

# WordOne Bible Study

## Beyond Our Ability

by Mark Frith

Text: Mark 8:27-38 for the Second Sunday in Lent, Lectionary Series B

### OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

1. Acknowledge their inability to gain God's trust on their own.
2. Rejoice in the self-sacrifice of Christ, whose grace and mercy covers our blunders and short-comings.
3. Confess the faith that is a gift only from Christ.

### MATERIALS NEEDED

Luther's Small Catechism (or the Explanation to the Second Article).

### GROUP GUIDELINES

Gather in groups of 5-8 persons if the group is larger than ten. Make sure that all members of the group have the opportunity to share their ideas. Individuals may "pass" if they do not want to share on a given subject.

### BUILDING COMMUNITY

Encourage each person in the group to complete the following sentences:

1. I am most happy or content when...
2. In order to enjoy life I must (have)...
3. If it were necessary for me to make a self sacrifice, I would be willing to give up...

### LOOKING AT GOD'S WORD

1. Read Mark 8:27-38 in unison.
2. Individually and silently read these verses in chapter 8:27-30, and chapter 9:1-13.
3. Based on your reading, discuss the following questions as a group:
  - a. In your opinion, what is St. Mark trying to tell us by sandwiching verses 31-38 between Peter's confession of Jesus (verses 27-13) and Christ's transfiguration (chapter 9)?  
Encourage the group to come to a consensus. What is that consensus?
  - b. Why would Jesus ask the disciples to take up crosses and follow Him when He must have known that they would run and hide when Jesus was arrested and crucified? (Brainstorm the possibilities.)  
(Paul writes about the struggle with sin in Romans 7: "I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate, I do." Can you relate to him?)
  - c. Why is it so difficult for us to follow God's Word and will?
  - d. Discuss this statement: IT IS GOOD TO HAVE A SAVIOR WHO DID NOT FLEE FROM DEATH AND DESTRUCTION BUT INSTEAD DIED FOR ME. IT IS A GREAT COMFORT AND STRENGTH TO KNOW THAT WHILE I MAY BE WEAK AND OFTEN LESS THAN FAITHFUL, JESUS FULFILLED WHAT I AM UNABLE. THEREFORE, I REJOICE WHENEVER I HEAR MY SAVIOR'S NAME, BECAUSE THEN I AM REMINDED THAT IT WAS FOR ME AND ALL BELIEVERS THAT HE CAME AND IS EVER PRESENT. (Any comments?)

### REINFORCING WHAT HAS BEEN LEARNED

Turn to Luther's Explanation of the Second Article of the Apostle's Creed. Read it together (if copies permit) or have one person in the group read it aloud. Select those words which are most comforting and strengthening. Share those thoughts with the group.

**CLOSING**

Close this session by turning to Psalm 57 and praying it together.

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