

# Unashamed to Be Scorned with Jesus

by John Piper

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**Scripture:** Mark 8:31, Mark 8:34, Mark 8:35, Mark 8:36, Mark 8:38

**Topics:** "Self-Denial", "Following Christ"

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## Description

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## Transcript

I invite you to turn with me to the gospel of Mark chapter 8. We're going to read verses 31 to 38. Mark chapter 8. I hope you will be looking at a Bible either on your device or in a book like this. It really matters that you're looking with me.

Mark 8 31. 31. Jesus 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.

And he said plainly, he said this plainly and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and seeing his disciples, Jesus 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. 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.

For whoever would save his life will lose it. But whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospels will save it. 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? For whoever is ashamed of me and 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.

Father, I ask now that Christ would stand forth from his Word with such truth and clarity and value that all this world's possessions and all this world's praise would for every heart in this room be as nothing in comparison with him. And I ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

The main point of verses 31 to 33, the first paragraph, the main point is that God planned and prophesied and performed the sufferings, the rejection, the killing and the raising of the Son of Man. And therefore, to resist that is to take the place of Satan or fallen man, which are the same in this text. Here's another way to put it.

Verses 31 to 33 reveal to us the relationship between God and the murder of the Son of Man. And that relationship is that God planned it, prophesied it, performed it so that it is not random, it is the gospel. Now let's see whether that is so.

That's the summary of the first paragraph. Verse 31, the Son of Man must, and that's the decisive word, the Son of Man must suffer many things, must be rejected by the elders, chief priests and scribes, must be killed and after three days rise again be raised, be killed and after three days rise again. So those four things have to happen.

Not might happen, not should happen, not even will happen, but must happen. There's a necessity here of some kind. Four things must happen.

He must suffer, he must be rejected, he must be killed and he must be raised. Verse 32, Jesus said this plainly so that when Peter rebukes him for saying it, we know it's not because Jesus was unclear. With clear, plain words ringing in his ears, Peter, it says, took Jesus aside and began to rebuke him.

Now what had he said that could possibly bring forth a rebuke? He had said his suffering, his rejection, his murder and his resurrection must take place. They must. And Peter considers that worthy of a rebuke.

Notice, it does not say Peter was frightened and urged Jesus to hide. It doesn't say that he was compassionate or empathetic with Jesus' suffering. He wasn't.

Just the opposite. He wasn't empathetic. He was disapproving.

That's what rebukes are. They're not just disagreeing. Rebukes are, that's wrong.

He accused Jesus of saying something wrong. What? He only said one thing. This has to happen.

Jesus, with all due respect, your suffering, your rejection, your getting killed and whatever this is, your rising, does not have to happen. And I rebuke you. To which Jesus now responds with his own rebuke.

Same word in Greek. Rebuke, rebuke. Verse 33, turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, get behind me, Satan.

You are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of, you expect him to say Satan. He doesn't. He says man.

They're the same. Fallen man and Satan, same mindset. Peter, you are not seeing the necessity of my sufferings the way God does.

You don't like the language of necessity when it comes to suffering and killing. You don't like me to say my murder must take place. You would like to counsel me, even rebuke me, that this is not the way God thinks.

This is not the way God acts. Well, Peter, my friend, you are wrong. And I rebuke you.

Satan doesn't like it either, Peter. And without knowing it, you've become his mouthpiece. When I say something must take place, Satan hears the implication.

He's not in charge. I am. God is.

And he knows his days are numbered. Necessarily numbered. And Peter, the whole human race thinks like this.

They don't like it when I talk this way. And that's why I said you're talking like Satan and you're talking like man. Fallen human beings don't like it when I use the word must for suffering and must for rejection and must for murder and must for being raised.

So what is it that Peter and Satan and the human race are so opposed to that they would even rebuke the Son of Man? What's behind this must, this incontrovertible necessity that brings down the rebuke against the Son of Man? Why must He suffer? Why must He be rejected? Why must He be killed by lawless men? Why must He rise again? And there are numerous right answers to that question. And I'm going to give you four. Number one, the Son of Man must suffer, must be rejected, must be killed, and must rise again because it is written and the scriptures cannot, cannot be broken.

