

A crown of thorns, a symbol of suffering and sacrifice, is shown resting on a weathered wooden plank. The thorns are dark and sharp, with some small red spots that suggest blood. The background is a close-up of the wood's grain, creating a somber and textured atmosphere.

THE SUFFERING SERVANT

Mark's Gospel Account

Mark 8:27-38

²⁷ Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked them, “Who do people say I am?” ²⁸ They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.” ²⁹ “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?”

Mark 8:27-38

Peter answered, “You are the Messiah.”

³⁰ Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him. ³¹ He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again.

Mark 8:27-38

³² He spoke plainly about this, and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³ But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. “Get behind me, Satan!” he said. “You do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.”

Mark 8:27-38

³⁴ Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.

Mark 8:27-38

³⁵ For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it. ³⁶ What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? ³⁷ Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?

Mark 8:27-38

³⁸ If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels.”

Peter's mistakes as a new disciple:

Peter's mistakes as a new disciple:

- 1) He had the right answers,
but the wrong priorities.

Peter's mistakes as a new disciple:

2) He had a skewed picture
of who Jesus was.

Peter's mistakes as a new disciple:

- 3) He was quick to tell Jesus what to do without first listening.

Jesus outlines three requirements for his disciples...

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1) Lay down our rights and desires.

The one who tries to live this life “for self”, who hoards it jealously and selfishly, will lose it. This is true, not only finally in the death that all must face, but moment by moment....Life, like sand, trickles between our fingers...and to grasp it the more tightly means that it flows the faster from us.

So a refusal to accept this “death to self”, which is the bearing of Christ’s cross and following him, is a spiritual death; whereas, by a divine paradox, spiritual life is to be found only by dying to self.

- R. Alan Cole, Ph.D.

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- 2) Embrace suffering for Christ's glory.

The call to discipleship, the baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, means both death and life. The call of Christ...sets the Christian in the middle of the daily arena against sin and the devil. Every day (Christians) encounter new temptations, and every day (they) must suffer anew for Jesus Christ's sake...

*-Dietrich Bonhoeffer,
The Cost of Discipleship (1937)*

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Jesus outlines three requirements for his disciples...

- 1) Lay down our rights and desires.
- 2) Embrace suffering for Christ's glory.
- 3) Daily surrender our agenda.

MAIN IDEA:

Every disciple's pressing priority must be to follow Jesus regardless of the cost.

Galatians 2:20

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

A crown of thorns, made of dark, sharp, and tangled branches, is positioned on a light-colored wooden plank. The wood shows signs of wear and has some small red spots, possibly representing blood. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and deep shadows, emphasizing the texture of the wood and the sharpness of the thorns.

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