

Matthew 16:24–28
Crucified Disciples

Saturday, March 22, 2025 ▫ Read Matthew 16:24–28

Questions from the Scripture text: Who spoke to whom in v24? What desire does He encourage? Whom must they leave/behind in order to do so? What must they take up in order to follow Him? What desire does He warn against in v25? What will happen to the one who tries to do this for himself? What must he give up, for Whose sake, instead? What will the outcome of that be? What would it be worthless to gain, even if you could (v26)? What can't he keep in this way? Why—what will the Son of Man do (v27)? In what glory? To do what? Who will do what, before when (v28)?

How does one follow a crucified Christ? Matthew 16:24–28 prepares us for the sermon in the morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these five verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **we follow a crucified Christ by taking up our own cross, in dependence upon Him.**

Jesus has refused the temptation to have a kingdom without a cross.

If we follow a King Who goes through a cross to glory, then we must be followers who go through crosses behind Him to go to glory with Him.

In order to be Christ's we must leave behind being our own. We cannot be our own purpose, must not attempt to live by our own power, ought not to live for our own pleasure. This, of course, is no loss at all—however impossible it is for our flesh to be that way. Who can compare being one's own to being Christ's in any of these areas?

One of these areas is of particular importance. In 10:39, it was him who finds his life who loses it. Now, in v25, it is the one who desires to save his life who will lose it. If Christ cannot come into His glory except through a cross, how much more this is true for us: we cannot come to His glory with Him, except through His cross. We must give up saving ourselves, or else we will lose our lives. Losing our lives for His sake begins with losing any illusions of being our own savior.

But being crucified with Christ is not only how the Christian life begins. It defines how the Christian life proceeds. Gal 2:20 is the Bible's own commentary on the concept that Jesus teaches here. To be crucified with Christ means that it can no longer be we who live, but Christ Who lives in us—that the life that we live in the flesh can only be lived by faith in the Son of God, Who loved us and gave Himself for us.

Though only Christ's cross can atone for ourselves or achieve our standing with God, each of us have our own cross assigned to us by God. The One Who created us and loves us has assigned to each of us our own cross. We are not permitted to take up His cross; we are not offered anyone else's cross but ours. Whatever pain, whatever shame, whatever death He might assign to us, it comes with the territory, and that territory is Christ. How worthwhile each believer ought to consider his own personal cross to be.

If we would spare ourselves pain to seek comfort, or spare ourselves shame to seek status, or spare ourselves death to prolong life... what would we gain? Suppose you could achieve all of those things to the maxim When the Son of Man comes in the glory of His Father, what will all that you had, taken altogether, amount to by comparison? And when He begins to reward according to works, what could be your hope without Christ and His works? You cannot give anything in exchange for your soul (v26, cf. Ps. 49:6–9).

Indeed, some disciples were just about to get a glimpse of that glory (v28, cf. 17:1–8). And every Christian is one who has seen that glory by faith (cf. 2Co 4:6).

What is your purpose in life? How are you bringing that into the purpose of each day, specifically? By what power do you live? By what means has He given you to depend upon Him and His power? What crosses has He given you to bear? In what hope do you bear those crosses?

Sample prayer: We praise You, our crucified Lord, and ask that by Your grace, we might be Yours and not our own. Grant that we might lose our lives for Christ's sake and come into His glory with Him, we ask in His Name, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP49A "Hear This, All Earth's Nations" or TPH332 "Songs of Thankfulness and Praise"

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Matthew 16, verses 24-28. These are God's words, then Jesus said to his disciples. If anyone desires to come after me? I am deny himself and to take up his cross. And follow me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it. But whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

For what profit? Is it if a man gains the whole world? And loses his own soul. Or what will a man give in exchange? For his soul. For the man will come for the son of man.

For the son of man will come in the glory of his father. With his angels, and then he will reward each according to his works. Assuredly, I say to you. There are some standing here. Who shall not taste death? Till they see the son of man coming. In his kingdom.

Men. So far, the reading of gods inspired. And Aaron tort. Verse 23 has taken place just between. Jesus and Peter. But verse in verse 24. After rejecting for his own? self. Have a kingdom without a cross. The temptation to try to have a kingdom of that across? Lord Jesus proceeds in verse 24, not just to address Peter.

But to address all of his disciples. And. as far as they are concerned. he has been. Telling them what he must. Suffer. Or that he must suffer. It doesn't say in verse 21 that he has been very. Specific. About even the sort of death. He definitely tells them about that later.

But it just suffers many things. it must suffer many things from the elders, Chief priests, and scribes. And be killed and raised on the third day. Now, however. He's letting them know that if they believe that he's the Christ. If they believe that he's the son of the Living God, and if.

For them. That means that. they must have him, and they must follow him. that it will cost them everything. If anyone desires to come after me, let him. Deny himself. And follow me.

In. 14. He would say it this. If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, wife, and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life. Also. He cannot be my disciple, and whoever it is not bear his cross and come after me. Cannot be my disciple.

