

Mark 8:31-9:1
Real Christians Hold Nothing Back
7/17/22

QTT: *CONTEXT: Jesus is explaining to His Followers exactly how serious their commitment to Him must be. Luke 14:26–27 (NASB95) ²⁶ "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. ²⁷ "Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.*

RN: When we commit our lives to God, how much does He want from us? Doesn't God deserve our best, or can we **ration** out our commitment to Him? How does God respond to total commitment verses rationed commitment?

AN: When we commit to God, He expects the best of our mind, heart, and strength. To give Him less than this is to respond to His **undeserved** generosity w/ insolence. But to give Him total commitment results in His lavish approval.

BI: Everyone who follows Jesus must **deny** himself, and this means that Jesus must rank **1st** in our lives—even if it means dying for Him. **Please turn in your Bibles to Mk 8:31-9:1.**

- I. This morning, we'll see what **defines** Jesus' mission on earth.
- II. And, we'll see whom Jesus **rebukes** as Satan's agent.
- III. Finally, we'll see **4** reasons why we can be **entirely** committed.

Real Christians hold **nothing** back. [PRAY]

(TRN) In (31-32a), Jesus plainly states His **mission on earth**.

Mark 8:31–32 (NASB95) 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. ^{32a} And He was stating the matter plainly.

(31-32a) Peter identifies Jesus as **the Christ** in (29). And now, Jesus begins to explain what this sacred title really means.

A. IOW, Jesus begins to explain Who He is and what He's doing—**in greater depth**. And as such, He will systematically change the thinking of His **12**, s/t their personal agendas will fade away.

1. Up to now, His **12** have believed that Jesus is going to be **their kind** of christ: A christ that boots out the Romans and restores the Israel's glory days.

2. And, it's true that **1** day Jesus will destroy Israel's enemies and restore its former glory but that day—**isn't today**. Jesus has more pressing business to finish first.

B. So, He boldly and bluntly spells it out when He says, "***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.***"

1. IOW, Jesus makes no bones about the fact that God requires Him to suffer many injustices, to suffer the hatred of men who know better, and to suffer His own murder.

2. But, He also makes no bones about the fact that God will cause Him to **triumph over** injustice, hatred, and death as Jesus miraculously rises from the dead, **3** days later.

C. Then, Jesus boldly and bluntly identifies his murders: They're the **elders**, AKA Israel's top lay leaders, the **chief priests**, AKA Israel's top religious leaders, and the **scribes**, AKA Israel's top teachers of the Law.

1. **READ THAT** Israel's Congress and their Supreme Court, the Sanhedrin, **the cream of Israel's crop** will join forces, form a kangaroo court, and stab Jesus in the back—and they'll do it all in God's **name**, the Law's **authority**, and Israel's best **interests**.

2. But, as such, they and Jesus will fulfill prophecy: **Psalm 118:22–24 (NASB95)**
²² ***The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief corner [stone].***
²³ ***This is the LORD's doing; It is marvelous in our eyes.*** ²⁴ ***This is the day which the LORD has made; Let us rejoice and be glad in it.***

3. IOW, Jesus' humbling at the hands of these VIPs in this life leads to His exaltation at the hands of God in the next.

D. Now, here's another **key** Truth to see amid Jesus' deeper revelation of Himself; He calls Himself—"**the Son of Man.**"

1. This title from **Dan 7** doesn't carry the political baggage that **the Christ** does. But it still holds the ideas that the **Son of Man** must suffer autocratic injustice b/f He can exercise absolute authority over the nations.

E. What's more, this title allows Jesus to focus on His God ordained mission and then to separate Himself from His Follower's political ambitions.

1. IOW, Jesus will use this less weighty title to avoid His Apostles' errors as He walks His gauntlet of suffering to His enthronement in Glory.

F. ILL: **John G. Paton** (1824-1907) pioneered a missionary work to the **Cannibals** of the **New Hebrides Islands** (SW Pacific Ocean near Coral Sea). Now, **1** day, he said the following to an elderly friend, a **Mr. Dixon**, who feared that the Cannibals might eat him.

“Mr. Dixon, you’re advanced in years now, and your prospect is to be soon laid in the grave and to be **eaten by worms**. However, I must confess to you that **if** I can but live and die serving the Lord Jesus, **then** it will make no difference to me whether I am eaten by cannibals or wormsⁱ.”

G. APPL: When we truly grasp Jesus’ identity, our personal agendas fade away.

We can serve God like Jesus does, b/c Real Christians hold nothing back.

(TRN) In (32b-33), Jesus rebukes Satan’s **agent**.

Mark 8:32–33 (NASB95) ^{32b} **And Peter took [Jesus] aside and began to rebuke Him.** ³³ **But turning around and seeing His disciples, He rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind Me, Satan; for you are not setting your mind on God’s interests, but man’s.”**

(32b) Jesus has been so straightforward that there’s no way His **12** can miss His point. But Jesus’ words are fightin’ words to 1 Apostle in particular—**Peter**.

