

Cost of Claiming Christ

27 Jesus and his disciples left Galilee and went up to the villages near Caesarea Philippi. As they were walking along, he asked them, "Who do people say I am?" 28 "Well," they replied, "some say John the Baptist, some say Elijah, and others say you are one of the other prophets." 29 Then he asked them, "But who do you say I am?" Peter replied, "You are the Messiah." 30 But Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him.

31 Then Jesus began to tell them that the Son of Man must suffer many terrible things and be rejected by the elders, the leading priests, and the teachers of religious law. He would be killed, but three days later he would rise from the dead. 32 As he talked about this openly with his disciples, Peter took him aside and began to reprimand him for saying such things. 33 Jesus turned around and looked at his disciples, then reprimanded Peter. "Get away from me, Satan!" he said. "You are seeing things merely from a human point of view, not from God's."

34 Then, calling the crowd to join his disciples, he said, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross, and follow me. 35 If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake and for the sake of the Good News, you will save it. 36 And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul? 37 Is anything worth more than your soul? 38 If anyone is ashamed of me and my message in these adulterous and sinful days, the Son of Man will be ashamed of that person when he returns in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

Mark 8:27-38 (NLT)

Observation (what does the text say?) **Interpretation** (what does it mean?) **Application** (what does it mean to me/us?)

Discussion/Topic Starters (Ice Breakers)

- What adjective do people use most often to describe you?
- O: What things in the text strike you or jump out at you? Why?

V27-30

O: Of what significance is the place (v.27) where Jesus asks these questions to His disciples?

Note: from the sermon, "Caesarea Philippi - In O.T. times there was a god named Baal that was worshiped here. In the N.T. time period there were many Greek God's worshiped in this area, especially the Greek god "Pan," which was usually depicted by a half boy half goat picture. This city also had some Jewish roots. It was a melting pot of religions. And it's in this place, a place with many different ideas of who God is, that Jesus asks His disciples, As they were walking along, "Who do people say I am?"

- I: Why does Jesus start with the question about what other's are saying about Him (v.27)? What is the significance of Peter's reply to this first question (v.28)? How would people answer this question today?
- I: What is significant about Peter's answer to Jesus' second question (v.29)?
- I: Why do you think Jesus told His disciples to be quiet about this response (v.30)?

Note: from the sermon: Jesus ends up clarifying what this means in the following verses because the true meaning is vastly different from what the Jews were expecting the Messiah to be.

A: If someone asked you who Jesus is, what would you say?

V31-33

O: What 4 things does Jesus prophesy about himself, the "Son of Man" (v.31) According to Jesus, what kind of Messiah is He?

- I: Why does Peter react so strongly to Jesus' teaching (v.32)?
- I: Why does Jesus react so strongly to Peter's "pushback" (v.33)?
- I: What is the essential difference between "things from a human point of view" and things from God's point of view (v.33)?

Note: another angle you could use is "How is Peter like the blind man in v.22-26?"

A: When have YOU felt the need to advise God?

V34-38

O: Who does Jesus now call to listen to His teachings (v.34)? Why?

O: What three things are involved in following Jesus (v.34)? Discuss each one, and how it is going in your life.

- I: How counterintuitive is v. 35? Give examples of how this is completely opposite from what the "world" tells us.
- I: What is the value structure discussed in v.36-37? How do these two concepts ("worldly gain" and "your soul") interact? Are they mutually exclusive? Can you have both? Is there balance? Is there a clear priority?
- I: What are the consequences of denying Jesus or being ashamed of Jesus (v.38)?
- A: How are you trying to grasp as saving your life? How are you giving your life away (v.35-36)?

Note: another way to ask this question would be: "Is your life characterized more by seeking to lose your life or to save it? Explain.

A: In which groups do you tend to be ashamed of Jesus' words (v.38)?

* As discussed in Riverside's HGLT (Home Group Leader Training), these guides are to be starting points for home group leaders to develop their own guides and approaches to leading group discussions. This is a resource tool, not a rigid "go through this guide word-for-word." There are intentionally too many questions for a single home group time. These guides rely heavily on a few different study guides; including "LifeChange Series" (ISBN 0891099107), N.T. Wright's guide (ISBN 9780830821822), James Hoover's guide (ISBN 9780830830046), and the Serendipity NT for Groups by the Young Life ministry (ISBN is N/A)

Recommended Follow-up:

- Pray: Focusing on verses 34-38, use the topics and struggles in this passage to pray. Spend time in confession and repentance, as well as in asking the Holy Spirit to take root and help up live lives worthy of the Gospel.
- Respond: Re-read this passage each day. Spend time meditating on it, as well as being quiet before God. Write down anything you think He might be saying in terms of re-orienting your life.
- Read: Next week's sermon (9/12/2010) will focus on Mark 9:1-13. Take time prior to next Sunday to read & study the passage, pray through the passage, meditate on the passage, etc.