

Matthew 16:21-28

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Date: 10 July 2022

[0 : 0 0] Matthew 16, picking up where we left off when we were together, Matthew 16, verses 21 to the end of the chapter, which gets us down to verse 28.

Matthew 16, verses 21 through 28. Before you read ahead, I'm going to go ahead and tell you that we are in. The most quoted saying of Christ is contained within this passage.

The most quoted saying of Christ. And we've already seen this quote of Christ once in the Gospel of Matthew in the 10th chapter. We've said this before, that when God says something, that settles it.

When God chooses to repeat something, that means we must stand up and pay attention to it. But when something is said six times in four Gospels, then we better stop and fall on our face before it.

Because what we will run upon this morning is something that is repeated six times by Christ throughout the Gospels.

[1 : 0 1] Now, did he say it that many times? We don't know. But we do know that the men of God were moved by the Spirit of God to pen the Word of God and thought that what he had declared important enough to be recorded for us six times.

Twice in the Gospel of Matthew, twice in the Gospel of Luke, and once in each of Mark and John. For any portion of Scripture to be repeated in all four Gospels is pretty amazing because the synoptics, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, share a lot of the content with one another.

There is a majority of it, an overwhelming majority of the content in Matthew that can also be found in Mark and Luke. And it seems to be that Mark is kind of more of the condensed version, and Matthew and Luke kind of flesh out Mark's writings and things of that nature.

But John seems to be kind of stand alone. It's over here by itself. But when something is repeated in all four of them, then we pay attention. But when something is repeated this many times, then we really pay attention.

And we see that here in this passage. I'll go ahead and tell you on the very beginning, this is not an easy passage because one thing that I have found is the things that God repeats are not the easy things, right?

[2 : 1 6] Because the easy things we get, the things that we need to really pay attention to, the things that we need a little bit more soaking into, those are the things that are repeated.

The things that are easy for your children to do, you don't repeat them. It's the things that are difficult that you have to repeat over and over and over again. And we see this in our passage this morning.

So if you're physically able and desire to do so, I'm asking you to join with me as we stand together and we read the Gospel of Matthew in chapter 16, starting in verse 21 and going down to verse 28.

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.

Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, God forbid it, Lord. This shall never happen to you. But he turned and said to Peter, Get behind me, Satan, for you're a stumbling block to me, for you are not setting your mind on God's interest but man's.

[3 : 23] 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. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

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? 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.

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. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for your word.

We thank you for the great privilege of reading it and hearing it. Lord, now we come with a desire to understand it. Lord, we pray that it would be by your presence that you would speak to our hearts and minds.

Give us so much more than biblical knowledge. Lord, give us heart-rending. Lord, help us to understand it as you have intended it to do. Lord, help it to have its purpose in our lives.

[4 : 31] And Lord, help it to accomplish that which you set it forth to do. And we ask it all in Christ's name. Amen. You may be seated. This morning I want you to see the high cost of following.

The high cost of following. Matthew is writing concerning the King of kings and Lord of lords. Above all other things in the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus Christ is King.

Matthew is writing to a Jewish audience and he is of very Jewish descent himself. He had been one that would have been considered to be a traitor to his nation because he became a tax collector and enriched his life literally upon the pockets of his fellow countrymen while working in cohort with the Roman Empire.

He is someone that would have been despised and rejected by many of the Jews until he met Christ. Until, as our brother is saying, he came to the table around Christ because literally there is this great feast and this meal in which Matthew, also known as Levi, and other tax collectors were called to this table and had this encounter with Christ.

And from that moment on we see the radical difference that it makes and it is he that God calls and taps on the shoulder that writes this letter to the Jewish nation reminding them, or not reminding, really just reinforcing to them the reality of what is preached in the early pages of the book of Acts that Jesus is the King.

[5 : 56] He is the Messiah. It is he who is calling his people not only to understand who Jesus is but to live in light of the reality, right? Because he is King of kings and Lord of lords, life looks different.

Things are changed and we behave in a different way, in a different manner. And we've seen the validation of this king. We've seen the proofs of this king. We've seen everything he's done and we've seen the teaching of this king.

