

Following JESUS

Part Three



Introduction..

- We now start the third session looking at the practical concept of picking up the Cross and following Jesus.
- In the last sessions we looked at the reality of the End Times, the state of the Church and the scarcity of sound doctrine.
- We looked at the case of Zacchaeus and the Rich Young Ruler.
- We looked at what things equated to being a spiritual baby:

Introduction...



- You can only handle milk word. That is processed milk. You don't know how to draw up a Bible study and teach someone else from the word
- You attend church religiously and will defend the church doctrine even if it does not line up with the word - blind leading the blind
- Everything is about You
- Your life, Your finances, Your family -
- Your prayers are 80-90% about you - all these things the Gentiles seek...

Introduction...

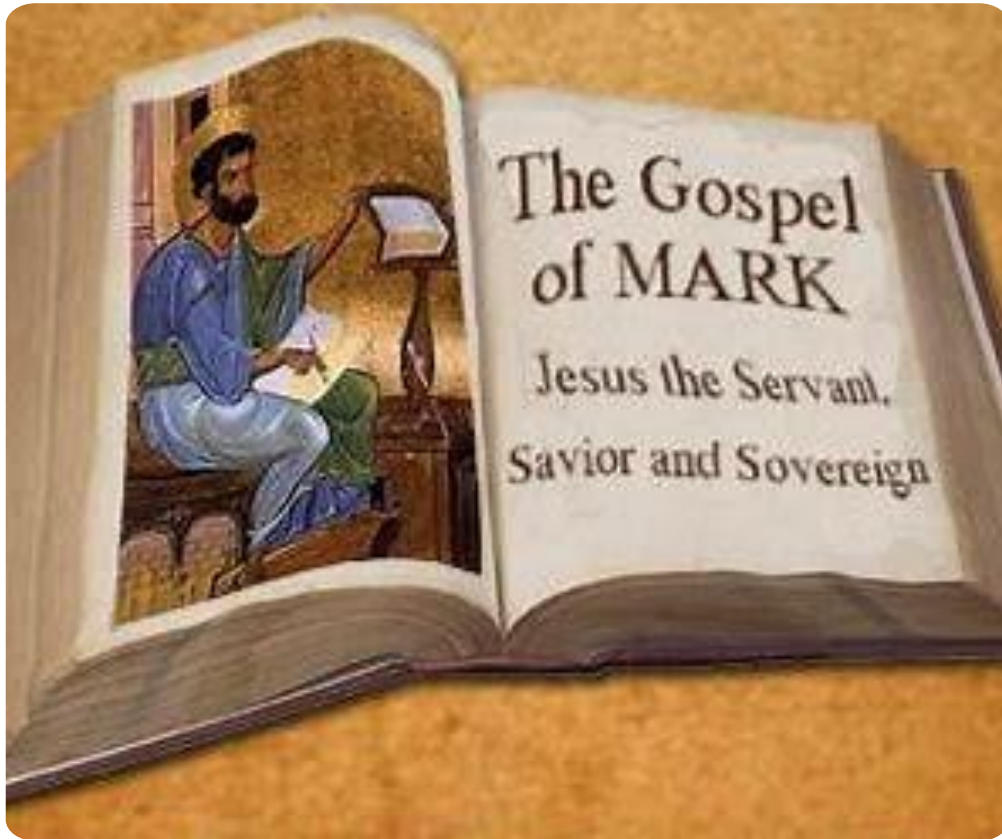


- You do not know your spiritual gifts
- You have not exercised any spiritual gift
- You can't remember when last you preached the Gospel to someone else
- You do not have any spiritual children that you brought into the Kingdom yourself

Introduction...

- You do not have a clear list of things the Lord Himself said directly to you in your quiet moments with him
- You are still in awe of men and their anointing or gifts and will attend a special program so that you can receive their anointing or blessing
- Your emotions and flesh get the better of you regularly. You are still acutely struggling with the same habits and besetting sins you had when you became a Christian or many years ago - Samson





Introduction..

- We made a deep dive into Mark chapter 8 where Jesus states what it means to follow Him
- He also talked about us taking up our own cross to follow Him
- We touched on the application of the Cross in our lives
- We then read about what it profits a man to gain the whole world and lose his soul.

What profit...?

- *³⁵ For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it.*
- *³⁶ For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? ³⁷ Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?*
- *³⁸ For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.”*
Mark 8:27-38



What Do You Value the Most?

- This is a valid question which a lot of us will rather not truly answer.
- To answer the question brings you and I face to face with the reality of our heart.
- What does our heart truly love?
- Let us listen to and read what our Lord says about this during His sermon...



Where your heart is...

- ¹⁹ *“Do not store up for yourselves [material] treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.*
- ²⁰ *But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in and steal;*
- ²¹ *for where your treasure is, there your heart [your wishes, your desires; that on which your life centers] will be also.*
Matthew 6:21 AMP



Where's your treasure?

- ¹⁹ Don't store up treasures on earth! Moths and rust can destroy them, and thieves can break in and steal them.
- ²⁰ Instead, store up your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy them, and thieves cannot break in and steal them.
- ²¹ Your heart will always be where your treasure is.
Matthew 6:21 CEV



The Pursuit of Happiness..

