

Sermon Title: The Way of the Cross: Deny Yourself

Sermon Scripture: Mark 8:34-35



## **Sermon Discussion Guide (2/22)**

Begin the discussion by checking in with each person present and share prayer requests/praises with the group. Then, have one person offer a prayer for the group making sure to include any prayer requests that were mentioned earlier.

### **Scripture**

Read Mark 8:31-35 out loud. Discuss any initial thoughts you have about these verses.

### **Observation**

What does the path that Jesus came to walk (verses 31-33) reveal to us about the path that we are called to follow (verses 34-35)?

What do you notice about the difference between saving and losing your life in verse 35? Why does saving your life lead to losing your life and vice versa?

Read 2 Corinthians 12:7-10. What is the significance of the word "sufficient" in verse 9? Why does Paul choose to delight in his weaknesses?

What do these verses reveal to us about our need for surrender?

## **Application**

To choose to follow Jesus also involves denying the idol of self. In what ways do you experience the idol of the self encouraging you to choose your way over the way of Jesus? In other words, how does your heart tempt you to indulge rather than deny your wants and desires?

In what area of your life are you clinging to control or power? How is God inviting you to surrender this to Him?

When you feel weak or as if you have a thorn in your flesh, what is your most common response (hiding it, fixing it, denying it, or something else)? What would surrender and trusting in the sufficiency of God's grace look like in this situation or experience?

This week, you are invited to fast from self-centered practices (control, approval, comfort, convenience) as a way to deny ourselves and surrender our lives more fully to Jesus. In what specific way will you practice fasting from self-centeredness this week?

## **Prayer**

Jesus my life belongs to You, Amen.