And now we come to Matthew 16, which is just a very, very powerful chapter in the Gospel of Matthew. One commentator very rightly said, in this chapter alone, just think about this, okay? In one chapter in the Gospel, Matthew 16, in one chapter we get the profession of who Christ is.

Who do men say that I am? Remember that question? But who do you say that I am? So we get the profession. You are Jesus Christ the Messiah, the Son of the living God. Peter confesses that. So we have the confession.

We get the mission of the Messiah in the building up of his church, right? Now upon this rock I will build my church. And we get that. We also get the knowledge of what he must do, his suffering and his death and his resurrection.

[7 : 03] And then we get the admittance of his second coming, all in one chapter. Right? Who he is, what he does, what he had to accomplish, and that he's coming again.

This chapter is full of theology. Right? Right? Every aspect of the study of God really is in this chapter alone. And we see this with such amazement.

And it is in this setting that Christ utters these words and speaks of the high cost of following him. Because he is the King of kings and Lord of lords.

He is deserving of being followed. And he is deserving of going after. And he is deserving of striving towards. And this is not an easy thing.

This is not an easy thing. Friend, listen to me. I'll just say this on the front end. I'll say it with all sincerity and all truth. In our day and time we have seen to dumb down and to ease the following ship, the followership of Jesus Christ.

[8 : 07] We've seen to make easy what God declares hard. We have convinced ourselves and persuaded others that to follow Christ is easy.

And that to go after him can be taken lightly. We see it in our professions and we see it greater in our actions. We love the Christ of fellowship.

We're not so sure we want the Christ of hardship. We love the Christ of redemption. But we're not so sure we want the Lord of our persecution.

See, the Bible does not change. And the reality is that there is still a high cost to following Christ. And unless we declare that when we share the gospel.

This week we have a great opportunity. And I'm not so skilled. Brother Sidney Gibson served as interim pastor prior to me at this church. Many of you love Brother Sidney as you should.

[9 : 16] Brother Sidney is not only the gentleman who licensed me into the pastoral ministry. He is also the man who ordained me into pastoral ministry. He licensed me in 2004 and came back and ordained me in 2006.

And it's a great benefit. I have followed Brother Sidney at both churches that I've had the opportunity to pastor. He was my pastor as well. Brother Sidney is a very, very well organized individual.

Brother Sidney takes two weeks vacation every year. He goes to a remote place out by a river. And he camps out and he fishes. And what he does in those two weeks is he plans every sermon he will preach that year.

Amazes me. I go, oh wow. And I'm talking about Sunday morning, Sunday night, and Wednesday night. He has everything planned by the time he comes back.

He told me that as a young preacher boy and was encouraging me. And I said, I will never be able to do that. And so far I have proved that true. I'm not that organized. Nor that intelligence.

[10 : 17] I heard a sermon from S.M. Lockridge yesterday. My wife and I were going down the road and she turned S.M. Lockridge on. And he said, I'm not intelligent enough to wax philosophical, but I trust that I am too intelligent to speak ignorant.

And that's kind of where I fall, somewhere in that middle ground, right? I'm not intelligent enough to be a philosopher. And hopefully I'm not too ignorant or I'm too intelligent to be ignorant. Hopefully, you know, I'm somewhere in that middle ground.

But I don't plan and prepare that far in advance. I love how the Lord gives us this on a week of vacation Bible school. We see the reality that when we share the gospel, when we share the gospel, we need to share the full gospel.

Because when Christ shares it, he shares it with strength and power and also the expectation. Right?

We see this in this message, the high cost of following. As we go through it, we see the Messiah's suffering. Because look at what it says. From that time, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must.

[11 : 22] And we continue on here. The very first thing we see with the high cost of following is the Messiah's suffering. And from that time, it says in verse 21.

And it is directly connected to the things which precede it, right? This is one of the things that we can say, yes, this happened consecutively in the proper order. And we see them happening in a literal sense. And millennial thinking, this is what happens.

And what happens is they go to Caesarea Philippi. And in Caesarea Philippi, Jesus asked them, who do men say that I am? And they give all the answers. And then he says, but who do you say that I am? And Peter gives the answer, right?

