



February 12, 2023

Kevin Sneed

Mark 8:34-9:1

The way of apprenticeship to Jesus is death to self and suffering love.

Read Mark 8:34-9:1.

1. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, in *The Cost of Discipleship*, writes about Jesus' invitation to follow Him: "As we embark upon discipleship, we surrender ourselves to Christ in union with his death - we give over our lives to death...When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die." How is this a radical invitation in our culture that worships the sovereign self? How has this "you do you" mentality crept into our faith?
2. Kevin redefined the soul as "the integration of mind, body, spirit, relationships, whole." How does this change the way you think about your soul? What implications might this have on the way we live day-to-day?
3. Kevin reminded us that "our strongest desires that stem from a disordered heart and a disordered soul will ultimately result in a lack of satisfaction." It is impossible to satisfy ourselves with finite things. How have you experienced this to be true in your own life?
4. To deny yourself is not to deny what makes you uniquely "you", nor is it denying something to yourself. To deny yourself is to crucify your false self - your ego, pride, and loves and longings that are bent away from Jesus. Is there an area of your life, currently, where the Holy Spirit might be inviting you to deny yourself, in order that Christ might inhabit that space and bring healing, satisfaction, and freedom from enslavement to desire?

5. The invitation to “take up your cross” is distinct from the invitation to “deny yourself” - it is a call to sever allegiances to anything other than Jesus. What are some common allegiances in our culture that come to mind? Where might you, personally, be at risk of placing your trust in kingdoms other than the Kingdom of God?
6. Read Mark 8:38-9:1. Why is it important that we remember that death to self is the beginning of our communion with Christ? Could it be that we resist the idea of dying to ourselves because we don't fully embrace the hope of the resurrection?
7. Spend some time in silence now to individually reflect on this passage. Make Psalm 139:23-24 your prayer during this time: *“Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me and lead me in the way everlasting.”*

As you reflect, revisit Jesus' questions in verse 36-37. What is God's invitation to you personally in this passage? How might He be prompting or challenging you to respond and re-align yourself with the way of apprenticeship to Jesus - death to self and suffering love?