



Life Group Discussion Guide

Feb 23 – Mark 8 --- Facing Persecution

Life Group Leaders,

During our *100 Days with Jesus*, you will have two approach options to guide your group in studying Sunday's text. We encourage you to try both methods over the next few months.

1. **Discussion Questions** – Each week, you'll receive a set of questions related to the text. If you choose this option, feel free to select the questions that best fit your group's needs and dynamics.
2. **SEEDS Discovery Bible Study** – This method introduces a Bible study format designed to empower participants to engage deeply with Scripture. The goal is to equip your group members with a practical tool for exploring the Bible with others, aligning with our mission to *Advance the Kingdom* with Jesus.

Both options are designed to enrich your group's experience. Experiment with each to discover what works best for your group. Thank you for leading and serving so well!

Ice Breaker: Do you or your family have any habits you do every day or every week? If so, describe it. For extra points explain how you feel if you miss doing the habit.

Discussion Questions:

Mark 8:31-38 --- Jesus Foretells His Death and Resurrection

1. Read **Mark 8:31-38**.
2. What does it mean to deny yourself?
3. What does it mean to take up your cross?
4. What does it mean to follow Christ?
5. What do you think Christ wants you to give up for the sake of the gospel?
6. What does it mean to be ashamed of Christ?
7. In what ways does Satan tempt us to do the opposite of what Christ wants for us?
8. What attitude or practice do you need to change in obedience to Christ?

Psalm 73:23-28

9. Read **Psalm 73:23-28**.
10. What desires on earth compete with your desire for God?
11. What are your biggest questions or doubts concerning your faith in God?
12. What new perspective does this passage give you about your own circumstances?
13. What can you do to be content the next time you feel unfairly unrewarded for the good you do?

Reflection and Application

1. As we reflect on Dr. Lall's sermon and the stories of persecution he shared, what feelings are stirred in your heart?
2. "Persecution unites the body of Christ." In what ways can you identify with those who are being persecuted and support them? (For more information see opendoorsus.org for Open Doors or persecution.com for Voice of the Martyrs).
3. Read **Matthew 5:10-12**. How difficult is it for you to rejoice when you are persecuted? The word "blessed" means "happy" or "in a position of favor." Does knowing that you have God's favor when you suffer for Him help you to rejoice?
4. In **Mark 8:32**, Jesus "spoke plainly" about the suffering he would soon face, yet Peter tried to stop Jesus from fulfilling his purpose. When you suffer, how does your own resistance to Christ get in the way of fulfilling His purposes for your own life? How does suffering lead you to deeper purpose and faith in Christ?
5. In the epistles named for him, Peter encouraged the believers to be faithful when they were persecuted. Read **I Peter 2:21**. How does it encourage you to know that Christ's suffering was an example for his followers? How can you follow Christ's example in your own life?

SEEDS Bible Study:

The Discovery Method works most effectively in small groups of three to four people. For larger gatherings, consider breaking into smaller groups to encourage deeper discussion. Here's a simple format to follow:

- **Form Small Groups:** Divide the larger group into smaller groups of three to four people.
- **Pose Questions:** Present one question at a time for the smaller groups to discuss. Allow a few minutes for meaningful conversation.
- **Share Insights:** Invite groups to share their thoughts with the larger group, if they feel led. This step fosters collective learning and reflection.
- **Repeat for Additional Questions:** Continue the process with the next question, following the same structure.
- **Close in Prayer:** Conclude the session with prayer, either within the smaller groups or together as a large group.

This approach encourages participation, reflection, and shared learning while keeping the conversation focused and engaging.

Discussion Questions:

Share

- What are you grateful for?
- What is stressing you out?

Explore

- What stood out to you from the sermon?
- Read the text twice (Select a portion of this week's text to focus on for your group's discussion.)
- Retell the passage in your own words.

Examine

- What questions, observations, and thoughts do you have about this passage?
- What does this text say about God, Jesus, and humanity?

Do It – Either alone or with others in the group.

- If the text is true, what are you sensing God saying to you?
- Write an "I will" statement.
- What does that look like for you?

Seek God's Kingdom

- **Tell:** Is there someone in your life you can share this text/truth with?
- **Give:** Is there someone in your life that you can serve this week?
- **Pray:** Close in prayer: God, thank You for planting SEEDS in us so we can share those SEEDS with others as we Advance the Kingdom!