The Son of Man must suffer many things because in Isaiah 53 sorrows, grief, anguish of soul are prophesied of Him. He must be mocked and insulted because it's written in Psalm 22. He must suffer betrayal because it is written in Psalm 41.

He must be spit on and struck in the face because it is written in Isaiah 50. The script of the sufferings of Jesus in the first century was written centuries earlier and the scriptures cannot be broken. They must be fulfilled or He must be rejected.

Have you not read the stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone? It must be. He must be killed. Don't you read in Isaiah 53, lamb led to the slaughter, cut off out of the land of the living, offering as a guilt, offering, will be poured out unto death, made His grave with the wicked.

It must come to pass. He must be killed and He must be raised. Have you not read the rest of Isaiah 53? He shall prolong His days.

The will of the Lord shall prosper in His hands out of the anguish of His soul. He shall see and be satisfied. He must suffer.

He must be rejected. He must be killed. He must be raised.

It is written and the scriptures cannot be broken. That's answer number one. Answer number two, the Son of Man must suffer, must be rejected, must be killed, must be raised because God not only predicts but performs His word.

The prophecies will come to pass, not because God has a crystal ball and is a good Zeus slayer. They will come to pass for this reason, Jeremiah 112, I am watching over my word to perform it. God doesn't predict what others will do merely.

He announces what He intends to do through others. I am watching over my word to perform it. I am God.

I'm not a fortune teller. I am God. And there is none like me declaring the end from the beginning and saying, my counsel shall stand.

And then the next phrase, I will accomplish all my purpose. I don't wait to see if it's going to happen. I do it.

I said it. I do it. That's why I use the word perform.

He performed it. He didn't just predict it. That's the second reason why it must happen.

Here's the third reason. The Son of Man must suffer and be rejected and killed and rise again because it was planned from before the foundation of the world by God. It was written.

It was performed. It was planned. God is infinitely wise.

He does nothing whimsically, nothing randomly. Everything is according to wisdom. In wisdom, He has made the earth.

In wisdom, He does all His works. Oh, the depth of the wisdom and the knowledge of God, how unsearchable are His ways. They're all done in wisdom because they accord with an infinitely wise plan, which is made explicit in relationship to the suffering and the rejection and the death of Jesus in Acts 4.27. Truly in this city, there were gathered together against your holy servant, Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod, Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles, the peoples of Israel, to do whatever your hand and your plan predestined to take place.

So the four perpetrators of all of Jesus' suffering, Herod, Pilate, the mobs, and soldiers, those four perpetrators were acting according to God's plan. They did according to God's plan. That's why the sufferings, the rejection, the murder, and the resurrection must take place.

They were planned. They were prophesied. They were performed.

One more reason why they must take place. The Son of Man must suffer, must be rejected, must be killed, not just die, be killed, and must rise because that plan is put in place for an ultimate and infallible final purpose. Purpose.

Ephesians 1.11, God works all things according to the counsel of His will so that we might exist to the praise of His glory. Or to be more specific, in verse 6 of Ephesians 1, He chose us before the foundation of the world for adoption through Christ unto this is the purpose, unto the praise of the glory of His grace. Jesus doesn't say it here in Mark 8, but He will make it plain two chapters later in Mark 10.45 that the sufferings, the rejection, and the killing of the Son of Man, this giving of His life is as a ransom for many.

Remember that verse, Mark 10.45, the Son of Man didn't come to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many. So the sufferings, the rejection, and the death of Jesus in Mark 8.31 are clarified in 10.45 as a ransom. And when that ransom is paid for many, it says, grace flows to that many.

The forgiveness of their sins, their liberation from every manner of bondage is paid. And so great grace is unleashed. So all these events, the suffering, the rejection, the death of Jesus are the unleashing of the final purpose of God, the mercies and the grace shown to sinners for their liberation.

