



Small Group Study Guide for February 25, 2024

Our Savior Lutheran Church and School

Theme: Don't skip the cross! The Christian life is filled with amazing hope, joy, and peace. But it is not easy, nor comfortable. Jesus faced suffering and persecution with a confidence in God's deliverance and redemption, and so can we!

Getting Started: (sharing with each other)

1. How have you seen God at work this past week? Take turns sharing your "God-sightings."
2. What do you find special about the season of Lent, and how are you observing it this year?

In the Word: Read Mark 8:27-38

3. Notice how Jesus moved from asking about others to asking the disciples directly. First he asks, "Who do people say I am?" and then He asks, "Who do YOU say I am?" Why do you think both of these questions are important for the disciples then – and for us today?
4. Peter is the spokesman for the group. But look at the contrast of his words in verse 29 and verse 32. How could Peter go from such a high point to a low point, and what do you think it was that Peter could not wrap his head around?
5. How do you think Peter felt when Jesus said, "Get behind me Satan!" How do you think Peter understood those words?
6. Jesus not only affirmed the fact of His cross that He would bear, but then He says that in order to be a disciple, we each must deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow Him. What are the differences between Jesus taking up His cross, and His disciples taking up their (our) cross?
7. What does Jesus mean when He says, "Whoever wants to save his life will lose it?" (verse 35)

8. What does Jesus mean when He says, “But whoever loses his life for me and for the Gospel will save it”? (verse 35)

Putting it all Together (what do we believe or do as disciples?)

9. Jesus faces His cross and accepts it. How does Jesus’ determination to face His cross, and the outcome of the Resurrection, influence our ability to face our own crosses?
10. What are some of the “crosses” that people have to bear these days?
11. “Deny yourself” is not a popular message these days. The message is more like, if you want it, go get it, just don’t hurt anyone. But why doesn’t that really work?
12. Lent is a time when many people “give something up.” How do we practice “denying ourselves” and why is it important to cultivate this as a virtue?
13. Asking people “who do you say Jesus is” is a great way to start an evangelism conversation. What possible answers might people give these days, and how would you respond?

Prayer: Thank Jesus that He went to the cross for us, and suffered everything for our salvation. Ask the Holy Spirit to help us deny ourselves and not get too attached to the world, so that we can cling to Christ alone.

Wednesday Lenten Service: February 28 is a “Youth Service” led by our High School youth on the color Olive Green and Jesus’ prayer in Gethsemane.

Next Week: Jesus’ first visit to Jerusalem makes a statement as He overturns the money changers in the temple courts. Read John 2:13-22