And he is the spokesman for the apostles there and the disciples. And he gives the answer. And it says, and from that time, he began to show them that he must. Now, the wording here says it's from that time, Jesus.

Most translations have Jesus, the original manuscripts. A couple of the original manuscripts says Jesus Christ. Now, that word Christ is really important because if you go back another verse, Peter declares to him that he is the Christ.

[12 : 21] Christ means Messiah, right? There are individuals in our community and in our society today who have the same name, physical name, as Jesus. We refer to them as Jesus, right?

Same name, spelled exactly the same way. I'll never forget. I had a little kindergartner get on my bus not too long ago. It was a couple years ago. He lives right down the road and I'm sitting at the school and Mr. Maybe is there. I don't know if many of you know Mr. Maybe.

I love Mr. Maybe. He walks by my bus and this is the first day, kindergartners road. And I'm just sitting here as a bus driver and he walks by my bus and he leans in and he says, all I'm saying is don't let Jesus take the will.

And I thought, what are you talking about, Mr. Maybe? He said, don't let Jesus take the will. Immediately following him, a little kindergartner named Jesus gets on the bus. And I said, he's not taking the will. Have a seat, right?

Now I get what he's saying. So that's a very common name. But listen, Jesus the Christ or Jesus Christ is not common.

[13 : 16] That is singular. Jesus the Messiah. That's what Christ means. So from that time on, Jesus Christ, the Messiah, began to show his disciples what must take place.

Do not miss this. He began to reiterate the suffering that was coming the exact moment they came to a full understanding of who he was. Because, friend, listen, his suffering only makes sense in light of the reality of who he is.

Only makes sense.

Well-scarred hands and his feet. We don't understand that in reality until we understand who he is. Because a lot of men suffer. A lot of individuals suffer throughout history.

But there's only been one who's the Son of God. Who's perfect. Who suffered. See, the high cost of following is based first and foremost in the Messiah's suffering.

[14 : 41] The Jewish people had an expectation and a hope for a coming Messiah. When we introduced the Gospel of Matthew. We introduced the Gospel of Matthew in what many believe or what many may seem to be the most unlikely of places.

To introduce the Gospel of Matthew, we went and preached a sermon out of the book of Isaiah. Isaiah speaks of a coming king. Matthew stands up and says, hey, he is here. Right?

So we introduced this in 500 B.C. So that we could see what had happened in 30 or 33 A.D. So for over 500 years, the Jewish people had been expecting and longing for and waiting on.

I would say longer than that because every prophet spoke of them coming. Isaiah is just the one who really highlights it. Right? Ever since Genesis 3.15, the proto-evangelium. The seed of a woman will crush the head of the serpent and the serpent will bruise his heel.

Right? The very first mention of the Gospel. Ever since Genesis 3.15. We've been waiting for this day. And there's been this expectation. There's been this hope. Job, the oldest book of the Bible.

[15 : 45] I told you I'd get a little excited today. I can't help it. Job, the oldest book in Scripture. We don't know how old it is. But Job says, for I know that I will see my Redeemer in the land of the living. I know that I will see him in the land of the living.

There's been this expectation and this hope of a coming Messiah. But listen, what none of the prophets could understand, what none of the Jewish people were expecting, was a Messiah that would die.

There was no Messiah that would die because that makes no sense. The Messiah is suffering and death.

Jesus began to show them that he must go to Jerusalem, that he must suffer many things at the hand of the Pharisees and the religious leaders and the elders, that he must die, that he must be raised up again on the third day.

Friend, listen to me. There is the divine imperative. These things must happen. Had to happen.

[16 : 47] The high cost of following is rooted first in the Messiah's suffering. Jesus began to show them when they understood who he was from spending time with him.

Many people believe this is about a year and a half into his three-year ministry. So about halfway through, they said, you know what, you're walking on water, you're calming the sea, you're feeding 5,000 and 4,000, you're turning water into wine.

I mean, you're doing things that we can't understand. You're doing all these just magnificent things. You're healing people from a distance and you're touching the blind and the mute and the lame and they're walking and seeing and speaking.