A. Peter’s chief strength—**daring directness**—can also distort into his chief weakness—**swaggering disrespect**. So, Peter goes *mano-a-mano* w/ Jesus.

1. To Peter, as well as the other Apostles, being **the Christ** is all about military triumph and national glory, not about repulsive death and physical Resurrection.

2. IOW, the way Peter sees it, Jesus is sinfully wimping-out and not rising up to do God’s will. So, Peter tells Jesus off, s/t he can slap some sense into Jesus.

B. But, as sincere and as patriotic as this may seem, there’s a wicked force at work behind Peter. What’s more, Peter’s pride and insolence energize this evil force.

1. It’s the same force that Jesus hauls over the coals after His **40-day** fast in the desert (1:12-13). And, it wants Jesus to rebel against God and the Cross.

C. **Here’s why—If** Jesus obeys His Father and submits to His obscene crucifixion, **then** He’ll crush this same evil force like a rotten egg under a big yellow school bus.

1. Then, God’s plan will eternally reorder all creation, eternally glorify all God’s saints, and eternally damn all God’s enemies. And, this evil force won’t have any of that!

ⁱ “Ready to Live or Die,” Ibid.

(33) Jesus looks at His **12**. Then, He looks at Peter. Finally, He stands to His full height and says to Peter and Satan, **"Get out of my sight, Satan! You're tempting Me to swap what you want for what God wants—And, I won't do it."**

A. IOW, Peter's set his mind on values that match Satan's values. So, he's become Satan's pawn and unintentionally tried to make Jesus serve Satan's agenda.

1. So, Peter has rebelled against God, stood against Christ's obedience to God, and set an evil example for Jesus' Apostles. And as such, Peter is **so** in hot water w/ God and God's Christ, b/c he's acting like Satan. Here's why—

B. When people—even **Christians**—tap into Satan's values, they become his agents.

1. And, if people, especially Christians don't repent of it, they can wind up demon controlled in the case of the Lost or demon manipulated in the case of Christians.

2. Now, let's take a moment to briefly talk about spiritual warfare, b/c Peter's opposition to Jesus is a good example of it.

C. Our war w/ Satan is real. Listen to what Paul says, **Ephesians 6:12 (NASB95)**
¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual [forces] of wickedness in the heavenly [places].

1. IOW, we live in a spiritual world, and we not only have friends but we have enemies, too. So, what can we do? How can we win?

D. **8 Strategies (Eph 6:13-17): 1)** Choose to be brave in and strong God's Grace. **2)** Trust God when He says that we are in a spiritual war. **3)** Do what Jesus does.

4) Quickly obey the Truth of the Gospel. **5)** Actively trust in Jesus. **6)** Learn about and Trust how our Salvation changes our relationship w/ God.

7) Correctly understand and wisely apply God's Word to your life. **8)** Pray for God's Grace to do **1-6**, not only for yourself but for others, too.

F. God knows that we're in a spiritual war, so He's gives us His nature, His Holy Spirit, His Grace, His Truth, and His Christ's victory to win it.

G. ILL: A **Schoolteacher** wrote a letter to the **Los Angeles Times** and told the editors that she had enjoyed a rewarding career teaching in the public school system. Each day she entered the classroom each day and addressed her students by saying, "Good morning, class." The students would respond, "Good morning, Teacher." Then, they would proceed w/ the day's work. This happened for many years until she retired.

Several years later, this Teacher decided to go back to teaching. She was a bit nervous about facing students again, so she prepared very carefully. She was relieved when she finally entered the classroom and saw all the bright, young faces. Certainly, the clothes and hairstyles were very different, but she reminded herself that these things always changed from year to year. W/ growing confidence, she said in a friendly tone, "Good morning, class." And **1** student in the front row shouted, "Shut up, [expletive deleted]!" And, all the other students laughed.

The **1st** question this Teacher asked the Los Angeles Times editors was this: "What happened in America between 'Good morning, Mrs. Jones' and 'Shut up, [expletive deleted]?" Her **2nd** question was: "Who's going to do something about it?"

H. APPL: When a man's values **match** Satan's values, he becomes Satan's **pawn**. So, if he doesn't repent, he can wind up demon controlled or demon manipulated.

We can match **Jesus' values**, b/c Real Christians hold nothing back.

(TRN) In (8:34-9:1), Jesus gives **4** reasons for total commitment.

