



Cuyahoga
Valley Church

SERMON STUDY GUIDE

Week of 4.12.26

Mark 8:22-9:1 // Joe Valenti

Please take the opportunity to revisit the CVC Equip
Portrait of a Healthy LifeGroup on a regular basis

CONNECT (10 MIN)

- 1 Can you think of a time when someone was incredibly, radically generous to you in some way? Talk about this experience - what happened, how it made you feel, how it showed you God's goodness, etc. - in your LifeGroup.

EXPLORE (30 MIN)

Create Context (5 min):

HERE is the Sermon Recap video playlist on Vimeo.

Study & Discussion (25 min)

Read Mark 8:22-9:1.

- 1 (Revisit verses 27-30.) Peter had some expectations for how he thought Jesus should be - He put on to Jesus what he wanted Jesus to be. These expectations did not match Jesus' own statements about His purpose and ministry. We can sometimes be just like Peter - we can have expectations for what we think Jesus should do or be that don't match who He actually tells us that He is.
 - In what ways do you think people in our culture today put onto Jesus who we want Jesus to be?
 - Can you think of a time in your life when you had incorrect expectations about Jesus? Share a little bit about what these expectations were and why you held them.
- 2 Many people in Jesus' day expected Him to be a political leader who would lead a societal revolution. Peter's statement in our passage from this week show that this was likely part of Peter's expectations for Jesus as well. Revisit Mark 8:22-26. On Sunday, Joe talked about how in Mark 8:22-26, Jesus healed the blind man partially, then corrected His vision totally. In the next verses, Jesus had to correct Peter's vision too. Joe said on Sunday, "Maybe your vision of Jesus today is still a little bit blurry." Sometimes we need Jesus to help us see Him more clearly, too.
 - In what ways did Peter need Jesus to "correct his vision" of who Jesus was and what He had come to do?
 - In what ways has Jesus corrected your vision about Him over time as you've walked with Him? How has He used you to help correct the vision of others that you love and care about?



- ③ Can you think of a time when God’s providential plan in your life has taken you somewhere “you did not want to go (John 21:18)? What did it look like in those moments to submit to God’s plan, to trust in the Jesus who wasn’t doing what you expected Him to do?
- ④ On Sunday, Joe mentioned many different ways that the Lord might call us to let go of our own expectations for our lives to trust in His plan. Read Mark 8:34-38. Joe said on Sunday, “Self denial and cross carrying are the requirements for anyone who wants to be associated with Jesus.” He mentioned that for us today, taking up our cross and following Jesus might look like:
- the death of your ambition - choosing integrity over success at work; being kind instead of cutthroat
 - the death of control - with our families, with our children, with our finances
 - surrendering the American dream for our children and praying and encouraging them to take a path that’s uncomfortable and sacrificial for the sake of the gospel
 - carefully setting our minds on things that are above and not the things that are right in front of us
 - choosing not to be bitter with God when things didn’t go the way you wanted them to go
 - the death of your financial autonomy - realizing your resources are not your own, but they belong to Jesus
 - being called to live on less so you can give away more

Which of these examples particularly resonates with you today, and why?

Are there any examples of “cross-carrying” that you feel called to today that don’t show up in this list? If so, consider sharing these with your LifeGroup too.

- ⑤ As missionary Jim Elliot (for more information on Jim Elliot and his life and death, see links below) once wrote, “He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.” If Jesus asked you to leave the life you built in order to live the life he planned for you, would you see it as a net loss or a net gain?

RESOURCES

“They Were No Fools: The Martyrdom of Jim Elliot and Four Other Missionaries” by Justin Taylor for the Gospel Coalition:

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justin-taylor/they-were-no-fools-60-years-ago-today-the-martyrdom-of-jim-elliott-and-four-other-missionaries/>

“Slain in the Shadow of the Almighty” by John Piper for Desiring God:

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/slain-in-the-shadow-of-the-almighty>



PRAY AND APPLY

- Pray for clarity in seeing Jesus rightly.

Ask the Lord to remove false or incomplete pictures of who Jesus is. Pray that as Pastor Joe preaches, people would see Jesus not as a “selective Savior” shaped by personal preferences, politics, or culture, but as the true Christ—both Lion and Lamb, King and Suffering Servant.

- Pray for humility in receiving hard truth.

Jesus speaks plainly about the cross, suffering, and discipleship. Ask God to guard hearts from defensiveness or resistance when His Word confronts personal expectations or “common sense.” Pray that people would not try to reshape Jesus to fit their lives, but would submit their lives to Him.

- Pray for repentance where we have tried to lead Jesus instead of follow Him.

Lift up those who may be subtly rebuking Jesus in their hearts—questioning His timing, resisting His commands, or preferring their own path. Pray that the Spirit would gently reveal these areas and lead people into surrender, trust, and obedience.

- Pray for courage to embrace the call of the cross.

Following Jesus means denying self, taking up the cross, and living differently from the world. Ask God to give courage to those facing decisions about integrity, generosity, reputation, suffering, or obedience. Pray that people would choose faithfulness over comfort and eternal gain over temporary success.

- Pray for confidence in Christ’s ultimate victory.

Pray that the reality of Jesus’ return in glory would shape how people live today. Ask that believers would not be ashamed of Jesus in a culture that values power and approval, but would live with boldness and hope, knowing that His Kingdom is coming and His victory is certain.



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WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Week of 4.12.26

Please take a moment to share these announcements with your group.

SEND

Disaster Relief Trip - North Carolina: April 21 - 24

To find out more about how you can pray, give, or go [CLICK HERE!](#)

COMMUNITY LIFE

Men's Breakfast: May 2

You are invited to join us for a free Men's Breakfast at Cuyahoga Valley Church Broadview Heights Campus on May 2, 2026 from 8-10:00am. This event promises to be a morning of inspiration and fellowship, and we would be honored to have you with us. The breakfast is a wonderful opportunity to connect, grow spiritually, and enjoy a hearty breakfast together. We encourage you to invite a guest to come along with you and share in this meaningful experience. We look forward to seeing you there! Register [HERE](#) or text "Breakfast" to reserve your spot!

YOUNG ADULTS

CVC Young Adult Spring Retreat - May 15-17

Young Adult Spring Retreat Getaway! Join us for a weekend away to Old Stone Acres in Uniontown Oh on May 15-17. It's a chance to step away from the busyness of everyday life, spend time growing in faith, and make great memories together. Whether you're new or have been part of the group for a while, we'd love to have you come along. Register [HERE](#).