You have to be the son of God. Many people want to make him king by force, and Jesus begins to speak of suffering. He begins to speak of this must, these things that had to happen.

Now hold on to that. Because when they began to understand who he was, then he showed them what he would do. You know, the reality is this.

[17 : 50] When we come to Christ, we're overjoyed. We're overjoyed with the fact that he can make all things new. We're overjoyed that I'm welcome.

I'm overjoyed that he can forgive me and redeem me and restore me. When I come to Christ, when I came to Christ, I'll just be honest with you. It was all about what he did for me.

And that's okay, because he showed me how much he loved me. He wooed me to himself. He won me over by showing me the price he had paid, by showing me how he can make me new.

He drew me with that love, right? But the longer I've been with Christ, now I'm still thankful and overjoyed with what he has done for me, but I am absolutely amazed at what he did in light of who he is.

Now it becomes all about him. Which means if we're walking in a faith that is still all about us, we're still very immature. It's what the author of Hebrews says, let us press on to things, maturity to the meat of the word, and not once again talk about the washing and regeneration, the raising of the dead and all that stuff.

[19 : 05] Let's get to the meat of it. And then he begins to speak of Christ. And it's all of Christ. It's all of Christ. It's all of Christ. It's all of Christ. Because we see the Messiah's suffering.

These are the things he must do. Secondly, we see Satan's tempting. There's the Messiah's suffering, and then there's Satan's tempting.

Jesus declares these things that must happen. I love this, by the way, because the Bible is so wrong. I love when Scripture shows us what happens in everyday living.

How when God declares something that must happen, man always comes with a way that it probably didn't need to happen. When God says, this must happen, Jesus says, these things must happen.

And man's like, no, it really doesn't have to. I mean, we can find a way around that. I'm sure there's a way around that. Because as soon as Jesus says this, then Peter, I love Peter.

[20 : 05] You've got to love Peter, right? Peter does all the cool stuff. Peter walks on water. Peter's the first man to run into the tomb. Peter cuts Malchus' ear off.

I mean, Peter's a go-getter. Peter makes the declaration. Peter jumps out of the boat, doesn't even worry about clothing himself when he's fishing because he sees Jesus on the shore and, you know, just runs up to Jesus after the resurrection.

You've got to love Peter. I've got a little bit of Peter's spirit inside of me. I love that. That forwardness that also gets you in trouble. You've got to love that.

Peter hears this and Jesus is saying this. Peter takes him aside. I mean, come on, just envision that. He is the son of God and man's going to take him aside.

Let me bring you over here and tell you something. It's almost humorous until we realize that's what we do. It's almost humorous until we realize that when we open up Scripture and the Lord talks to us and really begins to convict us and begins to show us things that are uncomfortable, then we want to take our Bible aside.

[21 : 11] But God, it really doesn't have to happen that way. See, there's a way around it. Because it says that Peter began to rebuke him. Wow.

Peter was probably on a little bit of an emotional high because, I mean, he had just been really just lifted up and Jesus had said, you know, you're the rock and, you know, you're right. This is the confession and, you know, I'm going to give you the keys of the kingdom.

And all of a sudden, Peter's greatly used of the Lord. We understand that. And he's used in a mighty way. And he literally opens up the door to the gospel in every new region throughout the book of Acts. And we see this. It says that when he hears this, Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, God forbid it.

Literally, what he's saying is, God have mercy. God forbid it, Lord. Lord, this shall never happen to you. Now, friend, let me just go ahead and stop.

When God says something must happen, we have no right to ever say it will never happen. This is where we know we're treading on wrong ground. If God says a must, let us never put a never there.

[22 : 15] But he says, this shall never happen. We're looking at Satan's tempting.

And let's just go ahead and affirm and settle this. Satan uses any tool he can find. And he really is not particular about who or when or where he uses them.

And too often, we make ourselves the most accessible to Satan when we're standing in the greatest spiritual victories. Peter's on the mountaintop of encouragement and feels like he is invincible.

And all of a sudden, Satan finds an opportune moment. Now, we know that this is not Peter so much as speaking. It is Satan speaking through Peter. Satan is not omnipotent.