And so. It's not just. all of the other priorities in life that you have to be. willing to leave behind. In order to follow Christ, you can't even have yourself. As your priority in life. If you're going to be? Christ's disciple. If you're going to follow him as the Christ, if you're going to follow him.

As the son of the Living God. If you are going to? Come after him. You have to as it were. Leave yourself behind. In this case, the first place that you do that the first way that you do that is you give up. all hope. That you can?

be worthy or. A tone for yourself. How you give up all hope that you can save yourself. When he had spoken like this? Back in chapter 10, he spoke of. Finding chapter 10, verse 39. He who finds his life will lose it, and he loses his life for my sake or find it.

But now he changes find to save. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it. But whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. so it's not just that. we have to leave behind. Our former. Priorities and pleasures and have the Lord be our priority and.

Whatever priorities he establishes for us, be the priorities under him. And have the Lord be our pleasure and whatever Pleasures are from him and in him. would become our Pleasures. It's not just that. But we also must give up saving ourselves. For whoever desires to save his life.

We'll lose it. This means we must accept God's way alone. Of R being made right with him. Of our being atoned for. Of our being brought all the way home. To glory. Just like the Lord Jesus had to submit himself. to the way that God had decreed that he would come into his kingdom and come into his glory.

He could not have his kingdom without a cross. Satan himself attempted him. To that in the wilderness in chapter 4. Peter just now! has a very full, foolishly full-heartedly. tempted him to a kingdom without a cross. just now in chapter 16. the way to glory for him was through a grave.

He had to suffer many things and be killed. And be raised the third day. So also for us. We cannot take our own way to Salvation. Cannot take our own way. To forgiveness. So we cannot take our own way to righteousness. We cannot take our own way, even to Holiness or.

To glorification. We must give up.

Ideas we have of how we will. Get any of these things and? Instead receive from God his salvation. In the way. that he says, and this is not just something that happens at the beginning of the Christian Life. This is the way of the whole Christian Life.

That's the point of the whole book of Galatians. when Paul is writing to the Galatians, he's so alarmed. Because they begin by faith. But now, there's, they're starting to. try to proceed or to grow by works. They've been deceived by these men. We call judaizers. into?

Into treating the Christian Life as something where? You Begin by faith, but once you have the faith, you have all these things, that you do and the doing of them is what? Continues and increases. Spiritual life and? your progress and Holiness. And. of course, Paul there, the Holy Spirit by Paul says.

That's a completely different gospel. You Begin by faith. You continue by faith. You begin by grace, you continue by Grace. You Begin by Union with Christ. and you continue by Union with Christ. And it's in that context that you have Galatians 2, verse 20. Where he says I am crucified with Christ.

And so you have? This denying of self? And not saving your own life. The only hope that you can have for atonement for your sins is crucifixion. But even if you were to be crucified yourself, it could not pay for your sins. Only Christ's crucifixion. Is valuable enough. To pay for sins?

And so you must be United to him. You must believe into him. You must give up. Atoning for what you've done? You are guilty. You have sinned against God. You deserve death and hell. But you begin in the Christian Life. By being crucified with Christ. And yet, you also continue in the Christian Life.

As one who is crucified with Christ, and this is how he says it. In Galatians 2. I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I, who live. But Christ, who lives in me. The life I now live in the flesh. I live by faith. In the Son of God.

Who loved me? And gave himself for me. And so Christ has his cross. Which atones for us? Christ says his cross, which is the way that. Not only are we forgiven, but that our old self dies. Coming to him believing into him, giving up our old, old self, leaving our old self to, to come and be a new self.

That is not our own, but it's his. That is not in ourself, but is. In him. that is the beginning of a life. that is lived by faith in him. So? He has. He has had his cross, but then he gives us our cross. And the life that we live by, faith in him.

There's one that includes includes things like? suffering. Pain. Includes includes things like? being ridiculed and mocked and attacked and persecuted. The cross was not just a method of execution. It was a method of torture. And it was a method of humiliation. And we must understand. That belonging to a crucified savior?

May and will include. Things that are torturous. And things that are humiliating. And so we leave ourselves behind. And we stick to him knowing. That's sticking to him. Means that there are particular pains that are assigned to us. Not the Pains of Jesus on the cross. Not even the pains that are assigned to other believers.

But your cross is assigned to you. Your particular pains in your life have been selected for you by God in Union with Christ. And the fact that they're selected for you by God should, in some sense, even make them precious to you. The fact that they come to you?

as a consequence with of and joined to being united to the Lord Jesus. as the spirit convinces you of that, it takes your particular Pains in your life. And it makes them precious to you. Your particular humiliations being mocked and shamed and exposed and ridiculed. Having others consider you as deserving what you get.

This all was part of being put up on a cross and being stripped naked and mocked and having others. shame and ridicule and say you deserve what you get. And yet, if you're getting it for Jesus's sake and with him. And if it's been selected for you. By his father and your father.

For your particular part of being with him and in him. It can be not just bearable. But again, precious. If anyone desires to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross. Nobody else's yours! Selected for you. By your creator and your savior. Assigned to you?

