

Mark 8:31-38

Have you ever played Marbles? First, you draw a big ring in the dirt. Then each player puts a few of their own marbles into the ring. The players then take turns shooting a marble, trying to knock the other marbles out of the ring. When a shooter knocks a marble out of the ring, they pick it up and puts it in their pocket. If their shooting marble stays inside the ring, they are allowed to keep shooting. If not, the next shooter takes their turn. When all the marbles have been knocked out of the ring, they are counted and the one with the most marbles is the winner. Pick up all the marbles.

Before a game of marbles begins, one player will sometimes ask the other players, "Are we playing for fun, or are we playing for keeps?" If you just play for fun, when the game is over, the winner gives the marbles back. But if you play for keeps, the winner gets to keep all of the marbles he has won.

Some people live their lives like a game of marbles, always trying to have the most "marbles." They think that the one with the biggest house, the fanciest car, and the most money in the bank is the winner. They think they are playing "for keeps,"

How much do they take with them when their lives are over? Nothing!

Jesus said that if we want to be real winners we must be willing to give up everything and follow Him. We may not live in a big house or drive a fancy car, but when we follow Jesus we have something much better-- treasures in heaven. In heaven we'll walk on streets of gold and we'll live forever with Jesus.

Let us pray:

Dear God, help us realize that the only life that lasts is a life lived for You. In Jesus' name, amen.