

Read Mark 8:31-38

31 Then Jesus began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many terrible things and be rejected by the elders, the leading priests, and the teachers of religious law. He would be killed, but three days later he would rise from the dead.

32 As he talked about this openly with his disciples, Peter took him aside and began to reprimand him for saying such things.

33 Jesus turned around and looked at his disciples, then reprimanded Peter. "Get away from me, Satan!" he said. "You are seeing things merely from a human point of view, not from God's."

34 Then, calling the crowd to join his disciples, he said, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross, and follow me.

35 If you try to save your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake and for the sake of the Good News, you will save it.

36 And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul? **37** Is anything worth more than your soul?

38 If anyone is ashamed of me and my message in these adulterous and sinful days, the Son of Man will be ashamed of that person when he returns in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

What was Jesus teaching His disciples (v. 31)? That He was going to suffer and be rejected by the Jewish leaders. And that He would be killed and after three days He would rise from the dead.

Peter took Jesus aside and what did he say to Him (v. 32)? That Jesus was crazy for saying He was going to be killed and then rise from the dead. Peter didn't know anything about the Cross or the Resurrection yet.

What did Jesus say to Peter (v. 33)? You don't know what you're talking about Peter. You don't understand the plans of God. You're thinking like a worldly man.

Why did Jesus call Peter Satan? Because Peter was acting like Satan and was trying to interfere with Jesus' plans just like Satan was. Peter thought he knew what was best for Jesus, but he didn't.

Then Jesus called the people and His disciples together and what did He tell them (v. 34)? If you want to follow after Me, you have to not be selfish and think about yourselves all the time. Instead, you're have to take up your cross and follow after Me as I lead you.

How does He lead us? By the Holy Spirit who lives inside our hearts. (Explain the prompting of the Spirit in the decision-making process). (Shoulder Taps <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4OAAJwnMNRQ>). And by the Bible....the Word of God (Hebrews 4:12).

What does it mean to take up your cross? You need to be like Jesus and be willing to be treated by the world the same way Jesus was. A lot of people hated Jesus and they were mean to Him. If you are a Christian, and you tell people about Jesus, not everybody will like you. Is that okay? Or are you worried what other people might think about you?

What does it mean to save your life (v. 35)? It means I love my life and I want to be in control of my life. I want to do what I want to do -- not what God wants me to do. And I want to live a long, long time so I can enjoy my life. **What does it mean to lose your life?** It means giving up control of my life to God and letting him decide where I'm going and what I'm going to do. Surrendering everything to God. If you are willing to give up control of this life, because it's not that important to you, you will gain eternal life in heaven with God.

What does v. 36 mean? Why would a person give up his soul and not go to heaven? Because he wanted the things of this world and not the things of God. Even if a person could get everything he could possibly want during his lifetime, what good would it be to him if he didn't go to heaven

What are some of the things of this world that we should not want? To be rich or famous. Really, anything that captures our heart and becomes an idol that we think about all the time.

What's the answer to Jesus question (v. 37)? The answer is "I would give Nothing in exchange for my soul!" Because our souls are worth more than all the world has to offer. Giving anything in exchange for my soul would be a bad bargain.

What does it mean to be ashamed of Jesus (v. 38)? To be embarrassed or afraid to talk about Jesus to my friends because they might not like me or they might make fun of me.

If we are ashamed of Jesus, what will happen to us? When He returns, He will be ashamed of us. That would be terrible!

Who was someone in the Bible who was ashamed of Jesus and was afraid to say he was a follower of Jesus? Peter. He denied Jesus three times.