Now, something has been happening in the last 50 years that's amazing in the world in relation to this text. The Gospel Coalition, for example, has come into existence along with hundreds and hundreds. I first wrote thousands, but thought I'd stay with hundreds just because I could probably find them.

I think it's probably thousands, but hundreds and hundreds of ministries, churches, schools, mission agencies, publishing houses, websites, spiritual movements in dozens of countries around the world. Millions of people have been waking up to the beautiful interweaving of the sovereignty of God with the gospel. More and more people are coming to see and cherish that the ultimate control of God over all things is different than they thought it was.

Millions of people are discovering that the sovereignty of God is not peripheral, it's not troublesome, it's not academic for debate or argument. It is a glorious divine reality and is the very stitching that holds the gospel together. When Jesus says, in verse 31, the Son of Man must suffer, must be rejected, must be killed, must rise, because God has spoken.

God performs His Word. God has planned this for an invincible purpose. He is saying there is no gospel apart from the sovereignty of God, the all-controlling sovereignty of God.

There isn't. It doesn't exist. Let's be more specific.

The sovereign control of God over the innocent suffering of Christ. The sovereign control of God over the sinful rejection of Christ. The sovereign control of God over the wicked murder of the Son of Man.

Without those sovereign acts over that suffering, that rejection, that death, there would be no gospel. It would be random. Random death saves nobody.

Unplanned, unprophesied, unperformed, unpurposed suffering, rejection, murder saves nobody. They save precisely to the degree that they are woven together by God. It's His work for us, and He sought to it at every level, in every minute detail, that it would be successful.

No gospel without the sovereignty of God. And I'm not saying that there are not people who make the effort to disconnect the all-controlling sovereignty of God from the innocent suffering, the sinful rejection, the wicked murder of Jesus. There are millions of them.

Lay people, pastors, seminary teachers, who make the effort to disconnect the all-controlling sovereignty of God from the gospel. I'm not saying they don't exist. I'm saying that in the last 50 years, millions of people around the world are seeing that that effort is futile, unbiblical, undesirable.

It is a rending of the precious fabric of the gospel, because they see over and over again in Scripture, the sovereignty of God is the stitching that holds the gospel together. They see a beautiful interweaving of the gospel of Christ with the sovereignty of God. They read Mark 8.31, the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected, and must be killed, and must rise again.

And without any long exegesis, without any long exegesis, millions are seeing it. But you see it. Must suffer, must be rejected, must be murdered by lawless men.

And they find themselves worshiping, singing. They say, this was your Son. This was your Son.

This was your plan. This was your work. This was your hand.

Innocent suffering, your hand. Sinful rejection, your hand. Wicked murder for me, for my forgiveness, for my everlasting happiness.

The greatest gift at the greatest cost to the least deserving. And millions of people find themselves bowing down and saying, I love you. I love you.

That's what's happening. You know, debates being won. God is opening eyes to the stitching.

So the reality of the sovereignty of God has been sweetened in the minds of millions, sweetened. It's a sweet thing. As they come to see, it is the golden stitching that holds the fabric of the gospel together.

So I am saying that the events of verse 31, woven together by the sovereign must, are the gospel. The innocent suffering of the Son of Man, his being rejected, his being killed, his rising from the grave, are the plan, the prophecy, the performance, the purpose of the sovereign creator of the universe. Now you should ask, do you think that you are in tune now with Mark's inspired intention when you call verse 31 and those events under God's sovereign stitching the gospel? I'd say yes, I think I'm in tune with his intention for three reasons.

Number one, two chapters later, as we said, in chapter 10, verse 45, Jesus describes this self-giving as ransom. The Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many. So the design of the divine must of the death of Jesus is that it be a ransom for many, that many be paid for, that many be set free.

This is what the suffering, the rejection, the death are. That's what they accomplish. They accomplish a ransom.

A ransom has been paid, finally, decisively. And that's why I'm calling it gospel. It's the second reason, because this death, suffering, rejection in verse 31 is also referred to in chapter 14, verse 24, like this.

