

Motivation For Discipleship

MARK 8:34-38

He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, “**If any want to** become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. **35** For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. **36** For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? **37** Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? **38** Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

MARK 10:28-31

Peter began to say to him, “Look, we have left everything and followed you.” **29** Jesus said, “Truly I tell you, **there is no one who** has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields, for my sake and for the sake of the good news, **30** who will not receive a hundredfold now in this age—houses, brothers and sisters, mothers and children, and fields with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life. **31** But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.”

MARK 10:41-45

When the ten heard this, they began to be angry with James and John. **42** So Jesus called them and said to them, “You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. **43** But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, **44** and **whoever** wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. **45** For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.”



What does each passage have in common?
What is different?

What motives does each passage address?

Which scene and invitation most strongly appeals to you?

The Rewards of Ministry

THE SACRIFICE	THE REWARD
<p>MARK 8:34-38: Lay down our lives for Christ's sake and the gospel's</p>	<p><input type="text"/>, real life, eternal life that begins now</p>
<p>MARK 10:28-31: Leave behind everything that represents security</p>	<p>Homes, family, <input type="text"/>: both in this life and the life to come</p>
<p>MARK 10:41-45: Choose the downward road toward servanthood and being last</p>	<p><input type="text"/>, a life of impact, touching the lives of others</p>

Each of these passages invites us to live our lives as Jesus' disciples, spending our time, energy and resources on behalf of others and the Kingdom of God. In each of these passages, Jesus invites us into ministry, choosing to find life, security and greatness the way he did, through a paradoxical path of losing, leaving and serving.

Ministry is not something we do for God; rather, it is something .

Case Studies

How can you see the previous promises at work in the following examples?

- ▶ A high school youth group goes to Mexico for a week to build houses and minister to children. They come back and a few of them share at church: "We went down to give but we received more than we gave."
- ▶ Rich, a small group leader in the fellowship, realizes that he learns more from his preparation for the Bible study than the rest of the students do from the discussion. He has been feeling guilty because he gets more out of the experience than they do, though his intention was to serve.
- ▶ Mother Teresa decides to love the poorest of the poor and, decades later, wins the Nobel Peace Prize.
- ▶ Francis, the son of a wealthy Assisi merchant, returns all his fine clothes to his father, rejects his family wealth and status, and embraces a life of poverty. His friends join him in this, and he begins an order of monks dedicated to finding joy in simplicity.

FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION:

1. How have you seen these paradox promises at work in your own life?
2. Which of these three most strongly motivates you?

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Jesus doesn't say, “I'm shocked that you want life, security, greatness! Those motivations are so sub-Christian.” He doesn't chide them for wanting these things. He merely points them toward the most effective and shrewd manner of pursuing these things. He wants them to want them, but simply to receive them by a paradoxical, upside-down life of faith, following his example.



What does each passage have in common?
What is different?

- Each passage involves a universal invitation: “If any want...” “there is no one who...” “whoever wishes...”
- Each passage involves a paradox: to find the thing that motivates you, you must leave it behind...
- From the wider context, Peter also seems to figure prominently in each story.

What motives does each passage address?

Mark 8: Life, true life. Found by embracing pain, suffering, death
 Mark 10:28ff: security, a financial and relational home, everything in this culture that represents security: found by taking risks with all we hold dear
 Mark 10:41ff: greatness, a life of impact and significance: found by becoming smaller, last, least.

Which scene and invitation most strongly appeals to you?

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THE SACRIFICE	THE REWARD
<p>MARK 8:34-38: Lay down our lives for Christ's sake and the gospel's</p>	<p>LIFE, real life, eternal life that begins now</p> <p>Some people are motivated to drink deeply from life, to suck the marrow out of life, to seize the day. Learning for its own sake, experience, travel, adventure—not to have wasted a day or a moment. Jesus promises this kind of life to his followers who are ready to lose their lives for his sake.</p>
<p>MARK 10:28-31: Leave behind everything that represents security</p>	<p>Homes, family, SECURITY : both in this life and the life to come</p> <p>I think sometimes we think Jesus really shouldn't have promised this—it sounds so low. The first promises adventure, but this promises security. Yet some of us are created to want a relational and financial home base. Jesus doesn't say, "NO WAY!" Rather he says, "Great. Here's how: Leave everything and follow me."</p>
<p>MARK 10:41-45: Choose the downward road toward servanthood and being last</p>	<p>GREATNESS, a life of impact, touching the lives of others</p> <p>This is where we are most likely to be embarrassed by Jesus' words. He cannot mean that it is OK to want to be great, can he? Indeed, the call to servanthood only really applies if you do what to be great. He assumes we do, and shows us the way he did it: by becoming a great servant.</p>

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