

Gospel of Matthew “Taking Up Crosses”
Matthew 16:21-28
August 27, 2023

Mathew 16:21-28

21 From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. 22 And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you.” 23 But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.”

24 Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. 25 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. 26 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? 27 For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done. 28 Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”

The disciples had come to know Jesus as the King but they had not come to understand the cross.

Sympathizing with Peter.

Matthew 4:1-11

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

2 And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. 3 And the tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” 4 But he answered, “It is written,

“Man shall not live by bread alone,
but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.”

5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple

6 and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written,

“He will command his angels concerning you,
and

“On their hands they will bear you up,
lest you strike your foot against a stone.”

7 Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. 9 And he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” 10 Then Jesus said to him, “Be gone, Satan! For it is written,

“You shall worship the Lord your God
and him only shall you serve.”

11 Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.

Why suffer if you don't have to?

The very first temptation with Adam and Eve.

"If I were in charge."

Matthew 16:24-26

24 Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. 25 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. 26 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?"

"Life" and "psyche."

How do you understand the way to become a 'self'?

"The more I resist Him and try to live on my own, the more I become dominated by my own heredity, upbringing, surroundings and natural desires. It is when I turn to Christ, when I give myself up to His personality, that I finally begin to have a real personality all of my own." - C.S. Lewis

Jesus will die on the cross at the end of his life, but to be a disciple is to die at the beginning of ours.

"Thus it begins, the cross is not the terrible end to an otherwise God-fearing and happy life, but it meets us at the beginning of our commitment to Christ. When Christ calls a man he bids him come and die." - Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

If not Jesus and the cross then it is just more of the same.

The cross isn't just what Jesus is doing for sin, but the very way in which God is making all things new.

Grow Group Discussion Questions

- 1.) What did God say to you during our Sunday gathering?
- 2.) Can you imagine Peter's shock to hear that Jesus is purposely going to go to Jerusalem to die? How do we typically define success and victory and how is Jesus showing us something different?
- 3.) Can you think of moments in your life when losing has been gaining?
- 4.) What do you think Peter was thinking when he rebuked Jesus? Why do we like to give God suggestions on what is best? What was the last "good idea" you presented to God?
- 5.) Why does Christianity ask us to give up control and the right of self-determination? How do you know if you've done that?
- 5.) Consider moments of suffering in your life. How does the cross of Christ shape your thoughts about those moments and whether God might be working in them?

- 6.) Compare life in Christ verses trying to find life in this world. What's the difference?
- 7.) How would you explain to someone that through the cross we find life and find ourself?
- 8.) How can your Grow Group pray for you and encourage you as it relates to this passage?