

Message #59

Matthew 16:21-28

A life committed to Jesus Christ is a life filled with difficulties and hardships; but it is also a life filled with many blessings. Not too many believed in Him and those who did, didn't understand Him.

JESUS CHRIST TEACHES HIS DISCIPLES ABOUT THE SUFFERINGS HE MUST ENDURE AS SAVIOR AND ABOUT THE LIFESTYLE THE DISCIPLES MUST ENDURE AS HIS SERVANTS .

POINT #1 – Jesus begins to make known what specifically is going to happen to Him. **16:21**

I want you to notice the prepositional phrase which begins **verse 21** “from that time.” This phrase only occurs in one other place, in Matthew 4:17. In Matthew 4:17 it referred to the introduction of the message and ministry of the King and kingdom to Israel. In **Matt. 16:21** it refers to the introduction of the sufferings of the King to the disciples in view of a future Church Age (16:18). The Church Age cannot be built until after the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. That word “must” is the Greek word “dei,” which refers to a divine necessity.

(Fact #1) - It was a necessity for Christ to go to Jerusalem.

(Fact #2) - It was a necessity for Christ to suffer many things by religious leaders.

Here is the first of many predictions of Christ's sufferings in Matthew (17:12, 22-23; 20:18-19, 28). Now carefully notice who would lead the suffering crusade—elders, chief priests and scribes. You would not expect the religious leaders to reject the righteous King of Kings, but the entire religious system was not right with God. By naming these leaders, it shows how evil their religion was and this would certainly imply there would be some religious trial. The truth of God will always be hated by religious frauds that are not right with God.

(Fact #3) - It was a necessity for Christ to be killed.

Hebrews 10:5-7 says that God would take no desire in the sacrificial death of animals, but would require the sacrificial death of One in a real human body (Heb. 10:10). The only way one can be right with God is through the death of Jesus Christ. Christ's death was the will of God and His is the only death that will make one right with Him.

(Fact #4) - It was a necessity for Christ to be raised on the third day.

Christ's resurrection proves His deity and our justification, and proves in Him is life.

POINT #2 – Peter rebukes the Lord. **16:22**

Now Peter was an emotional guy, but those who follow their emotions typically end up doing and saying stupid and even satanic things. Peter did not grasp the plan of God. Keep in mind that Jesus had just said this plan is a divine necessity. This is not an optional matter, this is a “must,” it is the plan of God.

POINT #3 – Jesus rebukes Peter. **16:23**

(Rebuke #1) - Peter is being used by Satan—the plan of Satan was to try to keep Christ from going to the cross (Matt. 4:-10). Satan is the enemy behind Peter’s words. Any person, no matter how religious, who tries to preach salvation by bypassing the cross, is satanic.

(Rebuke #2) - Peter is a stumbling block to Jesus—our lips and our lives can either be used to draw people to Christ or cause them to stumble in relationship with Christ.

(Rebuke #3) - Peter’s mind is not focused on God’s interests, but Satan’s interests. The moment we set our minds on our own interests rather than God’s, we move into Satan’s domain. Man’s interests are not God’s interests and they are in line with Satan.

POINT #4 – Jesus teaches about one wishing to be Christ’s disciple. **16:24-28**

Now carefully notice that this address is to “His” disciples, not unbelievers. This text is not about how one becomes saved, but how one becomes a saved servant (John 12:24-26). You do not have to deny yourself anything to be saved; Christ did all the work.

(Prerequisite #1) - One must deny himself. **16:24a**

The Greek word “deny” is one that means to refuse or to ignore one’s self (Smith, p. 44). A disciple will be one who will make pointed, concrete, moment-by-moment decisions (aorist tense) to ignore interests of self to pursue the interests of the will of God.

(Prerequisite #2) - One must take up his cross. **16:24b**

Now notice the pronoun “his.” Each disciple will have his own cross.

(Prerequisite #3) - One must be willing to follow Christ. **16:24c**

The present imperative means that a disciple has been commanded to continually follow Jesus Christ. One must be willing to continually obey His Word and will.

(Prerequisite #4) - One must be willing to lose his own life. **16:25**

Notice the conjunction “for,” which gives further explanation about being a disciple. A disciple who is truly interested in “saving” his life will lose it for Christ’s sake. The idea of “losing” one’s life is the idea of destroying one’s own self and nature and yielding it to Christ.

(Prerequisite #5) - One who is profitable in eternity will always be focused on his soul on earth. **16:26**

Again the conjunction “for” pertains to the discipleship discussion. The noun “profit” is critical. The true disciple, who does not want to lost profitability, will never exchange worldly things for eternal, Christological things.

POINT #5 – Jesus teaches about rewards for His disciples. **16:27**

Jesus will eventually reward disciples for their faithfulness or lack thereof.

POINT #6 – Jesus promises some disciples will get a glimpse of His kingdom. **16:29**

Christ is referring to the glimpse His disciples would get of His transfiguration. In fact, Peter would later refer to this event as a display of Christ’s majestic glory (II Pet. 1:16-18).

Discipleship is not easy, but the rewards of discipleship are eternal.