

SAVING OR SPENDING

Mark 8:34–38

October 4, 2015

When Jesus began to teach his disciples that he had come to suffer and give his life, Peter rebuked Jesus. But Jesus reminded Peter that he was thinking from a purely human perspective, not God's perspective. Instead of avoiding death at all costs, Jesus called his followers together and reminded them that following him means giving up our life.

Following Jesus Christ demands that his disciples forfeit their lives to Him (v. 34).

- Reason #1: Protecting your physical life brings no eternal gain (v. 35).
- Reason #2: Protecting your earthly means is a waste of time and energy (v. 36).
- Reason #3: Your eternal soul is priceless (v. 37).
- Reason #4: Refusal to follow Jesus completely is a refusal to follow at all (v. 38).

What does forfeiting our lives to Jesus Christ entail?

- If Jesus were here physically, we should follow him like the disciples did. They walked away from their livelihoods, their families, normal comforts, and forfeited their lives to Jesus. In fact, they all paid the ultimate price of martyrdom for Christ.
- Since Jesus is not here physically, what does it mean? Notice that Jesus adds that forfeiting our lives for him is also doing so for “the gospel” (v. 35). Notice that Jesus speaks of not being ashamed of him and his “words” (v. 38).

Following Jesus Christ in 2015 demands that we forfeit our lives to Jesus Christ for the advance of the gospel.

The advance of the gospel has two aspects. *Quantitatively*, the gospel advances when we tell those who are not Jesus' disciples that God has made a way for them to be right with him through faith in Jesus Christ and that he commands them to repent and believe in Jesus (Rom 3:21–26; Acts 17:30; Titus 1:2; 2:11). *Qualitatively*, the gospel advances when Jesus' disciples learn to submit every area of their lives to his authority and to obey all his commands (Matt 28:18–20; Titus 1:1, 16; 2:1, 12–14).

- An unwillingness to advance the gospel because of possible personal danger or loss wastes the life with which God has entrusted us.
- Merely preserving or hoarding the resources God has entrusted to us wastes them; rather, we should be investing them heavily in the advance of the gospel (cf. Matt 25:26–27).
- We cannot trade any earthly thing for the life, health, and resources with which God has entrusted us.
- If we are ashamed of Christ and his gospel, we show ourselves to be no followers of Christ (cf. Luke 9:62).