That is, he's not all-powerful. He is not omniscient. That means he does not know all things. He's not omnipresent. He's not everywhere present. He is none of those things. Which tells me that Satan can't be doing something to you over there while he's doing something to me over here.

[23 : 26] Now, Satan's legion could be doing those things. But Satan is always bound in time and space and scope and realm and even opportunity. We understand that.

Okay? The reason we know he is none of these things is because God alone is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent. God alone has that position. And Satan is a created being. That is, he's an angel.

Now, he's a beautiful angel with power and prestige. And he is not a pitchfork bearing red thing with horns. He was an angel of light, one of the most beautiful creatures in all of God's creation.

Let us never forget that. And he comes to steal and kill and destroy. But he also does it through conniving and bringing in and right tempting. So he is pleasant. It looks good. All these things. But what we need to understand is Satan uses people.

And Satan's tempting often comes through individuals. And sometimes the most unlikely of individuals.

[24 : 27] Which causes us not to cast hatred or judgment upon Peter, but to pump the brakes upon our own life and say, Could it be me? Could it be me?

I remember the most offended time I ever had sitting in a pew. I remember that. I got angrier at the evangelist than I've ever been at any man that's ever stood up and preached.

I was at some backwoods church in Lynchburg. If any of you are from there, I'm not casting hatred towards there. I'm just saying I could never find it if I needed to again. I had gotten invited to go to revival.

My wife and I had been invited to go to a revival meeting with our neighbors at that time. And I said, Well, yes, I'll go with you. And the evangelist was preaching. And I was sitting in the aisle seat.

And I was a very new believer. I was probably just turned 21. I'd probably just a few months from accepting Christ myself. And he was one of those on-fire evangelists and was really just kind of pounding the pulpit and really kicking the pews, if you know what I mean.

[25 : 32] He was really stepping on my toes. And I remember he made this comment. He said, Are you the reason someone's not coming to Christ? And I got mad. So I'm not the reason.

Every man has to make his own decision. Right? Who am I? And he just kept pounding. And I was mad. Hopefully.

I don't know. I'm one of those. What's going on on the inside, quite often you can see on the outside. That's one of the bad qualities I have. That peter spirit, right? That it kind of shows on my face. That doesn't mean you guys need to walk around staring at my face all the time.

Because I pay real close attention. I learned that a long time ago. My wife's always looking at me like, No, you need to fix this. So, you know, I try to make it look a little bit better. But usually what's on the inside comes out on the outside in some way, form, or fashion.

So I might have looked mad. I don't know. I was trying really to hold it in. And I was really angry. But here's the reality is the brother sitting beside me was my neighbor. And I had been a believer for a long time.

[26 : 29] And he was not. And I had not witnessed to him. And I had not shared the gospel with him. And I had not done. You know, he's the pastor that followed me at Normandy now. And when I got home, I wrestled with that.

Now, is it my responsibility to share the gospel? No, but had I been living in such a way that it had been fruitful? No. Because as Tony Evans says, sometimes Satan catches a ride on the backs of believers.

And unfortunately, I think my back had been the back too often. See, Satan's tempting comes here.

And we know it's Satan's tempting because Jesus turned and said to Peter, Get behind me, Satan. His rebuke is not to Peter.

His rebuke is to Satan. Get behind me, Satan. You are a stumbling block to me. For you are not setting your mind on God's interest, but man's.

[27 : 32] Word of caution here, my friends. We're talking about the high cost of following. The moment you begin to step out and follow in light of the cost and sometimes even in spite of the cost.

The temptation will come. And too often the temptation comes from those closest and nearest to you. Too often the temptation comes in a way that seems like concern. But friend, I want to be honest with you.

You must always guard that which comes at you if it's challenging you on doing what God has commanded you to do. Rather than saying, well, this individual is concerned for me.

I believe Peter was honestly concerned. We need to ask ourselves this honest evaluation. Is what is being told me contrary or contradictory to what God has commanded me to do?

No matter how close the person is to you. No matter how much love the person has for you. If it contradicts what God has clearly commanded you to do. Then it is Satan tempting you to take the easy way out.

