

Text: Mark 8:27-38 NAU (New American Standard, 1995 Version)



Saturday, 2/27 at 4:00 & Sunday, 2/28 at 9:00

Second Sunday in Lent – 2021

Lenten Wednesdays: Service at 11 & 7

**Introduction:** Dear friends in Christ: When something in life is difficult, people try to make things easier; for example: indoor plumbing, washing machines, and cars; *try to imagine life without such things...*

In this sermon we will discover that following Jesus IS difficult. Even though our natural reaction is to *try to make our following easier*, ☹ does that agree with what Jesus said and ☺ is that truly best for us?

Earlier in **Mark 8**, Jesus ➤fed the 5,000, ➤was approached by the Pharisees, and ➤healed a blind man; we now come to today's sermon text.

1. **The Setting?** <sup>27</sup> Jesus went out [of Bethsaida,] [where He had healed the blind man], along with His disciples, to the villages of Caesarea Philippi... [which were about 25 miles to the north]. // Somewhere between Bethsaida and Caesarea Philippi, *Jesus asked His disciples two questions.*

2. **Who Is Jesus?** ...and **on the way** He questioned His disciples, saying to them, “Who do people say that I am?”<sup>28</sup> They told Him, saying, “**John the Baptist**; and others say **Elijah**; but others, **one of the prophets.**”<sup>29</sup> And He *continued* by questioning them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered and said to Him, “You are **the Christ.**”<sup>30</sup> And He warned them to tell no one about Him.
- Why keep it to themselves? Since many expected the Christ to be an earthly king, *it was better to keep silent!*
  - What is the Christ?
    - The Champion *promised to Adam and Eve!*
    - Abraham’s descendant *who would bless all families!*
    - David’s *Son and Lord!*
    - The One *born of a virgin in Bethlehem!*
    - The One *anointed by God the Father with the HS!*
    - The One *who took away the sin of the world!*
3. **What Was Coming?**<sup>31</sup> And [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,<sup>1</sup> and **be killed**, and after three days **rise** again. // Jesus is the Son of God, so He knew about His upcoming ♦rejection, ♦suffering, ♦death, and ♦resurrection!

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<sup>1</sup> **The elders** “were the old, experienced men of the nation who had served as judges in the local courts and... risen to membership in the highest court.” **The chief priests** “were members of the ruling high priest’s family...” **The scribes** “were the experts in the interpretation of the Old Testament...” (Lenski, 339-340).

- a. Rejection: Jesus' rejection was **formal** – *by the 71 judges of the Sanhedrin*, and **informal** – *as the crowd in front of Pilate shouted, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!"*
- b. Suffering: Jesus greatly suffered as He **†was beaten** by the Roman soldiers, **†was nailed** to His cross, **†bore our sins**, and **†bore God's punishment** for our sins!
- c. Death: In a sense, Jesus was killed, *but He actually laid down His life to seal His victory!*
- d. Resurrection: Jesus was raised by God the Father to **‡show His acceptance of Jesus' payment** and **‡prove Jesus' victory over sin, death, and the devil!**

4. **How Did Peter Become Satan?** <sup>32</sup> And [Jesus] was stating the matter plainly. And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him [*to strongly tell Jesus that such things would NOT happen*]. <sup>33</sup> But turning around and seeing His disciples, He rebuked [*thus strongly spoke to*] Peter and said, "**Get behind Me, Satan**; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's." // God sent His Son to redeem us, but Peter opposed Jesus' work – *because it included rejection, suffering, and death!* Peter's opposition to God's will put him into the role of Satan. What about us, are we somehow opposing God's will? If so, *let us repent!*
5. **What Are the Follower Requirements?** <sup>34</sup> And [Jesus] summoned the crowd with His disciples, and said to them, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, **he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.** // Three requirements: **Deny your self** – *say no to your sinful desires*; **take up your cross** – *willingly suffer for Jesus' sake (as He did for our sake)*; and **follow Jesus** – *by honoring Him as Lord and following His will.*

6. **Who Is Lost and Who Is Saved?** <sup>35</sup> For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it." // For those who **refuse** to deny, take, and follow, this life might be better, but eternal life will be lost! But for those who **do** deny, take, and follow, they will be with God forever!
7. **What Is More Valuable?** <sup>36</sup> "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? <sup>37</sup> For what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" // You can have the whole world now or your soul with God forever!
8. **Are You Ashamed?** Jesus said: <sup>38</sup> "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous [unfaithful] and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." // When we identify with Jesus, we *will be persecuted*. Many are tempted to be "secret Christians," *but that won't work*; if we are ashamed of Him, *then He will be ashamed of us*.

### **Conclusion:**

- **Truth** – The path to heaven – deny, take, follow!
- **Relevance** – As it is good for a chick to struggle to get out of its egg, *so it is good for a Christian to struggle!*
- **Inspiration** – The end is heaven and everlasting happiness!

**Let Us Pray:** Dear Jesus, as You did what was necessary to save us, *so help us to keep denying self and confessing You!*

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