

Gaining by losing: We always want to be in total control of anything and everything in our lives, but we are not. God holds all knowledge of what has, is, and will happen. **The only way to gain Christ is to lose self and to open our lives to how, what, when, and where God is going.** As for the question why we may or may not ever know.

Colossians 1:17

And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Warning the following text is offensive!

Mark 8:31-38 English Standard Version (ESV)

Jesus Foretells His Death and Resurrection

31 And he began to teach them 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. 32 And he said this plainly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. 33 But turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."

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 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.”

Footnotes:

- a. **Mark 8:35** The same Greek word can mean either *soul* or *life*, depending on the context; twice in this verse and once in verse **36** and once in verse **37**

Gaining by losing: We always want to be in total control of anything and everything in our lives, but we are not. God holds all knowledge of what has, is, and will happen. **The only way to gain Christ is to lose self and to open our lives to how, what, when, and where God is going.** As for the question why we may or may not ever know.

We will never understand what it means to follow Jesus until we understand that to move forward we walk backwards. Life comes out of death, glory comes from suffering, winning comes out of losing. The Christian message isn't come to Jesus he will make your life better, your relationships better, your career better, the message is come to Jesus and DIE. Jesus had to lose his life to win our souls.

V31. And he began to teach them 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. This is a difficult lesson for the disciples to understand to this point they have followed this guy (Jesus) watched him heal people, feed people, and generally make lives better. Why would he say he must suffer be rejected and die? This is the 1st of 3 times in Mark's gospel that Jesus predicts his death and resurrection.

V32. And he said this plainly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. He said this plainly. That is bold, confident, clear so that anyone could understand. Why would Mark put this hear? It is significant! Jesus says almost nothing plainly,

Mark 4:10-11

10 And when he was alone, those around him with the twelve asked him about the parables. **11** And he said to them, **“To you has been given the**

secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables

The parables left people confused, scratching their heads, not knowing what he was talking about. Wondering why anyone would follow this Jesus guy he makes no sense. So now Jesus says I will make this plain, easy for you to understand, I must suffer. Peter gets it! He understands exactly what Jesus is saying! There is no confusion. It's not that Peter doesn't understand he just doesn't like it. (how many times are we like Peter here?) If we back up to verse 29 (29 And he asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered him, "You are the Christ) we see that Peter just began to understand that Jesus is the Christ. He expected a Christ that would rule and reign on this world, more like a King David, (the David Tony taught about 2 weeks ago David the conquering king, let's face it, the jews would not have held David in such high esteem if he would have lost, David was a winner!) he would be king of the jews, fight for them, overthrow the romans. This is what he was looking for, not someone who would suffer, be rejected, and die. We see in Daniel 7 what Peter expects.

13 "I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a *son of man*, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. 14 And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed. Daniel 7:13-14

This is the Christ that Peter wanted. After all this is the same language Jesus uses "the son of man". He is thinking I have read the book you are Christ.

So with all this Peter rebukes Jesus. So what is a rebuke? (Hey kids it's not the cube where you match the colors) A rebuke is to express sharp disapproval or criticism of someone because of their behavior or actions. Peter heard what Jesus said fully understood and said no you are wrong! I disapprove of what you said, what's wrong with you, why would you say

that? Peter is thinking hey James, John, Mathew lets pray for Jesus and his unbelief. He has forgotten who he is.

Vs 33 **But turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."** Jesus seeing all the disciples cannot leave this unchecked he must confront Peter he must call Peter out for his statement. So Jesus pulls out the big guns and says "get behind me Satan". Jesus is serious here he is not being dramatic why does he say this then? The last time he was tempted by Satan in the wilderness he said the same thing "get behind me Satan". The last temptation in the wilderness was: **Matt 4:8-10 says the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. 9 And he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written, "You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve."**

Peter is offering the same temptation here, Jesus you do not have to suffer you are the Christ it is all yours to rule and reign do not go to the cross, be beaten, mocked, given a crown of thorns, and put to death.

We can do the same thing be careful! If we devalue or take away the necessity of the cross we do the same thing. Anything or anyone that does this is doing the work of Satan. Satan hates the cross!

You see Peter knows that Jesus is the Christ, but doesn't understand who Christ is. Peter believes that Christ is coming to save the jews, set up an earthly kingdom here to rule and reign. His mind is on an earthly kingdom one that he can have now. This is what he expected like all the jews they hung onto this side of the Christ and forgot all about the Psalm 22 Christ that Tony showed us 2 weeks ago one that suffered. Look back to our verse

31 he must suffer many things be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and scribes..... Everyone hates Jesus our hero.....our savior..... the christ....

VS 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. Jesus had to carry a cross and so do we as much as we want to be free to do what we want when we want, we are not. We must follow Christ to the cross and suffer as he did. If Jesus is our master and he suffered, so will we, we are his servants. We like to think we are christians we will not suffer we will be exempt. Only non christians suffer because they won't believe and therefore can not have a victorious life. The truth is we will suffer not only the normal suffering of life, but also we will pay a price for following our savior. (Westley, aka the Dread Pirate Roberts, says to Buttercup in The Princess Bride, "Life is Pain, highness. Anyone who says differently is selling something.")