- *All men seek happiness. This is without exception. Whatever different means they employ, they all tend to this end.*
- *The cause of some going to war, and of others avoiding it, is the same desire in both, attended with different views.*
- *The will never takes the least step but to this object. This is the motive of every action of every man, even of those who hang themselves.*
Blaise Pascal



Where's your pleasure?

- God blatantly entices us to seek happiness, joy, pleasure (whatever you want to call it) in him with verses like this:
- “Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart” (Psalm 37:4),
- and “in his presence is fullness of joy, and at his right hand are pleasures forevermore” (Psalm 16:11).
- We're supposed to *want* pleasure



So the question is..?

- Are you wise or foolish...?
- *Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!*
- *²¹ Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, And prudent in their own sight! Isaiah 5:21*



Are you wise...?

- *¹⁵ See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, ¹⁶ redeeming the time, because the days are evil.*
- *¹⁷ Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.*
- *¹⁸ And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,*
- *¹⁹ speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,*
- *²⁰ giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ submitting to one another in the fear of ^[1] God.*
Ephesians 5:15-21



Read again...Slowly

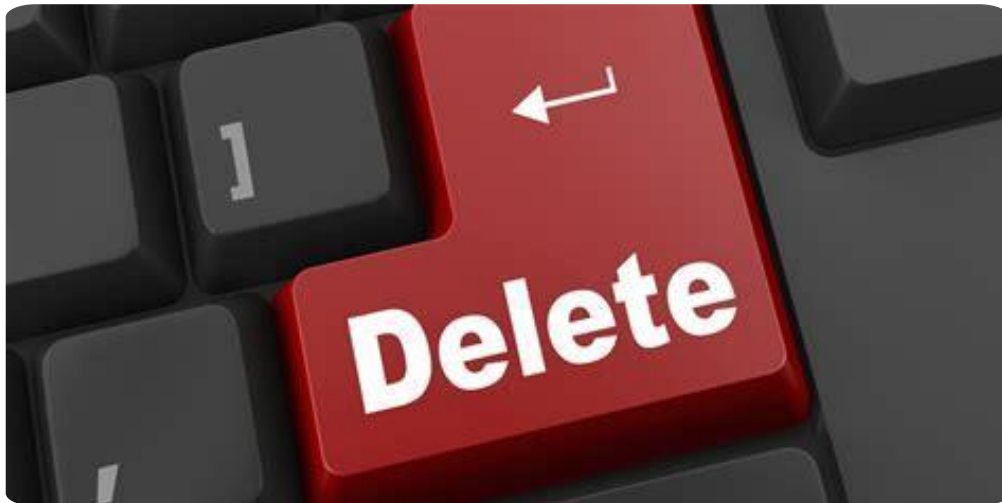
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Mark 8:27-38



Press SAVE!

- Tries to save his life means:
- Keep God out
- Do things your way
- Focus on the natural life only
- Reject the Will of God
- Try to gain everything you can
- Not take up your cross
- Go to Tarshish not Nineveh
- Be in the driving seat always
- Be selfish and self-absorbed
- Live like those who don't know God





Press DELETE!

- To lose your life means:
- To pick up your cross
- Surrender to God's Will
- Stop fighting your conscience
- Obey the voice of the Spirit
- Stop being stubborn
- Live with eternity in mind
- Fellowship with God
- Allow self to die
- Choose the narrow path
- Make the right but difficult choice

Too cool to preach?

- *38 For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.”*
Mark 8:27-38
- We cannot afford to be embarrassed to identify as a Christian
- We must get over our ego and desire for self-preservation and choose humiliation over dignity when it comes to Jesus
- Have you ever denied Jesus to look COOL?
- Has the fear of Man been stronger than the FEAR OF GOD?



Come to ME....

- So that we do not feel overwhelmed with heaviness, guilt and a sense of failure, let us remember what the Lord said:
- ²⁸ *“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavily burdened [by religious rituals that provide no peace], and I will give you rest [refreshing your souls with salvation].*
- ²⁹ *Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me [following Me as My disciple], for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST (renewal, blessed quiet) FOR YOUR SOULS.*
- ³⁰ *For My yoke is easy [to bear] and My burden is light. Matthew 11:28*



Come to Me...

- One of the most difficult things for the Believer is to come to Jesus and just slump into His arms.
- *“For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, And hewn themselves cisterns—broken cisterns that can hold no water. Jeremiah 2:13*
- We would rather do it ourselves
- We want to revenge our hurt
- We want to relieve our cravings
- We want to experience pleasure
- We would rather sin than win
- We would rather sink than swim



I will give you REST...

- Everyone who comes to Jesus will enter into a state of real rest.
- *29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me [following Me as My disciple], for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST (renewal, blessed quiet) FOR YOUR SOULS.*
- We will discuss this matter of REST further during our journey through the New Testament



A scenic landscape featuring a calm lake in the foreground, a dense forest of evergreen trees in the middle ground, and snow-capped mountains in the background under a blue sky with scattered white clouds. The water in the lake is still, creating a clear reflection of the sky, clouds, trees, and mountains. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

REFLECTION....