By your creator. And savior. Do not try to save yourself. Do not try to make your own way to heaven. Do not come up here with your own ways. Of making up for or atoning for? What you've done? Do not come up. Try to come up with your own ways of how you're going to be right with God and.

Feel that things are right between you and him. You take your ideas and your feelings out. Of being great with God. You don't save your own life. That's the way to lose it. That's the way to create another religion and another religion. Not only cannot save, but another religion that looks a little bit like Christianity, but isn't Christianity, it blasphemes Jesus?

It doesn't give him the place that belongs to him. And it actually deserves the wrath of God, much less. Can it help take away? The wrath of God from you? So, do not try to save yourself whoever desires to save his life. We'll lose it. And especially if you think.

That. You can spare yourself. This, the suffering the pain. The shame. But you can have your cake and eat it too that you can. Have Jesus, but not suffer with Jesus. That you can have Jesus, but not be. Ridiculed and marked and despised. With Jesus. If you desire to save your life if?

If you come and take yourself aside, like, Peter took Jesus aside and said far, be it from you self. This shall not happen to you self. And you're trying to save your life. Like Peter thought he was trying to save Jesus's life. Jesus says, no. That's the way to lose your life.

you must have. You must have him. And whatever God has appointed for you with him, particularly whatever crosses. what the Lord has assigned to you? With him. And this is a hard saying, but verse 26 reminds us, what does it stake? That either you genuinely have Christ and his salvation and?

You gain your soul. Or. You do not have Christ and his salvation. And there is nothing else that you can do. To gain your soul. So, whatever else you thought you gained? Maybe a little less pain a little more comfort for a little longer in this life. maybe.

A little less being ridiculed and despised by others. And you gain some of those things. Suppose you gained all of those things? And you had the most. physically Pleasant and socially. Approved. Life for the rest of your life in this world. Something that doesn't exist in this world, a pain-free everyone happy with your life.

Which of course doesn't even exist, but suppose you could? But you didn't have Christ. And you didn't have his sacrifice taking away your sin. And you didn't have his righteousness, making you right with God. If you take everything else that you accumulate. Could you offer it to God? To atone for your soul.

When it. When it comes to the last day? And the Lord Jesus is repaying according to their works. And there are believers who are? atoned for by him and righteous in him and their Works have been done in Union with him. And he has taken the penalty for all that is sinful and everything that they have done that is right.

And good has not even been done from themselves, but is being rewarded according to what he deserves. Because it's done been done in him, and that's how the Believers are receiving. But then the unbeliever. And particularly the falsely professing Christian. Is receiving, not just according to the sinfulness. Because everything he's done has been sinful.

But he is receiving according to the fact that he had Jesus's name on him. But did not live. From the Life of Christ in Union with him by his grace. And so not only does everything he has done. sinful. Everything he has done has been a blasphemy. Has been a mocking of the name of Jesus, which he has had upon him, but he lived from himself.

Instead of living from Christ. And in that day, which is about the glory. Of the son of man. You won't be able to. Take the whole world. And exchange it for your soul. The son of man will come in the glory of his father. With his angels, and he will reward each according to his works.

And one of the great difficulties for us as we have. Such a hard time, not such a hard time. It is impossible for us to imagine. The greatness of the glory of Jesus. He's about to give a glimpse of it to. A few disciples, but even that is going to be a glimpse and even that Glimpse is going to be so much more than they understand or can handle or know how to respond to.

he says, assuredly. I say to you, there are some standing here. Who shall not taste death? Till they see the son of man coming in his kingdom. Now, there are some say that that refers to his resurrection, which. His resurrection is part of his exaltation. That's true. yet it's not you who stand here.

It's. I suppose. By some, it could mean 11 out of 12 since. Judas will not see the resurrection. But. The not taste death till they see this on a man coming in his kingdom is immediately followed in next week's passage by. Now, after six days, Etc. And so.

When Peter, James and John on the mountain? I have this glimpse of the glory of Christ. They have this glimpse of the one. Before whom we will stand. And to whom you cannot give. any accumulation of anything and everything in this world in exchange for your soul.

And. Do not think. That you can actually reduce. The amount of pain or the amount of Shame, even if you could. Reduce it to zero for the rest of this life. You do it at the cost of increasing it to Infinity. For all of eternity. And what a stupid trade that would be.

And yet, it's the trade that we're making. If rather than saying? Christ is all for me. And whatever comes with him is not only worth it, but precious. To me, for his sake, If instead of saying that you say? It's nice to. Think about Christ and I want to be able to have him without pain and without suffering without mocking.

Without shame. Then you will find. That you do not have him. And whatever little you thought you were sparing yourself in this life. cost you. Infinitely more. Than you could ever save. So the Lord? Grant to us to receive this. From him from his. That we would be willing.

and welcome. Whatever comes to us with Jesus? So long as we may have him.

Lord, grant to us. And then it would be true not only. Of how we have begun in the Christian Life. But how we continue in? That we would be crucified with you. That we would be crucified with Christ. That. It would no longer be we who live. But Christ, who lives in?

And the. That we live in the flesh. We would live by faith. And the Son of God who loved us and gave himself for us. So, give us to live that way. We ask in his name. Amen.