At the last supper, Jesus says, this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. So the suffering, the rejection, and then the bloodletting of Jesus unto death is the purchase, securing, guaranteeing, obtaining of the new covenant. This blood is the covenant.

Well, what was promised in the covenant? Two things. Jeremiah 31, 33, this is the covenant, declares the Lord. I will put my law within them.

I will write it on their hearts, and I will forgive their iniquity and remember their sins no more. So new heart, forgiveness of sins is secured by the suffering, the rejection, and the death of Jesus. It's gospel.

That's the gospel. That's the good news. The new covenant has been purchased by these events.

And here's the third reason why I think we're in tune with Mark and Jesus when we call it gospel in verse 31, because Jesus himself uses the word gospel in verse 35. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospels will save it, putting a name on that news from verse 31. So I conclude here in Mark 8 that the gospel is this.

The gospel is the good news that the sovereign, all-controlling creator and judge of the universe orchestrated the payment of a ransom, the payment of a ransom in the suffering and rejection and death of the Son of Man to set many people free from the divine curse of unforgiven sin and to bring them into resurrection life. That's the heart of the gospel, and it causes us now to cry out, what must I do to be included in the ransom that you paid for many? What must I do? How do I get into verse 31? How do I get through the sufferings, the rejection, the death into the resurrection forever? How do I? I want to be included in this news. How do I get in? And that's the question that Jesus answers in verses 34 to 38, and he answers it not just to the disciples, he turns to the crowds to answer for them and does his kind of evangelism.

Let's read it. 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. For whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake in the gospels will save it.

For what does it profit a man if he gained the whole world and forfeit his soul? For what can a man give in return for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of me and 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 and with the holy angels. So what's his answer to the question, what must I do to be included in the gospel of verse 31? And we could go back to chapter 1 verse 15 and read this. The time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe the gospel.

And there you'd have your short answer, wouldn't you? Repent and believe the gospel. You're in. Repent and believe the gospel.

You could do that. And surely in our evangelism, we should say that. We should say that.

Repent and believe the good news. Give the best news you've got. It's the best news in the world.

In verse 31, and then say, turn from the old ways of unbelief and believe the news. Or you could just join Paul and Silas in response to the jailer, what must I do to be saved? And they said, please believe on the Lord Jesus and you'll be saved. You'll be in the gospel.

You'll be in the ransom. You'll make it through the suffering and rejection and death into the resurrection life. You'll be with him all the way.

You're in. Believe. You could say that.

That'd be true. The challenge is that then and now people just don't fill up the word believe. Not even if you put the word repent in front of it, which is often confusing to them.

They just don't fill up the word believe with the meaning Jesus intends. Where, I ask you, wherever you come from, where in this world would people pour into the word believe all that Jesus requires us to experience in believing? My understanding of verses 34 to 38 is that Jesus is answering the question, what must I do to be included in the gospel of verse 31? Not by replacing belief, but by revealing its essence. That's a huge claim.

You need to test it. Let me say it again. Verses 34 to 38 are not intended to add to the requirement of belief in the gospel as a way of being included in the gospel, but to reveal the heart or the essence of what belief is.

Okay, we've got our work cut out for us. Verse 34, and calling the crowd to him and with his disciples, he said to them, if anyone would come after me, literally follow, and the ESV doesn't want to say the word follow twice. I think it sounds funny, but if anyone would follow me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

Then I think the repetition is intended to say this. If you want to follow me, there are two things involved in following me. Namely, deny yourself and take up your cross.

That's the point of the sandwiching them with follow. Deny yourself, take up your cross. That's the way you follow me.

So you want to get with me on the road that leads through suffering into rejection, into death, and into everlasting life with me. You want to get on that road and go with me all the way forever, this is how you do it. Deny yourself, take up your cross.

In other words, a new self must come into being so that there is a denying self and a denied self. And Jesus says, take up your cross because the denied self must be crucified. A crucified self.

There's a self that must die and be reckoned dead by denial. I deny you, you're dead. That's the first part of his answer.