In our country it cost us very little to be a Christian in fact depending on circumstances it can even be an advantage. In the Roman the cost was high you had everything to lose so carrying your cross wasn't just a metaphor to you may suffer a little but rather carrying your cross meant you were on your way to die carry your coffin. So pick up the rope you will be hung with, load the gun that you will be shot with. The cross meant death.

What if we were persecuted to come to church every Sunday would you be here? If there was a law that said if you follow Jesus you will go to jail, would you follow? What Jesus is saying here is do not follow me unless you have counted the cost.

VS 35 For whoever would save his life^[a] will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel will save it. He is saying if you lose your physical life for me you will save it and conversely if you save your

life meaning putting your well being ahead of allegiance to me than on the last day you will lose your life. Jesus is saying the person who radically identifies with me is the person that will be saved. Notice he is not saying whoever loses their life, anyone can lose their life, he is not looking for a martyr plenty of religions have martyrs, but he says if you lose it for my sake the sake of the Gospel. Jesus wants us to give him everything completely.

If a man dies tomorrow with nothing no earthly possession, but has given himself to Christ he will have it all completely. On the flip side if a man dies tomorrow and has everything, awards, accolades, riches, and a mansion to pass down, but has rejected the Christ he has nothing or less than nothing.

VS 36-37 For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? For what can a man give in return for his soul?

Let's imagine someone comes up to you and tells you that they can give you everything you want, a big house, riches beyond belief, the man or woman you most desire. You can own Apple, Amazon, Exxon all of them. All you have to do is die. So you gain it all for an instant then you are dead. Would you do it? NO! Yet people everyday, we everyday, make that same bargain we try to gain the world and forget about our souls. We put short term satisfaction over long term well being. The heart of christianity is maturity not your best life now, but your best life later.

Now back to our scenario suppose we get it all and don't have to die and by the end of your life, you now own everything in the world — you "gain the whole world" — that's what Jesus envisages in verse 36. And then you die, and instantly you realize that was eternal suicide.

And suppose in facing Jesus you say, "I will give everything I have — the whole world — in return for my soul." What do you think he will say? I think he will say, "You would try to buy your soul with the very possessions that

destroyed your soul — that you prefer over me? Christ-replacing, Christ-belittling idols have no currency in heaven.” And he will send you to everlasting misery,

VS 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.”

Then, finally, in verse 38 comes the second clarification of what it means to treasure Jesus above everything in this world. The first clarification had to do with treasuring him above earthly *possessions*. This one has to do with treasuring him above earthly *praise*.

For whoever is ashamed of *me and of my words* [notice again *me* and *my words*, as in verse 35: *me* and *the gospel*] 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.

So, Jesus is making clear that there are two audiences for our lives. One is “this adulterous and sinful generation” — adulterous mainly in the sense of finding less satisfaction in God than they do in the people and the things he made. That’s adultery and the essence of sinfulness. The other audience is the coming, triumphant Son of Man, his all-glorious Father, and millions of holy angels.

And the question for us is: *Whose approval do we crave most? Whose praise are you most desperate not to lose? In whose presence do you fear most being shamed? Which relationship is most precious to you?*

Which then brings us back to [Mark 8:35](#): “Whoever would save his life will lose it.” That is, whoever lives to save his reputation — to avoid shame — to

save his acceptance among an adulterous and sinful generation will lose his respectable and popular life forever. The Son of Man, the all-glorious Father, and millions of holy angels will, in one terrifying moment, turn their face away from him in shame forever.

But (second half of verse 35) “whoever loses his life on account of me and the gospel will save it.” In other words, whoever experiences me and my suffering, and rejection, and shameful crucifixion, and resurrection (the gospel I just spoke to you in verse 31) as more precious than respectability and popularity from an adulterous and sinful generation will live forever under the smile of my approval.

Here’s the sum of the matter in [Mark 8:31–38](#). First, there is news. The greatest news in the world.

The Son of Man *must* suffer many things, and must be rejected, and must be killed, and must rise again.

The merciful, sovereign, all-controlling God planned, prophesied, and performed the sufferings, rejection, killing, and raising of the Son of Man. Therefore, they are not random events. They are the ransom of sinners. They are the glorious, God-designed gospel of grace. That’s the news. And it happened before we ever existed or did anything.

And the way into this ransom and resurrection is to experience the birth of a new self — a self that looks at this suffering, rejected, killed, and risen *Jesus*, and then looks at all the *possessions* and all the *praise* that the world can give, and says, “Possession-loving self, praise-loving self, I deny you! You are not me. And if denying you costs me my life in this world, then I will gladly lose that life, in order that I may live with this Jesus forever.”

