

## LIFE GROUP APPLICATION QUESTIONS

## *“Toward the Cross” Easter Series*

These questions are for the **March 17, 2024** message, “If anyone would come.” Please read the sermon passage (Mark 8:31-38) together out loud.

### Passage Outline

1. What kind of Savior is Jesus? (31-33)
  - a. Jesus has been correctly identified by Peter as the one-and-only Messiah (8:27-30)
    - i. Peter had expected a triumphant, glorious, and conquering earthly King.
    - ii. He expected his affiliation with Jesus to provide comfort, power and wealth.
  - b. Now that he has been correctly identified as the Messiah, Jesus adjusts expectations:
    - i. The Son of Man “must suffer.” His suffering is required.
    - ii. Jesus helps his disciples to expect that the religious elite would reject him.
    - iii. Jesus wants them to understand, so he teaches about his suffering, “plainly.”
  - c. Resistance to this pathway is also plainly confronted: “Get behind me, Satan.”
2. What will it cost us to follow him? (34-38)
  - a. If “anyone” would follow Jesus, their decision will require self-denial.
    - i. Deny your desire for admiration, pleasure, wealth and ease.
    - ii. When following Jesus leads to rejection and suffering, we pick-up that cross.
  - b. But why would anyone actually agree to this kind of “cross”?
    - i. The sacrifice is for the sake of Jesus (35) and we go to that sacrifice with him.
    - ii. If you accomplish all your goals for wealth and ease you will still die. (36)
    - iii. Souls are far more valuable than the accumulation of stuff. (37)
    - iv. “Whoever” is ashamed of Jesus (and his cross) will be rejected eternally. (38)

### Life Group Discussion Questions

1. Based on #1, above: Following Jesus does not make our earthly lives easier, more comfortable or wealthier. In what ways have you had to learn this lesson the hard way? Give examples of what you have had to say to friends who thought that Jesus would make their lives easier.
2. Based on #1, above: For Jesus, suffering was not merely possible, but a requirement. Most of us will not die for the name of Jesus, but all of us will experience resistance, loss and pain because we follow Jesus. How have you suffered in the name of Jesus Christ?
3. Based on #2, above: How has following Jesus required self-denial? How have you actively abandoned a preference, relationship or dream in preference of what Jesus wants?
4. Based on #2, above: Under 2. b., above, we see four reasons Jesus gives for why someone would choose the suffering and sacrifice which must be embraced when we follow him. We might summarize the reasons as relationship and fellowship with Jesus, the futility of living for self, the value of the soul, and the finality of judgment. Talk about how these reasons that Jesus lists impact your thinking and priorities.