



*THIS QUESTION  
IS FOR  
YOU*

**WILL YOU FOLLOW ME?**

**2023-03-12**

**Participant Notes**

**OVERVIEW:**

Welcome back to our series, 'This Question is FOR YOU"! In this series we are exploring 4 questions Jesus asks us. These questions Jesus asks are designed to get us thinking about who Jesus is and how we can follow him well. Today's question is - "Will you follow me?" In Mark 8:34, Jesus makes a radical call on us. It's challenging. It's all encompassing. It's dramatic. He says, "If anyone would follow me they must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me." This is an invitation to come and die. It's an invitation to go all in when it comes to following Jesus. It's not for the faint of heart. But as far as Jesus is concerned it is the most freeing and fulfilling way to live. Do you believe Jesus? Will you fully follow him as he asks?

**ICEBREAKER:** If I Could Save One Thing

Imagine your home is on fire. You have opportunity to retrieve one thing from your home before it all burns. Assuming people and pets are saved already, what is one thing from your home you would go after? Share with your group about the one thing you would save!

## STUDY:

“Our soul is like a stream of water, which gives strength, direction and harmony to every other area of our life.”

Dallas Willard - Renovation of the Heart

For today's study we're going to focus in on Mark chapter 8 where Jesus calls on us to follow him fully and relentlessly. This call teaches us about the value of our soul. As you read Jesus' words, think about how valuable you are to God. Consider the value of your soul and how you can be intentional about living a life that says - "It is well with my soul."

**READ:** Mark 8:34-38

34 And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. 35 For whoever would save his life[a] will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. 36 For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? 37 For what can a man give in return for his soul? 38 For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

Mark 8:34-38 ESV

- In vs. 34 Jesus says, "If anyone would come after me, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me."

1. What does it mean to "come after" Jesus?
2. "... let them deny themselves ..." What do you think Jesus meant by this?
3. "... take up his cross and follow me." What might it look like for us to "take up the cross" of Jesus?

- To deny yourself and carry your cross could be a freeing way to live. How might that be?

Four “For”s (Mark 8:35-38).

In Mark 8:35-38 we read the word “for” at the beginning of four statements Jesus makes. These statements immediately follow Jesus’ call for us to follow him. Why is giving up our lives for Jesus worth it? Here’s what Jesus tells us.

35 For whoever would save his life[a] will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel’s will save it.

4. What does Jesus mean by, “ ... whoever would save his life will lose it ...”?

5. What analogy or word picture might you use to better understand this idea of saving yourself?

36 For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?

6. What do you think Jesus meant by this? How else might you word this idea?

37 For what can a man give in return for his soul?

7. What does this question tell you about the value of your soul?

“The most important thing in your life is not what you do but who you become. That’s what you will take with you into eternity. You are an unceasing spiritual being with an eternal destiny in God’s great universe.” Dallas Willard

- What do you think of the statement - “The most important thing in your life is not what you do but who you become.” Do you agree? Why or why not?

- How does this statement factor into the value of your soul?

38 For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation ...”

8. What does it mean to be ashamed of Jesus?

“... of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

9. What does Jesus mean by this?

10. **READ** this quote from Dallas Willard about the soul:

“Our soul is like a stream of water, which gives strength, direction and harmony to every other area of our life. When that stream is as it should be, we are constantly refreshed and exuberant in all we do, because our soul itself is then profusely rooted in the vastness of God and his kingdom, including nature; and all else within us is enlivened and directed by that stream. Therefore we are in harmony with God, reality, and the rest of human nature and nature at large.” Dallas Willard - Renovation of the Heart

- How does this image of your soul being a stream help you understand the value of your soul?

- Imagine yourself as the keeper of the stream (your soul), with the responsibility to keep it pure and fresh. How you be intentional in your role as the keeper of the stream?

### **PRAY:**

Watch this video (or listen) to this hymn together - It is Well With My Soul

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VbNm\\_Kdez8o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VbNm_Kdez8o)

Spend some time thanking God that it is well with your soul.