**Life group notes**

**Mark 8: 27-37**

**Summary:**

Sam showed us how we, like Peter, can misunderstand what Jesus is doing. He took us through some stories that showed us how Jesus had authority over, humans, demons and nature, and appeared to be the promised Messiah. Sam then focused on Jesus’ call to follow him, being tied up with a kind of ‘death’ to self. We saw how Peter’s disappointment was a small, temporary human view, but Jesus’ aim was much bigger. We considered how we are tempted to focus on our temporary comfort, success and happiness and can miss the bigger thing that Jesus is doing. Finally, we saw that call to ‘lose our-self’ involves surrendering our being ‘in charge’, giving up on our fake ‘ideal self’, and trusting God even when things are tough.

**Ideas for activities:**

*Please think about which of these ideas, studies and activities best suit your group*

1. Look in detail at the other passages Sam mentioned from Mark.

1. Mark 1: 1-7 What does Mark want us to know about Jesus through the prophecies and through John the Baptist? (Mal 3:1, Ex 23:20 and Is 40:3)
2. Mark 1: 9-11 What does Mark want his readers to know about Jesus’ through his Baptism?
3. Mark 1:21-28 What do we learn about Jesus as he teaches in the synagogue and interacts with the demonised man?
4. Mark 4:35-41 What is Mark’s point in the retelling of this story?

2. You could use Mark 14:32-50 and 21-39 as a basis for **taking communion together.**

Focus on Jesus submitting to the father’s will for us.

3. Application questions on Mark 8:27-37:

(i) In pairs: Are there times when, like Peter (v32) you feel frustrated with the way God is acting in your life? Try to be honest about any disappointments you have.

(ii) In what ways can your ‘self’ get in the way of following Jesus? Perhaps you struggle with independence, or with trying to present yourself as better than you are (on facebook etc or in person). Or other ways?

(iii) Is there anything in your life that you feel God says ‘it’s time to die’?

Spend time praying for one another.

*If there are new or non-Christians in your group, take time to be clear about what Jesus’ call is and why following him is still the only way we can truly find life. Try to encourage them to ask questions.*

*Possible answers:*

*1 i. That God is coming and Jesus is God. That John was a prophet pointing to Jesus.*

*ii. That father and Spirit commend him and empower him.*

*iii. His incredible authority over humans and evil spirits. His battle against evil.*

*iv. Jesus is Lord of Nature. Interesting that the storm comes as Jesus embarks on his first mission to Gentiles (Gerasenes was a Gentile region).*