



Connection Group Questions

February 28, 2021

Series: *The King's Gambit*

Message: *The Counterintuitive Invitation to Finding Yourself*

***“34 Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said:
“Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves
and take up their cross and follow me.
35 For whoever wants to save their life[b] will lose it,
but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it.”
~ Mark 8:34-35***

Open

Call it the counterintuitive invitation. Or the paradoxical path of discovery. We find our life by losing it to Jesus. And that's our gambit! If we surrender our position, our very lives, we will in win life and secure our position with Jesus.

All people are on some journey of self examination and discovery. *Did you ever go out to “find yourself?” Did you succeed? Are you still looking, or in what ways are you still looking to figure out you and your life?*

Discuss

Read Mark 8:27-39

Last week's passage had three movements (Mark 1:9-15):

FIRST- Jesus is baptized and his identity revealed.

SECOND- Jesus is immediately send by the spirit into the desert to be tested and tempted by Satan in spiritual warfare.

THIRD- Jesus goes into mission mode declaring the good news- “The kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe!”

Today's reading has three parallel movements:

FIRST- As Mark hit his halfway point he tells wher Jesus asked his disciples, “Who do you say I am?” We have for the first time the disciples declaring you are the Messiah, or as we more often say, the Christ.

SECOND- We immediately see Jesus going into spiritual battle once again. He gives them the new definition of the Christ- the suffering servant. Peter wants nothing to do with that and

actually rebukes Jesus, whom he just called the Messiah! And Jesus says get behind me Satan!

THIRD- Jesus immediately goes back to the people and declares the good news in a new way- "WHOEVER wants to be any disciple must deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow me."

What does this deeper revelation of Jesus, that he is the Messiah, tell us about the man and his mission?

Why does Peter rebuke Jesus? Why does Jesus in turn rebuke Peter and add get behind me Satan? That's pretty harsh. So why was it necessary?

Jesus calls "whoever" to be his disciple. Why is this such good news? Who are the whoever's in your life that need to hear good news? How would you define or explain discipleship? Maybe try to come up with an elevator pitch- In 30 seconds what is a disciple?

"Deny yourself." We've been in denial. We've denied ourselves some things. But what does complete self-denial mean and look like in your life?

"Take up your cross." We've turned the cross into jewelry and decoration, which isn't necessarily a bad thing. What does "the cross" mean? How do we make enough (not too much, not too little) of the cross? Have you ever picked up a metaphorical cross to follow Jesus, and if so, what?

"Follow me." Where has following Jesus led you? Where is following Jesus taking you?

Finally, Jesus promises that "whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it." Have you experienced the counterintuitive key to finding your life by losing it to Jesus? Perhaps share about a time or an example where you really did seem to lose yourself in Jesus.

Apply

What can you do this week and leading up to Easter to be a more faithful disciple of Jesus? How might you deny yourself/. What cross might you carry? Where could following Jesus take you?

Commit to a daily devotion of losing your life to Jesus- his will, his way; always, Lord willing!