[28 : 31] Because man always likes to find a way around. I remember when I surrendered to the call of the ministry.

I don't like the word surrendered. I answered. I didn't really fight. And I was going to take it seriously. I had well-meaning, well-intentioned, loving people challenge me.

Really challenging me. And I think they did it with the best of intentions. But also believe that Satan can use anyone to offer you a temptation.

Really believe it. The temptation to go around. Yesterday we were out riding. And I like to go down roads and just, it drives me nuts if I see a road that I don't know where it goes.

Maybe you're okay with that. I'm not. For years we had driven this place. I'm not going to tell you where it is. Because sometimes it's okay for my wife and I to get away without kids. And get away without anybody really knowing where we're going.

[29 : 43] So we were going down the road and we went over an hour and a half away and still ran into people we know. I'll just go ahead and tell you that. But anyway, so we're going. And I've been down this road thousands of times.

And buses and cars and all this. And there had always been this road that had just agitated me. Because it looked like a cool road. And I'd never been able to take it. Because man had made an easier path. Yesterday, the pastor's wife, very gracious to me.

She said, go ahead. I know you want to take it. So I did. I got off the easy path. Really cool road. Really cool road. Because man has a way of making it easier on ourselves.

Man has a way of going around it. Peter says, these things don't need to happen. And Jesus says, this is Satan's tempting. Friend, listen. Following is hard.

The temptation of Satan is. It doesn't have to be. Third. Third. And I know I'm going long. But stay with me.

[30 : 46] Third. There's man's calling. I would do you severe injustice if we didn't finish this. So I will finish it. Third. Man's calling. Here is the most repeated phrase of Christ.

Here we see what it is that the gospel authors wanted us to see. We've already seen it once in Matthew chapter 10. We will see it here again in Matthew 16.

Then Jesus said to his disciples. Now we need to put this together. As we've said it's repeated in all four gospels. So we need to make sure that we have this in its proper setting.

Because this particular case is also repeated in the gospel accounts. This particular case where it is stated. And this particular case immediately following the confession of Christ. And what Christ says about his suffering.

Mark and Luke also repeat this case. Mark tells us that when he turned and he called the crowd to him with his disciples. Now that's important. Because if we don't put Mark's account with this.

[31 : 47] Then we would think that what Jesus is saying here. And the admonition he's given here. Is just to the 12. Right. But it's not. It's not limited to the 12. Because Mark tells us the scope. That it is for all people.

He calls the crowd to himself with his disciples. And we don't know that they're still in Caesarea Philippi. Probably not. They probably came back a little bit. And we have all these other things that are going on.

But he calls the crowd. And he has his disciples. And he makes this statement in verse 24. Then Jesus said to his disciples. If anyone wishes to come after me.

Now. Stop right there. Because I want you to see this. When Christ speaks of his suffering. He puts the emphatic must there.

The New American Standard. I believe. Has accurately translated it. The King James. I believe the New King James. And maybe other translations. Do not have this word there.

[32 : 43] But it is. It is in the original. In the force of the original. Because the Greek has so much different force. To it than English. If anyone wishes to come after me.

He must deny himself. Take up his cross. Follow me. Here's man's calling.

He must deny himself. Take up his cross. Follow after me. With the same force that Christ speaks of his own suffering.

Here he speaks of man's calling. This. Is again. A divine. Necessity. Hard.

High costs. Of following. Jesus says that he must deny himself. Now. We have made that easier. Because we want to tell you what you must deny. Well if you give up this.

[33 : 48] This. This. This. And this. Then surely that's what he means. And if you give up all these bad things. And you give up this habit. This habit. This habit. The old school preachers. And I love them. I love listening to them dearly. But there was this vein of preaching.

That we wanted to go through things. Especially in the early years of our own nation. And they would come through. And they would say. Well give up this. This. This. This. And this. And you'll do it. But the wording here. In the original. To deny. Is really a word that is full of power.

And force. And it's so much more than just giving up little things. To deny oneself. Is the same word used. The Pharisees and the Sadducees denied Jesus Christ. That means to count as nothing.

