**The Gospel of Mark: A Disciple’s Mirror**

***Reflections on Following Jesus--*** From A Handbook on Cross-Bearing

**Mark 9:30–10:31**

***Who is Greatest in God’s Kingdom?*** Or, what does it mean to be a Crucified Self?

**What’s (happening in) the story?** Jesus refines discipleship.

Jesus has prophesied His death on the Cross, and invited His disciples to follow, for the cross of suffering leads to a crown of glory. They now argue over the Kingdom’s “pecking order,” and where they are on the organizational chart. Jesus here teaches them, in a series of object lessons, the qualities of a “crucified life.”

**What’s the challenge in the story?** How do I relate to God’s Kingdom?

Before criticizing the disciples, remember that their conflicts are like our own. We, too, struggle with the promises of God vs. the pain of daily life. We, too, wonder how we fit into God’s plan. Jesus gives us five “attitude adjustments” which change the question from “What’s in this for me?” to “What can I do for others?”

**What are the key elements in the story?**

Premise: Jesus’ teaching about discipleship. 9:30-32

Jesus again has foretold His crucifixion (and resurrection), and invited His disciples to follow. They are Crucified Selves. . .

*A Crucified Self is the King’s servant and the Father’s child*. 9:33-37

Temptation: Pride, lording it over others.

Remedy: Live to serve the vulnerable. (Welcome God’s children.)

*A Crucified Self identifies with all God’s Kingdom-Family.* 9:38-50

Temptation: Exclusivity, becoming an “in crowd.”

Remedy: Grace (“salt”) Saturation (Serve with all God’s children.)

*A Crucified Self protects family.* 10:1-12

Temptation: Hardheartedness, rejecting a spouse. Malachi 2:14-16

Remedy: Serve your mate. (Maintain a safe place for children.)

*A Crucified Self takes time for others in God’s Kingdom-Family.* 10:13-16

Temptation: Self-importance, ignoring the vulnerable.

Remedy: Discover your vulnerability in others’. (Bless God’s children.)

*A Crucified Self, by faith, embraces dependency upon God.* 10:17-31

Temptation: Attachments, loving things/comfort above God/people.

Remedy: Don’t cling to things/people. (Enjoy being God’s Child.)

**What’s the big idea (main point) of the story?**

Crucified selves humbly serve Christ with all God’s children, free from greed, insecurity, and lust that tempt us to ignore the vulnerable.

***So, let’s take a look at ourselves in Mark’s mirror. . .***

* Am I content not to be greatest? Romans 12:10; Philippians 2:3, 4
* Do I make room for and work with a wide range of believers?
* Do I seek to protect the vulnerable, especially children? Psalm 68:4-6
* Do I stop to make time for and bless the vulnerable? Luke 10:25-37
* Am I free from the love of money, and the power and comfort it brings?
* Are the key actions of my soul to protect myself or to serve others?