

CORE STUDY #8

THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND DISCIPLESHIP

PASSAGE: Mark 10:32-52

LEADER PREPARATION

Read the passage over at least three times, noting what you feel might be the main points of the passage. Using your **Summit Training Guide** (section 2 “Engaging the Word” and section 3 “Responding to the Word”), ask observation and interpretation questions of the passage.

You will also find it very helpful to read the parallel passages in the other 3 gospels. By reading all three gospels you will have a fuller picture of what happened and what was said.

- Read Mt. 20: 17-34

- Luke 18: 31-42

INTRODUCTORY QUESTION

We have spent time discovering who Jesus is and what the Kingdom of God is like. Is there something new that you have learned about Jesus and the Kingdom?

Encourage your group members to look back at old studies, since they might not remember all of what has been looked at. We are moving into a study that looks at what the response should be when faced with the truth of who Jesus is, and what that realization calls us to.

FOUNDATIONS STUDY

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (selection to choose from)

- 1. Given what Jesus has just said about his impending death, what is ironic about James and John’s request (vs. 35-37)?**
- 2. What is the motivation for their request? How is that shown by the way in which they asked?**
- 3. Jesus asks the question, “What do you want me to do for you?” Compare James and John’s response to Bartimaeus’.**

The disciples have shown themselves to be spiritually blind and Jesus attempts to open their eyes to the truth that they must give up their lives, take up their cross, and follow him. The contrast between the two is startling and has amazing implications for discipleship. While James and John want to sit on thrones with Jesus and reign with him in triumph, Bartimaeus sits in the dust, makes no demand for glory, and cries out from his wretched poverty. He only wants to see.

- 4. What has Bartimaeus seen in Jesus that the disciples have not? Why does he call Jesus “Son of David?”**

The disciples see Jesus as a Messiah who will bring them mastery and glory; Bartimaeus sees him as the Son of David who brings him healing and sight.

- 5. Look closely at Bartimaeus’ actions. What can we learn from this poor, blind, homeless man about what it truly means to be a disciple of Christ?**

When he heard that Jesus was coming he began to shout for mercy. He recognized his need for a Savior and he recognized who that Savior was. He was persistent, even when others rebuked him and told him to be quiet, he shouted "all the more." He threw his cloak aside...a seemingly innocent gesture. But his cloak would have been the most valuable thing that he owned, the thing that he would lay before him and people would put money on, as well as the thing that kept him warm at night. By casting it aside, he is showing that he is not encumbered with anything in following Jesus. Finally he asked to see - what every disciple should want, to see spiritual healing and show that discipleship is identifying with Jesus in faith and not just confined to Jesus' specific call to follow.

6. Why is it so significant that once Bartimaeus received sight from Jesus he followed him along the road? What does it mean for Bartimaeus to be on this road with Jesus?

Think about where Jesus is headed, what he is going into. Jesus is going into Jerusalem to be crucified and Bartimaeus follows. The picture of true discipleship.

RESPONSE QUESTION

As we can see from Bartimaeus, following Christ means sacrifice (in the aspects of leaving all his possessions behind, and following Christ on the road to the cross) as well as incredible hope and life. In your discipleship journey with Christ, what has been or will be a sacrifice? How has this journey brought life and hope into your life?

Take time to pray with each other, to support and encourage one another in the cost of following Jesus, but also to give thanks and praise the one who infuses our life with healing, just as he did with Bartimaeus.

GOING DEEPER STUDY

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (selection to choose from)

1. Who might be the two people for whom the places beside Christ have been prepared?

Jesus spoke about where the road to Jerusalem will end - with his suffering and his death. It is likely that Jesus is, in part, referring to the two criminals who were crucified on his left and on his right (15:27). These are the only two places where Mark used this phrasing in the book.

2. Why does Bartimaeus call Jesus the "Son of David"?

This title carried strong messianic overtones, a title that identifies Jesus as the Messiah, as the King - the King that Israel had been waiting for. Jesus accepts this title and shows that as the Son of David he will show his royal authority in works of healing and mercy for the despised outcast. This Son of David hears the cries of the oppressed, gives sight to the blind and brings blessing and peace.