How to be included in verse 31. Experience the miracle of a new self coming into being that looks at the old self and says, no, you're dead. Now, at the end of verse 34, we haven't told anything about what's good or bad about these two selves.

One of them's got to do some denying, the other one's got to be denied, and one of them's dead, going to be dead, going to be crucified. That doesn't help get to heaven. That's why he didn't stop talking at the end of verse 34.

Verse 35 is the most important verse in this paragraph, because it defines the two selves. Let's read it. Whoever would save his life will lose it.

But whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel, or I like to just say, on account of me. I just want to hear that word me. It's just so there.

It's there. On account of me, me, on account of me, Jesus and the gospel will save him. Now, that's a description of two selves in verse 34.

One self aims to save its life in this world, aims to maximize all that this world can give, loves this world, and that's the self that must be denied, crucified. The other self, at the end of verse 35, second half of verse 35, experiences Jesus, right? On account of me, experiences Jesus and his gospel. On account of me and the gospel, this self experiences Jesus and the gospel as more valuable, more loved, more satisfying than anything this world can give, including life itself.

So the first self, Jesus says, is going to be lost forever. Whoever would save his life will lose it. And the second self is going to live forever.

Whoever loses his life for me, for me, because you fall in love with me. You've seen me. You love me.

You're satisfied with me. You're treasuring me. I'm everything to you.

You live forever. You're on the road, and you stay on it through death and resurrection, and we live together forever. So don't miss, I mean, I've stressed it, but don't miss the implication, the beautiful implication of the words, on account of me and the gospel.

Because that's the key, and that's the key in the whole paragraph, 34 to 38. He doesn't say just on account of me without reference to how you see me in the gospel. He doesn't say just on account of the gospel.

It's on account of me as you taste me in the gospel, on account of me as you see me suffering, see me being rejected, see me being killed, see me rising from the dead. You're seeing it. You're seeing it, right? You're seeing it in the gospel.

You're tasting the goodness of God in the gospel, and on account of that, you're new. You're a new human being. I mean, wake up.

You didn't do that yesterday. Everything was more important than me yesterday. This is new.

This is a miracle. This is called the new birth. A new self has come into being.

Christ is precious, beautiful, glorious, satisfying, infinitely valuable, more valuable than anything else. That's the new man talking. That's the miracle.

That's how you get in. It happens to you. Jesus is experienced in the gospel so great, so beautiful, so valuable that you're willing to lose everything in the world, including your life, in order to live forever.

So if you want to be his disciple, you want to be included in the ransom, included in the resurrection, that's what has to happen to you. Verses 36 to 38, what do they do? What do they add? Here's what they do. They clarify, and it would be good to linger here as to why he would choose to say it with regard to his particular listeners, but we'll just do it for ourselves because we're all like them enough so that it's relevant for us.

He's going to clarify how Christ and the gospel become more precious in relation to the possessions that we could get in the world and in relation to the praise that we could receive from the world. The first one is verses 36 and 37, possessions. The second one is verse 38, praise.

So that's what we'll do now. Is that true? Let's see if that's so. Verse 36, 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? This is about possessions.

This is about stuff, money, houses, books, computers, land, businesses. Suppose your heart considers the worth of Jesus and considers the worth of possessions, the gladness you could have in Jesus, the gladness you could have in possessions, and suppose your heart is drawn to prefer possessions, which is what is happening to billions of people. Suppose your heart is drawn to prefer the worth of possessions, and you turn away from Jesus, and you embrace as superior to Jesus all that earthly possessions can give you.

And suppose you succeed all your life, you succeed, nothing but success, and by the end of your life, suppose you own everything, the world, everything. Not just Apple and Google, mobile oil, all of it. It's yours.

You call all the shots. You own them all. That's what he envisages, right? Verse 36, gain the whole world, and then you die.

And instantly, you realize it was suicide. It was eternal suicide. And suppose facing Jesus, you say, I'll give you everything.

I'll give you everything I have. I own it all. I'll give you everything, the whole world in return for my soul.

