

Unexpected News (Mark 8:27-38)

Discussion Questions

Read Mark 8:31-33

1. Why does Jesus react so strongly to Peter's 'rebuke' in verse 32?
2. What does it mean to set your minds on the 'things of man' rather than the 'things of God' (v.33)?
 - a. It can be hard to take a God's-eye view and we often look at things only from an earthly, human perspective. Think of 3 or 4 specific ways you struggle with this.

Read Mark 8:34-38

1. What are some of the 'costs' associated with openly following Christ today?
2. What about Jesus and his words are you most tempted to be 'ashamed' of (v. 38)?
3. Read the following quote:

"To follow Jesus means more than just identifying yourself as a Christ-follower. It means renouncing self and journeying with him even to death. To "deny oneself" does not mean to live a life of self-denial or self-discipline. It is to renounce your claim on yourself – desires, ambitions, personal goals – and to submit yourself to Christ as his slave. It is a denial of autonomy and self-sufficiency." – Mark L. Strauss, Exegetical Commentary on New Testament (Mark).

- a. Think of 3 or 4 specific desires, ambitions or personal goals you may have to abandon in order to follow Jesus?
- b. How are you tempted to be independent and self-reliant i) in your home life ii) at work?

Prayer Suggestions:

- Think of one or two friends, neighbor or work colleagues who don't yet know Jesus. Pray that God will help them understand the true significance of the cross and that they will begin to follow Jesus.
- Pray for one another, that you will be able to set your minds on the things of God, deny yourself and follow Christ in the specific ways you discussed.