

DISCUSSION NOTES

MARCH 26, 2017

Pray and ask God to teach you, help you trust Him more deeply, & strengthen you to live what you learn.

GETTING STARTED

1. What is the hardest or most important exam you ever took? What was on the line in your exam—your G.P.A.? your job? acceptance into college or graduate school? a promotion?

DIGGING IN

2. Read Mark 8:27-30. Make 5-7 quick observations about these verses. Who initiates the action? What is the focus?
3. What kinds of answers does Jesus receive to his first question? What do these answers reveal about how people perceived Jesus? What do they have in common? How do these answers make Jesus a really big deal, but still not make a big enough deal about who he is?
4. In verse 29, Peter answers for the twelve disciples responding to Jesus' second question. What is his answer? To better understand this response, read 2 Samuel 7:12-16 and Jeremiah 23:5-6. How do these Old Testament passages tell of the coming of Jesus, the Christ?
5. In Matthew 16:17, Matthew records an additional statement about Peter's answer. How might this statement about Peter's answer be connected to our previous study in Mark about God's healing of our spiritual blindness? The New Testament also describes how God opens our eyes to see Jesus in 1 Corinthians 2:14 and 1 Corinthians 12:3, as well as in other places.
6. In Mark 8:31-33, we see that Jesus still had much to teach the disciples about his arrival as a King who would give his life for them as a suffering servant. These verses signal the shift in Mark's gospel as the story begins to move toward Jesus' death. Taking these passages together, how would you describe Peter's spiritual understanding at this point in his journey? Can you relate to him?

LIVING IT OUT

7. If we apply Jesus' first question (in Mark 8:27) to our day, who do people say that Jesus is? What are some insufficient or inaccurate answers that people offer?
8. The most important question from Jesus for us to consider is this: "Who do you say that I am?" How would you answer that question in your own words and in a single sentence?
9. How does attachment to Jesus lead us to experience peace and freedom from shame and guilt? How does attachment to Jesus lead us to experience hope and wholeness from past wounds? Would you be willing to share a personal pain you carry in your heart that needs God's healing?
10. How does your desire for health and wholeness reveal that God's already at work in your heart?
11. How does attachment to Jesus lead us to experience a new identity and security in Him? How do you daily, personally, practically remind yourself of this good news and practice living in your new identity?
12. Who has God placed in your life that needs to experience the transforming love of Christ?

TIME OF PRAYER

Would you spend some time praying for our church in light of all we've talked about? Here is a list of suggested items for your time in prayer. Save this list to pray through as a group, as a family, as friends, or individually. Thanks so much for partnering with us in praying for our church and our mission.

- Pray that we would worship Jesus, our Servant-King, in increasing measure all our lives.
- Pray that we would trust Jesus to provide for all our needs in every circumstance.
- Pray that we would serve and give so that others may live.
- Pray that we would be servant-hearted people.
- Pray that all of our ministry serve teams opportunities would be filled.
- Pray that would we see an inflow of new people to serve and new servant-leaders to direct ministries.
- Pray that we would be generous-hearted people.
- Pray that God would provide for all our needs and further his mission through our generosity.
- Pray for those who need jobs and those who face debts or financial hardships.
- Pray for an inflow of new attenders to become giving partners who support our ministry.
- Pray for our church to have a heart for our community and a passion to reach the lost.
- Pray for our city and all those that need to be reached with the gospel to come to faith in Jesus.
- Pray that we would love our neighbors, befriend them, seek their good, share Jesus with them, and invite them to be a part of our church family.
- Pray "by name" for those that you personally feel called to reach. Pray specifically for the people whose names you wrote on the "So That Others May Live" wall at our church gathering.
- Pray for the things that God brings to your heart and mind related to Christ's mission through Redemption Church and/or in our city.
- Pray for the nations, for people who have no one to tell them about Jesus, for those who have no Bible and no pastor and no gospel witness. Ask God to send people to unreached peoples.
- Pray for our church plants:
 - Claude Atcho, Redeemer Church, Boston
 - Justin Burkholder, Iglesia Reforma, Guatemala City
 - Watson Jones, Restoration Church, Philadelphia
 - Steven Lee, Redeemer City Church, Washington DC
 - Bryan Padgett, Redeemer Church, Stillwater, OK
- Pray for our pastors and ministry leaders and they serve our family and equip us for ministry.
- Ask God for help in any area where you feel weak, confused, tired, or bored and need to be renewed by God so that you can be used in his mission.