And to cast off. They denied Christ. They cast him off. And what Jesus is saying. Is that whoever. If any man wishes. Or longs to follow him.

Or to come after him. Which is salvation. Right? Discipleship. Here we have the wording. He must count himself.

[34 : 47] As nothing. And follow. Completely. After Christ. That is. He must count oneself.

As absolutely. Unnecessary. His pleasures. And his comforts. Are discounted. To the reality of his service. And his sufferings. He must cast off. His easiness. And he must cast off.

His comfort levels. And he must cast off. His joys. And he must cast off. Everything that his flesh. And his life. So desires. And he must cast them aside.

For usefulness. For the sake of the kingdom. Deny himself. I told you it was hard. And we rejoice.

In the cross of Christ. Because the cross of Calvary. Paid our sins. The cross of Calvary. Took our shame. The blood on that cross washes us as white as snow.

[35 : 44] But the man who hung on that cross says that those who come after him have their own cross. That they take up their cross.

Because, see, the man carrying the cross, as has been said so many times throughout history, faces one direction, has one outcome.

And has nothing to look back to. The reality is, it's hard. Man's calling, in light of the Messiah's suffering, is to deny oneself, to pick up his cross, and follow him.

You say, oh, but people will think I'm nuts. Peter thought Jesus was. Oh, people will mock me. Well, they mocked him. Well, people will ridicule me. They ridiculed him. Well, people won't understand.

They didn't understand him. Even his disciples didn't understand him. Jesus says, I am setting my mind on God's interest, not man's. And the calling is that you will do the same. But see, even in light of the weight of these words, I can almost guarantee you, because I am man too.

[37 : 07] And while you get to hear it on Sunday, I get to wrestle with it from Monday till Sunday, right? And while you get to hear it here, I wrestle with it all day long. And I can almost guarantee you what's going on. Almost immediately, your mind begins to reconcile how you can take this and turn the must into a never.

Almost immediately in our mind, we begin to say, well, I know that's what it says, but. And we begin to rebuke the Lord because he said it.

And then to just express its weight, he offers these statements that all begin with four. For whoever wishes to save his life, physical, will lose it, spiritual.

But whoever loses his life, physical, will, for my sake, will find it, spiritual. So there's this contradiction between physical life and spiritual life.

For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits its soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? See, here's the weight of it. The reality is, is if we don't make that choice and we don't hear that admonition and we don't answer that calling, then we are just by our unresponsiveness to it, we are saying, well, I'm going to just live my best life now.

[38 : 29] And I'm going to gain this world now. And I'm going to get up whatever I can now. And the Bible tells us in other places that a man cannot redeem his own soul, let alone the soul of his brother. Whatever you gain, what good is that going to do to you?

You say, but I've got so much to lose. Jesus says, but you have so much to gain. You say, well, you don't understand. And this is where it gets complicated and confusion.

And this is where you begin. People say, well, if I was to do this and I would have to quit my job and I would lose all this other stuff. And I say, yes, but you gain this. You say, pastor, are you telling me I need to quit my job? No, I'm just saying that if the Lord tells you to quit your job, quit your job.

Because you're following him, not me. You say, but pastor, I don't understand. This is hard. Yes. Surely there's an easier way around it. No. There is.

But you don't want to go there. Because it's a high cost to follow. D.O. Moody first came to Christ. Dwight Lyman Moody was not a believer growing up.

[39 : 38] As a matter of fact, he was a very angry young man and really got just bitter and made it his ambition when he left home to go into the workforce and to make his millions. Literally, that was his ambition. He wanted to make a million dollars.

So he went and he worked, I think, up in Akron, Ohio for a little while. And he was working in a rubber factory up there. And then he got a job as a shoe salesman, a shoe repairman over in Chicago.

So he went to Chicago and was working in a cobbler shop making shoes and really had made it his ambition to make a million dollars. That was his goal. And he was on his way to do it. He became just a very, very prominent businessman.

He became really involved in big circles. You know, guys like Wrigley, last name Wrigley, Mr. Wrigley of Wrigley's Field in Chicago. That was kind of one of his counterparts. And, you know, just hanging out with people like that. And he came to Christ.

