

**5/20/2026 # 7 Study Sheet: “Come & Die: What Does It Mean to Follow Jesus?” (Mk 8:22-38)**

1. According to Mark 1:1, the Gospel is fundamentally about Jesus Christ, the \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The healing of the blind man at Bethsaida is unique because it happens in a \_\_\_\_\_ process, symbolizing the gradual opening of the disciples' eyes.
3. Although the disciples could see Jesus' miracles, they were initially \_\_\_\_\_ blind to His true identity as God’s Anointed One.
4. When Jesus asked, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered, “You are the \_\_\_\_\_”.
5. After Peter’s confession, Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ charged the disciples to tell no one about Him yet.
6. Jesus began to teach that the Son of Man must \_\_\_\_\_ many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and scribes.
7. Jesus knew that His death was \_\_\_\_\_ because it is the only way sinful people can be brought back into a relationship with God.
8. Peter found the idea of a suffering king so inappropriate that he actually took Jesus aside and began to \_\_\_\_\_ Him.
9. Jesus responded to Peter's correction by saying, “Get behind me, \_\_\_\_\_!”.
10. Jesus told Peter that he was setting his mind on the \_\_\_\_\_ of man rather than the things of God.
11. From God's perspective, the cross is not a sign of weakness, but part of His \_\_\_\_\_ plan.
12. On the cross, Jesus was executed in our \_\_\_\_\_, taking the punishment for crimes He never committed.
13. Jesus states that if anyone wants to follow Him, they must \_\_\_\_\_ themselves.
14. The word "\_\_\_\_\_ " literally means "to change one's direction," stopping our own way to let Jesus take charge.
15. In addition to self-denial, a follower of Christ must also \_\_\_\_\_ up his cross.
16. Jesus warns that following Him may involve being \_\_\_\_\_, marginalized, or isolated by friends and family.
17. Jesus poses the ultimate challenge: “For what does it profit a man to gain the \_\_\_\_\_ and forfeit his soul?”.

The **two-step process** in the healing at Bethsaida is a unique miracle in Mark's Gospel where Jesus restores a man's sight in stages rather than all at once. The process unfolded as follows:

- **First Step:** Jesus took the blind man out of the village, spit on his eyes, and laid His hands on him. When Jesus asked if he saw anything, the man replied that his vision was vague, stating, "I see people, but they look like trees, walking",.
- **Second Step:** Jesus laid His hands on the man's eyes a second time. Following this second touch, the man's sight was fully restored, and he could see "everything clearly",.

The sources highlight that this miracle is a **symbolic parallel** to the gradual opening of the disciples' eyes. Just as the man initially saw only vaguely, the disciples could see Jesus' miracles but remained "spiritually blind" to His true identity as the Son of God until later in their journey. According to the sources, taking up your cross is a **"call to die"** that represents a radical commitment to following Jesus. It involves several key components:

- **A Call to Martyrdom:** While it is unlikely that most modern followers will face a literal cross, the sources describe this command as a **"martyrdom of one kind or another"**. It is a commitment where the follower is prepared to die for Jesus, just as Jesus died for them.
- **Facing Suffering and Opposition:** Taking up one's cross means being prepared for the **suffering, marginalization, and isolation** that can come from following Christ. This often occurs because a believer's conduct or exclusive claims—such as Jesus being the only way to God—may be seen as "uncomfortable or even offensive" by friends, family, or colleagues.
- **A Change of Allegiance:** It goes beyond simple self-denial. Taking up your cross is part of a **"profoundly radical" change of allegiance** where you stop being the ultimate authority over your own life and allow Jesus to take full charge of areas like your time, money, work, and family.
- **Heading for the Same Destination:** Jesus issued this command while He was heading toward His own literal cross. Therefore, taking up your cross means **intentionally heading in the same direction as Jesus**, regardless of the earthly cost.

In summary, it is a call to **"come and die"** to one's own self-will and worldly reputation to gain eternal life.

What does it mean to set your mind on the things of God?

In the context of Jesus' rebuke of Peter in Mark 8, setting your mind on the **"things of God"** means viewing Christ's mission and the life of a believer through **God's perspective rather than a human one**. According to the sources, this involves several key shifts in understanding:

- **Accepting the Necessity of the Cross:** While the "things of man" view the cross as a sign of weakness, humiliation, or a "pathetic and needless death," the things of God reveal the cross as a **purposeful and daring rescue mission**. It is the recognition that Jesus' death was "necessary" as the only way to bring sinful people back into a relationship with God.
- **Recognizing Divine Power in Sacrifice:** From God's perspective, the cross is not a defeat but the **most powerful moment in history**. It is the culmination of God's rescue plan where Jesus was "executed in our place" to pay the price for sin.
- **Prioritizing the Eternal over the Temporary:** Setting your mind on the things of God involves lifting your eyes from present earthly circumstances to fix them on the **eternal future**. This means understanding that the "soul" is the most precious thing a person possesses, far outweighing the profit of gaining the "whole world".
- **Embracing God's Authority:** It requires a "change of allegiance" where a person stops acting as the ultimate authority over their own life and allows Jesus to take charge of their time, money, work, and family.

In contrast, setting your mind on the "things of man" leads to rejecting the idea of a suffering Savior because it seems "ridiculous" or inappropriate for a king to die. Jesus identified this human-centered mindset as being aligned with **Satan**, as it opposes God's essential plan for salvation.

## **Answer Key**

1. **Son of God**
2. **two-step**
3. **spiritually**
4. **Christ**
5. **strictly**
6. **suffer**
7. **necessary**
8. **rebuke**
9. **Satan**
10. **things**
11. **rescue**
12. **place**
13. **deny**
14. **repent**
15. **take**
16. **misunderstood**
17. **whole world**