



Title: The Cross Before the Crown

Text: Mark 8:31-9:1

1. The Cross Was God's Necessary Plan (8:31-33)

2. The Cross Defines Every Disciple (8:34-38)

3. The Kingdom Confirms Our Hope (9:1)

Life Application Questions:

1. According to verse 31, what specific events does Jesus say must happen to Him? What is Jesus' response to Peter, and what reason does He give for rebuking him? Why do you think Jesus says these events "must" happen instead of saying they simply will happen? Why is the cross essential to the gospel? What would be lost if Jesus had established His kingdom without suffering and dying (Isaiah 53; Psalm 22; Genesis 3:15)?

2. What three commands does Jesus give to anyone who wants to follow Him? What would "taking up your cross" have communicated to Jesus' original audience? Why does Jesus connect discipleship with losing one's life? How does Jesus' teaching challenge today's cultural emphasis on self-fulfillment and personal autonomy? How does Jesus' teaching here fit with Paul's description of union with Christ (Galatians 2:20; Romans 6:1–11)?

3. How does the promise of God's kingdom encourage disciples who are called to suffer? How does Christ's future glory give meaning to present suffering (Romans 8:17–18; 2 Corinthians 4:16–18)? Why is it impossible to separate the cross of Christ from the cross of the Christian? If someone asked you, "What does it truly mean to follow Jesus?" how would you answer from Mark 8:31–9:1?