And someone told him after he came to Christ, by the way, he came to Christ because his Sunday school teacher stopped by and just shared the gospel with him in the back of the shoe repair shop. Not because some pastor preached a sermon because he wouldn't go to church or anything else.

[40 : 35] Someone looked at him and made this statement. And says, the world has not yet seen what God could do with a man wholly committed and devoted to him. Moody looked at that man and said, I will be that man.

So in his uneducated state, he left the shoe shop, found a dilapidated bar, turned it into a Sunday school, had over a thousand street boys, ended up building the YMCA there in Chicago, built a metropolitan, well, greater Chicago tabernacle, which became Moody Church.

Started Moody Bible Institute. Started a boy's school in his hometown. Started a girl school in his hometown. Started works. And never once pastored. He was never the pastor of anything that he planted.

Because he didn't feel himself educated enough and never was ordained because he lacked education. He said, I will be that man.

Absolutely surrender. And if any of you have ever read some of Moody's actual writings, you will be amazed that God used him. The man couldn't spell or write or anything. I mean, literally, he wrote things the way they sounded.

[41 : 49] And it's almost impossible to read them. It's humorous. He said, I will be that man. And the reason he wanted to be that man is our fourth and final thing that's quick, I promise.

The high cost of falling, is it worth it? The fourth thing is the king's coming. Because look at what it says. We really don't have to add anything else to it.

I will clarify one thing really quick for you. We don't have to add anything else to it. As he begins to call them to this high standard, he gives this declarative statement.

Again, in light of the reality of his suffering that must happen. In light of the calling that he's given to them that must take place. For the Son of Man is going to come. For the Son of Man is going to come.

In the glory of his Father. With his angels. Here's another divine imperative. He is going to come.

[42 : 54] He is going to come. That message we listened to yesterday of SM Lockers. I don't even know the title of it. He was speaking of being a service for Christ.

He said, too many of us have confined ourselves to trying to figure out the day that he's coming.

As opposed to figure out the day he's given us to live in. We're more concerned about his coming than we are about our serving. We serve in light of the reality he is coming.

You say, well, when? I don't know and I don't need to know because he tells me here that he is. He is going to come. And when he comes, he comes in the glory of his Father and his angels and will then repay every man according to his deeds.

Now let's clarify that last sentence just so you don't leave with confusion. 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.

[43 : 57] Again, here's his kingdom word. Some have said historically that applies to what's going to take place in the very next chapter. Peter, James, and John up on the Mount of Transfiguration and seeing him in his glory.

But when we read it in light of the reality with Mark that tells us that there's a great multitude around him, probably more than likely what Jesus is referring to is the multitudes that were there.

And they will see the coming of his kingdom with the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. In A.D. 70 when Jerusalem fell, Christianity as a faith went from being a part and a portion of Judaism to being a completely separate kingdom.

It went from being something seen as connected to just the Jewish faith to being a stand alone. Because where the Jews lost their ability to worship, the Christians began to really realize that they were given a world for their kingdom purposes.

They began to see how the gospel was spreading to the nations. They began to see how the fall of a city did not affect the building of the kingdom. Where Judaism had to cease, Christianity began to grow.

[44 : 57] And there were those who were alive who saw that. See, it does not say that you will see me coming. Because if he was referring to his second coming, either he was delusional or he was wrong. And he was neither one of those two things.

He was speaking of his coming in his kingdom. And the coming of the kingdom is seen in the growth of the church. And the church really began to take over and really began to spread historically.

And when Jerusalem fell, a number of Jews stood up and took notice and said, Well, there must be something to this. That's my interpretation of the passage. You're welcome to interpret it however you like.

I just felt like I would share with you mine. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for this day. We thank you for the time we've had to look at your word. And Lord, we realize that the subject is difficult and hard.

Lord, we know that the Savior is more than present. Lord, would you be there to lead us and to guide us. To call us to yourself, to restore and redeem us, to use us as you see fit.

[45 : 57] And may we be surrendered to your purposes for your glory and your glory alone. We ask it all in Christ's name. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.