

earthly natural perspective and to see the spiritual reality of God's plan instead. **"33 But turning around and seeing His disciples, He rebuked Peter, and said, "Get behind Me, Satan; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's."** Here Jesus not only corrects Peter's **serious sin**, but He teaches the disciples just how **important** and **vital** the passion of His death and resurrection will be. It is the very interest of God that the **"Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again."** To oppose the Suffering of the Cross and the Glory of the Resurrection would be like Satan himself opposing God and His interests. For Peter and the others to learn of the **severity** of this matter Jesus likens Peter's rebuke to that of Satan's work, **"33 Get behind Me, Satan; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's."** Whatever loyalty Peter and the others might have toward Jesus, it **must not** be in **opposition** to His **Death and Resurrection**. MacArthur comments, *"Peter erred greatly on that day near Caesarea Philippi, but he would soon come to understand and cherish the cross deeply. Less than a year later, on the day of Pentecost, he would boldly stand in Jerusalem with the other apostles and proclaim the gospel of a crucified and resurrected Messiah. Near the end of his life, writing to believers in Asia minor, Peter explained the glorious significance of the crucifixion: for Christ also died for sins once for all, that just for the unjust, so that he might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit (1 Peter 3:18). What the disciples considered to be the ultimate bad news on that day, was in reality the best news the world has ever received. It was the very heart of the gospel. By dying and rising again, Jesus Christ, the son of God, paid the penalty for sin and conquer death, so that all who believe in him might have eternal life."* **End Quote.** Having taught the disciples of the most important matters of His New Kingdom and New Covenant, Jesus will now speak to them about how that Gospel relates to people personally. Jesus will now call the **multitude** of **disciples** together and explain some very fundamental things about **following** Him and **trusting Him** as **Messiah**.

**Mark 8:34-38** - 34 And He summoned the multitude with His disciples, and said to them, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. 35 "For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's shall save it. 36 "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? 37 "For what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? 38 "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."

Not only will Jesus go to the **Cross, suffer and die and rise again**, but all those who have **saving faith** in Him must **identify** with Him in **His Death and Resurrection**. The news of Jesus suffering and death is about get even more perplexing. **“34 And He summoned the multitude with His disciples, and said to them, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. 35 “For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's shall save it.”** Now here is one of the most **fundamental** teachings on the **Gospel** and the Christian Life. Even as the great truths about **Christ’s Cross** and His **Resurrection** that He just taught them are the central truths of all Christian teaching, so is it central that we understand how we **receive** and **relate** to His Death and Resurrection. Here the Lord defines **true saving faith** in a way that exposes its **inner core**, its central elements. He defines it as, following Him, denying oneself, taking up one’s own cross and losing one’s life for His sake. This is a profound description of the **Christian life** indeed, and it expressed the personal nature of our relationship with Christ. So bound in **Union with Christ** are we who are truly **born again** and saved, that we are to identify with Him in **death to sin** like He was on the Cross, and being **alive to God** like He was when God **raised Him** from the dead to a new life of power. And this was not only His personal instruction to the twelve, but His invitation to the multitude, **“34 And He summoned the multitude with His disciples, and said to them, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.”** Here Jesus gives the universal invitation of what **“anyone”** must do if they wish to **“come after”** Him, they **must** do these things. One might ask, I thought all we had to do was **believe**? To which of course the answer is, YES! And this is what **true belief** and **true conversion** looks like. It looks like **total abandonment** to one’s **own life**, selfish ambitions, self-reliance, self-preservation and self-willed direction for their life. It is to allow one’s life to be completely **redefined** by **Christ** and His Kingdom and **His purposes** for one’s life. **“34 If anyone wishes to come after Me,”** shows first one must have a true **desire** to **pursue Jesus**, it must be one’s **own wish** or will to **“come after”** Him. And so strong is that desire that one is willing to **“deny himself, and take up his cross,”** in order to **“follow Me.”** Surely this is a very countercultural and heavenly kind of grace that would cause someone to **“deny himself,”** to now **“deny”** one’s own will and comfort and ambitions in order to do **Christ’s will** above his/her own. So **ardent** is this **self-denial** that Jesus likens it to **dying on a cross, “take up his cross and follow me.”** The Christian life is defined by such a massive submission to the will and purpose of Christ, that one would be willing to give their very life in order to **“follow”** Him and go where He goes and do what He does. And to be sure that this is what He means by **“take up his cross,”** He repeats it in unmistakable terms. **“35 “For whoever wishes to save his**