



Kingdom Value
Cost-Benefit Analysis
Matthew 16:21-28

How to Prepare

Begin preparing by reading the full passage a few times. Then answer the questions for yourself. Then think about how your Small Group might answer them. Try re-wording the questions to fit you and your Small Group. Don't feel tied down to the discussion guide, just be sure to discuss the main point of the text in your conversations.

Resources-

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

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/peter-rock-of-truth-satanic-stumbling-block>

<https://www.gotquestions.org/take-up-your-cross.html>

<https://www.gotquestions.org/he-who-loves-his-life-will-lose-it.html>

Sermon Outline:

Matthew 16:21-28

1. The Gospel Was Costly. Vv. 21-23
2. Faith In the Gospel Is Costly. V. 24
3. Being Found In Christ Is Worth Every Cost. Vv. 25-28

Matthew 16:21-28

Jesus Foretells His Death

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 be raised up on the third day.

22 Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to You."

23 But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's."

Discipleship Is Costly

24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.

25 For whoever wishes to 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 will a man give in exchange for his soul?

27 For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and will then repay every man according to his deeds.

28 "Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."

Discussion Questions

Ask a volunteer to read Matthew 16:21-28.

INTRODUCTION

Here is a question or two to help introduce the topic and jump-start discussion.

1. Discuss this quote and what it makes you think about: "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose." - Jim Elliot

UNDERSTANDING AND APPLICATION

These questions should help your Small Group dig deeper into the text and then apply it to your lives today.

I. The Gospel Was Costly. Vv. 21-23

2. What was Peter's understanding of the Messiah, and how did Jesus' description of suffering and death shatter that understanding? How might this apply to our understanding of Jesus' Lordship over our lives?

3. Why was Jesus' response to Peter so sharp, and why did Jesus call Peter "Satan"? Why were Peter's good intentions ultimately evil and a tool of Satan? In what subtle ways does the desire to avoid suffering or failure tempt us to reject God's plan today?

4. Why does salvation require the ultimate sacrifice from Jesus? How does that cost influence our understanding of the value of the gospel?

II. Faith In the Gospel Is Costly. V. 24

5. What would the phrase "take up his cross" have meant to Jesus' disciples and any of the first century readers? What does this command truly mean for us, and how has our modern, sanitized view of the cross perhaps weakened the force of this command?

6. What does it mean practically to "deny himself"? What are the core parts of "self" that we are most unwilling to surrender to Christ? How does this challenge our notion of "accepting Christ?"

7. What are some specific ways God is calling you to deny yourself in your life right now (e.g., integrity in business, purity, serving a difficult family member, giving away time/money, etc.)?

III. Being Found In Christ Is Worth Every Cost. Vv. 25-28

8. Why does "saving your life" or "gaining the world" lose and forfeit your soul? What are some ways we are tempted to "gain the world," and why is it foolish to pursue them?

9. Where do we find true life, and why is it worth the cost of death? What does Jesus mean by "whoever loses his life for My sake will find it," and how do we live this out?

10. How should the certainty of the future judgment from Christ influence the choices you make today regarding personal sacrifice? What is one concrete area of your life (time, money, relationships, ambition) where you feel the tension between "saving your life" and "losing it for Christ"? What is your next step?

Commentary (from ESV Study Bible)

Matt. 16:21–17:27 The Suffering of the Messiah Revealed. Jesus reveals the nature of his messiahship. He is a suffering Messiah, and those who are his disciples must suffer with him (16:21–28). Still, the transfiguration (17:1–13) discloses who Jesus really is: the Son of God. And believers, who are themselves sons of the kingdom, are free from the old era of the law (17:14–27).

Matt. 16:21–28 The Suffering Sacrifice. Jesus predicts his suffering and resurrection (vv. 21–23), and reveals the cost of discipleship (vv. 24–28).

Matt. 16:21 From that time marks the conclusion of Jesus' Galilean ministry and the beginning of his journey to Jerusalem to face the cross. This is the first of four times (v. 21; 17:22–23; 20:17–19; 26:2) that Jesus predicts his arrest and crucifixion.

Matt. 16:22 In the context of the Jewish master-disciple relationship, it would have been audacious for a disciple to correct his master, let alone rebuke him. This shall never happen to you. Peter, like most of his fellow Jews, resisted the idea that the Messiah must suffer, even though it is found in the OT (e.g., Psalm 22; Isaiah 53; Zech. 12:10; 13:7).

Matt. 16:23 Satan attempts to hinder Jesus' mission through Peter, who must change his human-centered ideas about the mission of the Messiah (see note on v. 22). Peter still does not understand that Jesus' messianic role must include suffering and death.

Matt. 16:24 take up his cross. See note on 10:38.

Matt. 16:25 Verses 25–27, each beginning with for (Gk. *gar*), provide three related reasons why a disciple must let go of his earthly life and take up his cross. whoever would save his life. The person who rejects God's will and instead pursues his own will for his life ultimately loses eternally every earthly good he is trying to protect.

Matt. 16:26 gains the whole world. Acquiring all of the money, pleasure, and power of this world brings no lasting benefit if one forfeits his soul to spiritual death and separation from God (cf. Phil. 3:7–9).

Matt. 16:27 Son of Man is going to come. See note on 8:20. The second coming of Christ with his angels in the glory of his Father will bring judgment for those who have chosen to follow their own will, and reward only for those who have taken up the cross.

Matt. 16:28 Some of the Twelve who were standing there with Jesus in Caesarea Philippi would live to see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom. This predicted event has been variously interpreted as referring to: (1) Jesus' transfiguration (17:1–8); (2) his resurrection; (3) the coming of the Spirit at

Commentary (from ESV Study Bible)

Pentecost; (4) the spread of the kingdom through the preaching of the early church; (5) the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem in A.D. 70; or (6) the second coming and final establishment of the kingdom. The immediate context seems to indicate the first view, the transfiguration, which immediately follows (see also Mark 9:2–10; Luke 9:28–36). There, “some” of Jesus’ disciples “saw” what Jesus will be like when he comes in the power of his kingdom. This interpretation is also supported by 2 Pet. 1:16–18, where Peter equates Jesus’ “glory” with his transfiguration, of which Peter was an eyewitness. At the same time, interpretations (2), (3), and (4) are also quite possible, for they are all instances where Jesus “came” in the powerful advance of his kingdom, which was partially but not yet fully realized. Some interpreters think that Jesus is more generally speaking of many or all of the events in views (2) through (4). View (5) is less persuasive because the judgment on Jerusalem does not reflect the positive growth of the kingdom. View (6) is unacceptable, for it would imply that Jesus was mistaken about the timing of his return.