

MARK 8:34-9:1 WHAT IS CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE PART 2?

REVIEW:

- Jesus brings them to the revelation of Who He is and the road He is to walk.
- How would you define a Christian? Only Jesus can define it.
- These verses are His definition.
- This section of scripture can be broken down to 3 headings;
 - 1) The principle of true discipleship. Vs. 34
 - 2) The paradox of true discipleship. Vs. 35-37
 - 3) The payment of discipleship. Vs. 38

READ MK. 8:34-9:1

1) THE PRINCIPLE OF TRUE DISCIPLESHIP VS. 34;

When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me."

- Here in verse 34, Jesus lays down 3 principles or conditions for true discipleship.
 - A) The disciple must deny himself.
 - B) He must take up his cross.
 - C) He must follow Jesus obediently, wherever He may lead.
- Discipleship always comes with a cost. no cross, no crown.
- A) To deny yourself: "to have no association with" to disassociate, to "disown completely", to forget one's self, lose sight of one's self and one's interests.
- A good soldier one must deny himself, his ideas. To perform his duty successfully he must take up the will of his superior and continue daily to do so.
- This is the idea of the bondsman of the Bible, his will is completely swallowed up in another's. Paul, Peter, James, Jude.

B) Take up your cross:

- In the first century the cross was universally understood.
- It was designed to prolong the agony of death for as long as possible.
- Not every believer will be called upon to be a martyr, but all are called upon to die to self.
- What then does taking up one's cross mean:
- It is the out-working of denying oneself.
- Living for another, following another's will, "not my will but thine."
- It is when our will crosses the will of God and we choose God's will.
- Jesus was basically saying, "if you follow Me, it will not all be an easy time, your earthly wants, hopes and will not be met as you desired."

- To slay the self-life is always painful, but there is no discipleship without the putting to death of the "old man."
- He who once sat on the throne, who did all things according to his own will must die!

C) Follow Me: Loyal Obedience.

- **To follow:** to be "a follower," or "companion", here expressing "union, likeness," and "a way;" hence, "one going in the same way" to take the same road.
- The idea is not that of following behind another, but that of accompanying the other person, taking the same road that Christ takes and fellowshiping, communing with Him along that road
- It is basically obedience.
- Jn 10:27, My sheep hear my voice and "follow" Me.
- Our lives are to be characterized by a habitual self-emptying, taking up of the cross and a coming after Jesus.
- I am not my own, I belong to another.
 - 1 cor. 6:19, 20; or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? ²⁰ For you were bought at a price; therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

INTRO: VS. 35-37

- Jesus continues to teach us that discipleship is a matter of "profit and loss," a question of whether we will waste our lives or invest them.
- What is the worth or value of the soul? Can anything temporal be of greater value than that which is eternal?
- The Life/Soul: (sue-khay) That part of man which wills, thinks, feels, reasons, the emotions and personality.
- In these verses Jesus is not giving the terms of salvation for we cannot earn salvation, but he is continuing to give the conditions of discipleship for those who would follow and desire to live the joyful Christian life.
- I get excited, passionate about this theme in scripture, for this is the gospel that saved my soul. That gives meaning to the Christian life, that opens the door to life in fellowship with God.

2) THE PARADOX OF TRUE DISCIPLESHIP: VS. 35-37 (seeming contradiction)

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?*

- **A paradox:** A seemingly absurd or contradictory statement that when investigated or looked into with greater thought may prove to be true and well founded.

