

Following Jesus: Week 5

Feb. 9, 2020

Matthew 16:24-28

Warming Up

1. Share with your group something you've done in your life that was incredibly costly (time, \$, energy). Was it worth the cost? Why or Why not? Would you do it again? What did you receive in paying the price?

Knowing the Gospel...

2. In vv. 25-27 there are 3 reasons a disciple must let go of his earthly life and take up his cross. What are they? What are some examples of how people try to: "save their lives", "gain the whole world"? How does our culture promote and reinforce these pursuits? How have you seen this play out in the lives of adults you know? Kids?

3. Compare Matthew 10:38 with 16:24-28. What is involved in taking up one's cross as Jesus commands? Why do you think Jesus used crucifixion (a shocking metaphor), as a metaphor for discipleship? How did Jesus set an example for us? (John 4:31-34, John 6:38-39, Matthew 26:36-46, 1 Pet. 2:21-23.).

4. How does Jesus' call to discipleship differ from the "prosperity gospel" that is still prevalent in our country? Is it wrong to be 'prosperous' as a Christian?

Living the Gospel...

5. In verse 24, What 3 things does Jesus require of a disciple? What do each of these mean? What might each of these look like in the life of a genuine disciple?

(Matthew 10:34-39, 8:18-22, Luke 9:57-62). Draw a portrait of a disciple (Make a list of characteristics, priorities, practices, pursuits of a person who genuinely follows Jesus).

Which ones do you struggle with? Why?

6. Why does Jesus place such an emphasis on our souls (lives)? Jn. 3:16, 1 Cor. 6:19-20, 1 Pet. 1:18-19. Since Jesus puts such an emphasis on the value of our souls, what does that say about where our priorities should be? (See 1 Peter 2:24, 4:1-6, 2 Peter 1:3-11, 3:10-13). What are some ways we can 'tend to our souls'?

7. What challenges, hurdles, temptations, pitfalls do you tend to wrestle with the most often when it comes to: Denying yourself, taking up your cross, and following Jesus? (Could come from either w/in, other people, from our culture, or all 3). What do you need prayer for the most in your desire to follow Jesus?

8. What role does/should church play in an individual's process of growing as a genuine disciple of Jesus?

Telling the Gospel...

9. How can you help someone (who doesn't yet follow Jesus), see the value in it? How can you help them see the emptiness the world offers?

10. Take up the challenge to pray for someone in your life that you know is apathetic or even antagonistic towards Jesus. Take up the stiffer challenge to tell them you love them and are praying for them.

Next Week: Matthew 19:16-30