Mark 8:34–9:1 (NASB95) ³⁴ *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. ³⁵ "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. ³⁶ "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? ³⁷ "For what will a man give in exchange for his soul? ³⁸ "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous 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."*

¹ *And Jesus was saying to them, "Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power."*

(34) A wrong take on what it means to be **the Christ** leads to a wrong take on what it means to follow **the** Christ. So, Jesus calls the Crowd and His Followers, s/t He can give them this **key** Truth about following Him:

A. He says, **"If anyone wants to follow Me, then he has to put Me first in everything, and he must do God's will—even if it means dying for Him and Me."**

1. IOW, Jesus has just **defined** what it means to be a **real** Christian: **1)** We must turn **180°** away **from** personal agendas that conflict w/ God's will.

2. **2)** We must turn **180° toward** God w/ the rock-ribbed commitment to faithfully do His will—**no matter what**.

ⁱⁱ Imprimis, Jul 1994, 2.

3. **READ THAT** Suffering isn't automatically a sign of God's anger, often it's a sign that He's entrusted us w/ the duty to tell this vicious, spiteful, nasty World about Him.

B. Now, when Jesus uses the image of a prisoner carrying his cross to picture this Truth, He's making a powerful statement that the Crowd and His Followers can't miss.

1. When the **Romans** condemn a man to crucifixion, they force him to carry the crossbar in public to the place of his execution.

2. And, the Crowd and His Followers know that the Romans make the prisoner do this to show that he's submitting to the authority that he once rebelled against.

3. So, for the Christian, the Cross is a symbol of our **submission** to the Divine authority Whom we've rebelled against.

C. And soon sinless Jesus is going to set this example, Himself. He's going to carry His Cross and publicly submit to God for love's sake. And, He expects us to do the same.

1. IOW, Jesus expects us to obey His Word come what may—**even if it means suffering and death**. And we submit for the love of God and each other.

D. Now here's another **key** Truth to think about: When Jesus says, "**Follow Me,**" the verb Greek form of this verb can be translated, "**Keep on following Me!**"

1. IOW, real Christians must keep on turning from self to God, for love's sake, during his entire life, no matter what.

(35-38) Jesus states **4 key** reasons why we must be so committed:

A. **1)** The person who runs away from discrimination and martyrdom for Jesus' sake in this world will ultimately lose his **soul** in the next.

1. But, the person who suffers discrimination and martyrdom for Jesus' sake and the Gospel Truth about Him will ultimately safeguard his **soul** in eternity.

2. IOW, the person who values spiritual life in Heaven more than physical life on earth will get to keep both on **Judgment Day**.

B. **2)** What good does it do for a person to be more successful than any king or kaiser, businessman or banker, heir or heiress if on Judgment Day that person is a spiritual failure? Jesus' answer: It does that person **no good** whatsoever!

1. IOW, the person who values earthly approval more than Heavenly approval will lose both on Judgment Day.

C. **3)** What can a person give God to ransom his selfish, doubting, rebellious **soul** from God's white-hot wrath? Again, Jesus answers: Absolutely nothing!

1. IOW, the person who values earthly success more than Heavenly success will lose both on Judgment Day.

2. And, as such, Jesus teaches us about the true value of our **souls**. And, He's the only One Who can, b/c He paid His infinitely precious blood to **buy** them.

D. **4)** Jesus ends w/ a warning: **If** He embarrasses a person and he denies Jesus b/f the World, **then** Jesus will deny him b/f God on Judgment Day.

1. IOW, when Jesus, the Son of Man, returns clothed in His Shekinah glory, leading Heaven's blazing host, He will deny all cowards on Judgment Day.

2. So, it's better to suffer this World's contempt for Jesus' sake rather than to suffer Jesus' contempt for the World's sake. **And here's why**—The World is fading away, but Jesus' **Kingdom of Justice** is forever.

(9:1) Jesus ends His talk w/ this stirring promise—Some of His Followers will see an incredible display of God's power b/f they die.

A. IOW, sooner or later, every man tastes the poison of death but b/f this happens to some of these men—Almighty God will shatter time and space b/f their frightened eyes to prove that He means business. And, this promise comes true in Mark **9:2-13**.

B. ILL: This riddle appeared in a magazine: "Who am I? I haven't always been, and I won't always be, but right now I'm on the move, measuring out life. People wait for me, submit to me, and fear me; but, no one can **stop me** except God. Most men think I'm on the move forever, but I'm not. When God stops me, that will be it. Then, it will be too late to **forgive** your brother, to **apologize** to your sister, to **visit** a sick friend, or to **help** the needy. Worst of all, it will be too late to repent and be **saved**. My name is Time, and when my end comes, you will go w/ me into **eternity**."iii."

C. APPL: When Christ returns, He will **deny** everyone who's denied Him, so it's wisdom to suffer the World's scorn for Him rather than to suffer Christ's scorn for them.

We can be **submitted**, b/c Real Christians hold nothing back.

ⁱⁱⁱ "Who am I?" INFOsearch Pro ver 4.3P.

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