I have these verses, this paradox, divided into two headings:

A) THE SAVING THAT IS LOSS:

B) THE LOSS THAT IS SAVING:

A) THE SAVING THAT IS LOSS:

- The truth of this paradox is amazing, to live and chose to save our life is to lose it. To choose to lose it for Christ's sake and the gospels is to save it.
- **To Save:** to make whole; the idea is that of saving from disease and its effects. To save, keep safe and sound, to rescue from danger or destruction.
- **To lose:** to perish, not extinction, but ruin, loss and not of being, but of "wellbeing." (Jn. 3:16)
 - Used in Mk. 2:22; And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine bursts the wineskins, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined.
- If I am preoccupied with myself, the saving of myself, the very act of saving ourselves will result in the destruction of ourselves. this is the "paradox.
- Whoever desires to save his life: to preserve, hold unto, to spare his life must lose it.
- If not, they will lose the meaning and purpose, the value, the joy and reward of life.
- If we are being preoccupied with ourselves, our needs, our way, our will, we will actually lose ourselves, destroy our selves.
- To live selfishly, in self-gratification, one will lose that which makes the activity of these things worthwhile and satisfying.
- Some of the truth here, which we do not immediately see, in the losing of one's soul is really the losing of purpose, the contentment, fulfillment of life. One's soul literally becomes empty, a hollow waste land.
- This answers why so many people with resources lose their life. Lose their way.
- They try every sort of sin and anything imaginable money and fame can buy, to try to satisfy their souls, but nothing satisfies the eternal soul, but an eternal cause, an eternal relationship with the eternal God.
- For the man or woman who endeavors to save his life, things are only a mirage, transitory, for in reality at the end of the day he will find his life lost, vain, hollow and empty. Like drinking salt water. The beginning of a hell on earth.
- Losing life is not necessarily the losing salvation, or eternal lostness, it will mean that for some, but it will also be for others, the loss of reward.
- All humans have a God shaped vacuum.
 - St. Augustin said regarding God, "thou hast made us for thyself O Lord, and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in Thee."
- God has so created man that he cannot find complete lasting rest and satisfaction until his entire being is swallowed up in the sweet satisfying will of God.
- For a Christian to live pre-occupied with self, avoiding sacrifice and service for Christ and His kingdom will mean great loss in that day when he stands before God and give an account. Rom.14:10, 2 cor. 5:10
- See parable in Matt. **25:24-30**

- While the man or woman who is willing to lose their life for the kingdom and the gospel appears to be at loss, in reality they will be found to be saving, preserving their soul and its reward.

B) THE LOSS THAT IS SAVING:

- Christ, in calling us to these great sacrifices shows us that the only way to save true life and spiritual wealth is sacrifice.
- And he who wants to save, pamper, spare his natural life will lose the true life, soul health, heart joy, spiritual growth and immortality.
 - **Mark 10:29. 30.**
- The list of things I am directed to lose my life for are very few, His Kingdom, and the Gospel. (His sake)
- Not only does Jesus demand that we should deny our own lives, but He declares that He alone should be the motive for which we chose and live the selfless life.
- Who else has the right to demand such a thing and be the motive for such self-sacrifice but the God who is our Creator.
- Whatever Jesus says, I will do, where ever He leads I will follow, regardless of the cost! {I have decided to follow Jesus} *Baptisms*
- Works, giving one's life for the Kingdom and the gospel will not save a man's soul, he cannot earn salvation, but works must follow on the heels of salvation. Dedicated service for the Kingdom must follow or a man will know loss, regret, a terrible regret in that day.
- Our lives can only be spent once. We cannot buy them back again, there is no hint or hope for a second chance after this life.
- Jesus nowhere mentions a second go at things after this life. As C. T. Studd said, "only one life."
- If we could possess all the fame, power, popularity and wealth of this world, yet it would not be sufficient in price or value to buy another chance at life.
 - Heb. 9:27; And just as it is appointed for [all] men once to die, and after that the [certain] judgment,

CONCLUSION:

- What am I saving/preserving my life for?
- Satan, sin and the world offer you glory, but in the end, you will receive suffering; God prepares us for some suffering, but in the end that suffering is transformed into glory.
- We must be careful not to be selling our birth-right for a small bowl of stew.
- All for Jesus all for Jesus. He is to be our all.....