



## ENCOUNTER

Toward Surrender  
Shane Philip  
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Discussion Notes  
The Crossing Church  
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## OPENING

We are making a transition on our journey through the Gospel of Mark. While the first half of Mark centers on Identity - Who Jesus Is, the second half is about His Purpose. Jesus' ultimate purpose is to give His life on the cross. We are getting up close and personal with the life of Christ on this path that has the potential to change our lives. God is offering us hope, change and life. Remember, the closer we get to Him, the more our lives will change.

## SCRIPTURE<sup>1</sup>

**Mark 10:17-31** As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. "Good teacher," he asked, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" "Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good – except God alone. You know the commandments, 'You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, you shall not defraud, honor your father and mother.' " Jesus looked at him and loved him. "One thing you lack," he said. "Go sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." At this the man's face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth. Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God." The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, "Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God." The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, "Who then can be saved?" Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God." Then Peter spoke up, "We have left everything to follow you!" "Truly I tell you," Jesus replied, "no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age: homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields – along with persecutions -- and in the age to come eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first."

**Mark 8:34-37** "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it. What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?"

## OBSERVATION

The rich man in our scripture this week chose temporary success over eternal success because he defined his identity by his wealth. He said, "The price is too high." Whenever there is something that is in direct competition with our hearts, we have to choose.

**Question:** What does success look like to you?

**Question:** In what areas of your life are you choosing temporary success?

## APPLICATION

So how does Jesus define eternal success? It is called surrender - giving up the love of all worldly possessions and relationships in order to serve Him. The cost is high, but worth it! Jesus gives us three commands: sell everything we have; give it all to the poor; come and follow Me. This requires total

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<sup>1</sup> All scripture is NIV unless otherwise noted.



surrender and when we surrender, God takes the responsibility for the outcome of our lives. Does this mean we have to sell everything we've accumulated over a lifetime? Well, in some cases it is a literal command (i.e., Mother Teresa, Billy Graham). In others, it is a command to be willing to give up everything if God asks. Do you realize that surrender has no conditions? It takes a heart of love for Jesus to enable us to surrender everything to Him, because the competition for our hearts is our stuff! Jesus addresses everything that makes up our stuff: our wealth, our relationships, our careers, and our possessions because they make up our identities. God wants our identities to be IN HIM, but He will not get in the way of our choosing. He won't rob us of the responsibility associated with our decisions.

**Question:** What would you least want to surrender to Jesus?

**Question:** What will it take for you to be willing to surrender your own identity for something better – for identifying with Jesus?

Surrender requires trust and giving up of our pride and control over our lives. It is scary until we realize that the One to Whom we are surrendering loves us unconditionally and is omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent! He knows everything about us and has great plans for us. What could be wrong about this decision? We all put our trust in something that will eventually cost us everything. Some of us choose temporary success and others choose eternal success. The Apostles sacrificed everything – do you ever wonder if you are up to their challenges?

**Question:** Name people of the Bible, other than the Apostles, who trusted in God and it cost them everything but gained them eternal success.

**Question:** What is your cross?

**Question:** Tell us about a recent decision you made before considering the consequences. How did this decision turn out?

Stephen Covey, in his book 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, says, "If you carefully consider what you wanted to be said of you at your funeral, you will find your definition of success." This will expose what is most valuable to us because our definition of success has almost nothing to do with accomplishment – it is about our character and how we treat people.

**Question:** How do you measure success?

**Question:** What would you want people to say about you at your funeral? What contributions and achievements would you want them to remember?

Did you realize that baptism is a picture of surrender? It is saying publicly, "I am all in for Jesus!" On Easter weekend, there will be numerous opportunities to be baptized and demonstrate to the world that you have surrendered your life to your Savior.

**Question:** Have you been baptized? If yes, why did you make that decision? If not, what would it take for you to step out at Easter and honor God?

Just imagine that Jesus is asking you to give up the big house, the big bank account, the big boat, and the Ferrari. Remember, whatever we fail to surrender, we are responsible for the outcome. Wouldn't it be worth it if you believed that one day you will hear Jesus say, "Well done, my good and faithful servant?"

## PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we honor You, we magnify You, we worship You, we exalt You! You know that surrender is difficult for us and we have many fears concerning the future, but when we fully realize how much You love us and the marvelous plans You have for us, there is really no other choice to be made but the choice for eternal success. Help us to make decisions that will assure us eternity with You. In Jesus' name. Amen.