

York St Small Groups

Sermon Based Studies

SUNDAY 31 MARCH 2019

Speaker: Colette Harrison

Journey to the Cross

The COST

Mark 8: 31-38



Please note that these studies are designed to be explored after hearing the Sunday Sermon and also to be accompanied by a time of prayer/sharing and supper.

To listen to this message again please head to the York St Website or download from iTunes.

Webpage: www.yorkst.com.au

Question #1

Have you ever signed up for something that you thought was free and then found out it was going to cost you? What happened? How did you feel?

Read Mark 8:31-38

Question #2

Discuss the image of the cross. What did it mean to first-century people? What does it mean to people today? What do you think the expression 'take up your cross' means?

THE WORD

Read MARK 8:27-30

Question #3

How do verses 27-30 help us understand what is happening in our passage?

Question #4

What is the connection between verses 31-33 where Jesus predicts his own suffering and death, and verses 34-38 where Jesus calls his disciples to a life of self-denial and bearing the cross?

Question #5

How do you interpret the apparent paradox of verse 35? (Hint: think of how the word 'life' be used in different ways)

Question #6

This Gospel was first written for second or third generation Christians in AD 100s. How would verse 38 strike them more forcefully than us? How might it similarly strike Christians in countries like North Korea, Afghanistan, Syria or Nigeria very sharply?

(According to OPEN DOORS 1 in 9 Christians globally experience 'high' levels of persecution. In 2018, it was the equivalent of 1 in 12.)

<https://www.opendoors.org.au/persecuted-christians/blog/2019-world-watch-list-1-in-9-christians-persecuted-for-their-faith/>

Question #7

Are you ever tempted to be 'ashamed' of Jesus? In what groups is this more of a temptation? In what ways have you experienced suffering for being a Christian?

Question #8

What does it mean for us to 'deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow Jesus'? (note these are not separate things)

Question #9

Colossians 3:1-17 is a further reflection and application of our passage. How do these words from Paul help us understand the passage?

CONCLUSION & PRAYER

Salvation is a free gift, free for us... but it cost! It cost Jesus greatly, but he bore that cost. But as we choose to follow him it will cost us!

If we live carefully, always thinking first of our own profit, ease, comfort and security... if our only aim is to make life as long and trouble-free as possible... if we make no effort except for ourselves, we will lose our life. But if we spend our life for others... if we disregard our health, our wealth, our time and comfort in an honest desire to spend our life for God and our neighbour... then we are making a mark for eternity. There is nothing less than our very soul at stake here.

The question that each one of us has to answer before God is: Whose values are we representing? God's or our own? Whose agenda are we following in our lives? What matters the most to us? What is the cost of our discipleship?

****Pray for one another.***