What do you think he will say? I think he will say this, Jesus, you would try to buy your soul with the very possessions that destroyed your soul, the very possessions that you preferred over me. Christ-replacing, Christ-belittling idols have no currency in heaven, and he will turn his face away, and you will perish. What you just tried to do with your money, that ransom for the many, for the elect of God, the ransom is paid, and you preferred not to be a part of it.

You preferred not to be with Jesus. You preferred to make crystal clear you were not elect. That's what you meant to do.

You're going to go with the alternative treasure. Oh my, don't do that. That's verses 36 and 37, and the intention is to clarify how the me and my gospel of verse 35 is more precious than things.

Do you feel freedom welling up in your heart right now? I do. I mean, there are temptations at 73 with stuff. I love this text.

I need all the help I can get to be free. Right? You do too. Free, free, free from the main idols in the world, possessions and praise.

Let's look at praise. Verse 38, for whoever is ashamed of me and my words, and notice again, me, me, my words. Verse 35 said, me and the gospel.

Here, it's me and my words. Whoever's ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the son of man be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his father and with the holy angels. So, Jesus is making clear there are two audiences for our lives.

Number one, this adulterous and sinful generation. Adulterous, not mainly because they sleep around, but because they find more pleasure in God's creation than in God, and thus they commit adultery against God, which is the essence of sin. Adulterous and sinful generation.

The other audience is three, the coming of the son of man or the son of man at his coming, his glorious father, and millions, I'm going to say millions from Daniel 7, millions of holy angels. That's a lot of glorious beings to smile at you or turn away. 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 brings us back now to verse 35.

Whoever would save his life will lose it. That is, whoever lives to save his reputation, to avoid shame, to save his acceptance with the people that matter to him, namely an adulterous and sinful generation, which points out the humanity of it all, will lose his respectable and popular life. The son of man, the son of man, the all-glorious father, the millions of holy angels will in one terrifying moment turn their face away in eternal shame.

If you have tried to save, I've got to save my reputation. I've got to save my acceptance. I've got to save how cool I am in the lives of everybody.

You're going to die, and millions of angels, the noblest creatures in the universe under God, will turn their face away. But the second half of verse 35, whoever loses his life on account of me and the gospels will save it. In other words, whoever experiences me and my suffering and my rejection, my death, my shameful crucifixion, my resurrection, whoever experiences all that is more precious than the respectability of popularity, more precious than being accepted, being admired by an adulterous and sinful generation.

You can live forever under the smile of the son of man and his father and millions of angels. So here's the sum of the matter. Mark 8, 31 to 38 is first news, the greatest news in the world.

Verse 31, the son of man must suffer many things. He must be rejected. He must be killed, and he must rise again.

The merciful, sovereign, all-controlling God planned it, prophesied it, performed it, suffering, rejection, death, resurrection of the son of man, and therefore it's not random, it's gospel. It's ransom, it's grace. The way in to the gospel so that you not only experience the suffering, the rejection, the death, but the resurrection unto eternal joy with Jesus, the way into that is to experience the birth of a new self, a self that looks at the suffering, the rejection, the killing, the rising of Jesus, and then looks at possessions and looks at praise and says, possession-loving self, praise-loving self, I deny you, I kill you, I reckon you're dead, you have no dominion in my life.

That's a new man. That's a miracle. That's salvation.

And if it costs me my life to deny you, you possession-loving self, you praise-loving self, if it costs me my life to deny you, I'll die gladly to be with Jesus forever. That's the point of this text. That's the way in.

And very few people fill up the word believe when you say believe that way. So we've got our work cut out for us in evangelism. I close with five applications for your evangelism in view of what we've seen.

Number one, tell unbelievers the news first. Foreground the news. Make the news prominent.

The world doesn't know the news. They know, they think they know lots of the requirements. Self-denial.

We heard this. Pretend you get the news. So foreground the news.

