

## The Gospel of Mark

### The Promise and Paradox of Discipleship

Mark 8:34-38

1. **An** \_\_\_\_\_  
After His private interaction with the disciples where His identity was verified (Mk. 8:29) and His mission was clarified (Mk. 8:31), Jesus now extends an open invitation for anyone who would follow Him (Mk. 8:34). To follow Jesus, a disciple must be single-mindedly committed to putting faithfulness to the teachings of Christ (cf. Mk. 8:35, 38) ahead every other need, desire, goal, or relationship. A disciple must also embrace a willingness to suffer for Jesus (cf. 2 Tim. 3:12; 1 Pet. 4:12-19). Everyone who is truly Jesus' disciple will continue to follow Jesus throughout his or her life (cf. Mk. 4:20).
2. **An** \_\_\_\_\_  
Having painted the path of discipleship as one that embraces a willingness to suffer death, Jesus explains that the only way to preserve your own life is to be willing to lose it in service to Him (Mk. 8:35). In obvious hyperbole, Jesus clarifies the immense value of a person's life in comparison to anything and everything that could be had in the world (Mk. 8:36-37). All of the stuff of this world will fade away (1 Jn. 2:17), but men and women will exist for all eternity (Mt. 25:46).
3. **A** \_\_\_\_\_  
There are only two options in front of anyone who hears the gospel of Jesus and His call to become His disciple: you can deny yourself and follow Christ or you can deny Christ and follow yourself. To refuse Jesus' call to be His disciple (Mk. 8:34) is what it means to be ashamed of Him (Mk. 8:38). The consequence of refusing to follow Jesus will be that He will reject and deny you in the presence of the Father (Mk. 8:38; Mt. 10:33; cf. Mt. 7:21-23).