

Read: Mark 8:31-38

Crossroads

Mark 8:34

If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Have you ever gone hiking in the woods? If you follow marked paths, sometimes you will come to a crossroads. That's where two paths cross each other. At a crossroads, you have a choice. You can continue on the same path or change directions and go on another path.

From the time he was born, Jesus was walking on the path to the cross. A few months before he died, he told his disciples exactly what was going to happen when he went to Jerusalem. But Peter didn't want to hear it. He couldn't imagine why Jesus would want to suffer and die. He tried to talk Jesus out of it.

Jesus was at a crossroads.

He could continue the path to the cross or he could choose the easier route of not suffering. At that moment, Jesus could have changed course.

Jesus was at a crossroads, and he chose the road to the cross. Peter tried to change his mind. The devil tried to discourage him. But Jesus wasn't going to change paths.

Why? Because he loved you so much. Jesus knew that you were going to mess up. He knew all the bad things you would say and do in your life. He knew that your sins had to be punished.

But Jesus loved you before you were even born. He didn't want you to have to go to hell. So, he chose to walk the road to the cross in your place to suffer God's punishment for all the bad things you would say and do.

We should be the ones who have to suffer what Jesus suffered, but he loved you so much that he walked that road to the cross for you. In fact, he wasn't about to let anyone or anything stop him.

In your life, you will come to many crossroads. You will have many choices—the choice to follow Jesus and do what is right or to listen to the devil's lies and do what is wrong. The path to follow Jesus is sometimes harder and more painful. The other paths look easier and more fun.

The next time you come to a crossroad and wonder which one is the right one, look for Jesus. Remember the path Jesus chose for you. Then follow him! He loved you so much, he walked all the way to the cross for you. Trust how much he loves you and follow him, even when it's hard.

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- Who tried to talk Jesus out of going to the cross?
- Why did Jesus keep going to the cross even though it was going to hurt so badly?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- When Peter tried to stop him, Jesus said, "Get behind me, Satan!" Why do you think he said that?
- Jesus talked about the crosses we have to carry when we follow him. Since it's not an actual wood cross, what are those crosses?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Give an example of when kids your age are at a crossroads and have to make the difficult choice between following Jesus or following another path.
- A friend tells you, "Going to church is boring. Being a Christian is no fun. God doesn't want us to have any fun." What would you say?

Closing Prayer:

Dear Jesus, thank you for choosing to walk the road to the cross for me. Help me to now follow you, even when it's hard. Amen.