God planned, God prophesied, God performed a ransom for sinners. Jesus embraced the plan, became the performance. Suffered, rejected, murdered, raised, knowingly, intentionally, obediently, triumphantly, make the objective facts of the glorious Jesus-exalting news clear.

There's no other way that the next steps of the gospel can happen if they don't know the news. Because it's in the news that they see him and they got to fall in love with him to be in. So number two.

So first, tell the news. Make the news clear. Number two, urge them to look at Jesus in the news.

Look at Jesus. Look at him suffering. Look at him being rejected.

Look at him dying. Look at him rising. Look, look, look.

What do you see? What do you see? That's what you do. You urge. You plead.

Don't you see? This is the greatest person who ever was. This is beauty. This is glory.

This is value. This is everything. Don't you see? Number three, warn them that to love this world, to love its possessions, and to love its praise more than they love Jesus will cost them their lives forever.

Tell them that. That's what Jesus does. Warn them that Jesus is coming back.

He's coming back. And when he comes in the glory of the creator of the universe and with holy, holy, holy angels, millions of them, nothing you have ever owned, no praise you have ever received will make up for any disapproval of Jesus you've ever shown. Your shame of Jesus will bring down shame on your head.

Warn them. Warn them. We need to warn people with tears, eyeball to eyeball, at a restaurant over the table.

Number four, promise them in the name of Jesus that whatever must be denied in this life bears no comparison to the joy of being with Jesus on the Calvary Road and the glory that will be with Jesus after the Calvary Road. In the new world, no comparison. They need to be told that.

Don't let them, especially if they've grown up in church, don't let them fasten on the word self-denial as if it meant there's no Christian self capable of unspeakable joy. What a travesty in understanding the term self-denial, right? Make it clear, make it crystal clear from this text that the self that is to be denied is the self bent on suicide. That's the only self to be denied, the one that's bent on eternal suicide, suicide.

The one that's bent on the insane thought that owning the world is better than belonging to the Son of Man. That's insane. Tell them that denying that self is wisdom, wisdom, joy, everlasting hope.

Make sure they know that the only self that's being denied is the self of utter foolishness of craving the approval of man over a million angels and the Father and the Son. Insane, crazy, folly. Don't get too loud in the restaurant, but it is possible to help them see.

They'll never forget that conversation. They won't ever forget it. No, don't let them fasten on to self-denial anything other than what Jesus means.

Oh, there is a self to be denied, and what a joy-killing self that is, forever. Killing, kill that self. Get up in the morning and say, you're dead.

Go to bed at night and say, you're dead. Now I won't have you killing my joy forever. Oh, no.

So that's number four. Fill them with promises. The bottom line in verse 35 was, you will live.

Lastly, number five, be like Jesus and be like Paul and make sure they know, the people that you're evangelizing, you're trying to make a disciple, make sure they know from the start, through many tribulations, we must enter the kingdom. You will suffer in this life. No sugar-coated, no bait-and-switch, upfront.

Jesus was upfront all the time about suffering in the Christian life. And Paul, discipleship 101 in Acts 14.22, through many tribulations, you must enter the kingdom. Count the cost.

Don't want you to get on the road and be surprised when the suffering comes. It will come. Count the cost.

And then say this, listen, if the all-governing, all-controlling, sovereign, merciful God was weaving a fabric of beauty and hope out of sufferings, rejection, murder, and resurrection of the Son of Man, if he was weaving, stitching in his sovereignty, stitching a fabric out of horrors and horrors and horrors of sinful rejection and sinful murder, a fabric of beauty and a fabric of hope, then don't you think that he can and will weave out of the torn pieces of your life and out of the tangled threads of your life a beautiful tapestry for his glory? And then when you're done, you pray. You say, can I pray? To Father, perhaps right now, I have done some evangelizing for some, and I pray that they would see in the sufferings and the rejection and the death and the resurrection of Jesus a beauty and a glory and a value and a greatness that is so precious that it would be more precious to them than all the possessions they could have, all the praise they could receive, and they would find themselves saying, I'm new. I'm new.

The Word of God has brought me forth. I ask this in Jesus' name.

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