

SBC – April 24, 2022  
Matt. 16:24-28 (NKJV)  
***“Take Up Your Cross and Follow Jesus”***

# 61

***Prayer:***

**Slide # 1**

***Theme: Christ the King***

***Outline:***

- Chps. 1-2 The Advent of the King. (Proving His LEGAL right to the throne by His genealogy.)
- Chp. 3 The Forerunner of the King and the King’s baptism.
- Chp. 4 The Test of the King. (Proving His MORAL right to the throne by not yielding to temptation; and exhibiting His kingdom resume.)
- Chps. 5-7 The Pronouncements of the King. (Proving His JUDICIAL right to the throne as seen in the wisdom of His kingdom teaching.)
- Chps. 8-10 The Power of the King. (Proving His PROPHETICAL right to the throne by fulfilling prophecy.)
- Chps. 11-12 The Rejection of the King.
- Chp. 13 The Parables of the King.
- Chps. 14-16 The Revelations of the King.**
- Chps. 17-20 The Instructions of the King.
- Chps. 21-23 Formal Rejection of the King.
- Chps. 24-25 The Predictions of the King.
- Chps. 26-27 The Passion of the King.
- Chp. 28 The Resurrection of the King.

Matthew 16 is a pivotal chapter in the gospel of Matthew. The spiritual leaders in the nation of Israel have rejected Jesus as the Christ. The nation was fickle not knowing what to think about Jesus – thinking He is someone special and yet not recognizing Him as the Christ – not recognizing His divine nature.

With about 6 months left in His earthly ministry Jesus asked the ultimate question that was the MAJOR point of emphasis in His ministry up to this point. He asked, “***Who do men say that I am?***” and then again to the disciples, “***who do you say that I am?***” This is the ultimate question that everything else builds on. As Jesus told the Jews in John 8:24, “***if you do not believe that I am, you will die in your sins.***”

Peter under inspiration properly answered Jesus’ question by saying, “***You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.***” (Mt. 16:16)

That was the right answer. It is this ROCK TRUTH that Christ went on to say He would build His Church upon in which Peter would have a leading role.

But then Jesus went on to tell the disciples to tell no one that He was the Christ (v. 20). The problem was they did **not yet understand the CROSS WORK** of Christ that was yet to come. They now understood WHO He was but they did not yet understand that He must go to Jerusalem where He would be abused by the religious leaders, killed, and then raised the third day (v. 21).

Jesus went on to share this with them and Peter then tried to correct the Lord on this and was soundly rebuked for not being mindful of the things of God (v. 23). Peter did not yet understand the full orb ed plan of God involving BOTH the PERSON and the WORK of Jesus the Messiah.

First comes suffering then glory. That is the pattern for the Messiah. But there is one more thing they needed to understand. This pattern of suffering then glory not only applies to the Messiah, but also to all those who would be His disciples (Jn. 15:18-20; Rom. 8:17). To identify with the Messiah is not only to share in His future kingdom glory it is also to identify with the truth of His cross.

The disciples had been thinking kingdom. They had preached the kingdom is at hand. They argued over who would be the greatest in the kingdom. They were definitely thinking about what they were going to get out of it in the here and now.

But they were not thinking about a cross to bear in order to get there. This is the great truth that Jesus now shares with them at the end of Matthew 16. Yes, Christ's people are on their way to the kingdom, but it comes by way of a cross. The cross is the way to the kingdom. That is true first and foremost in relation to Christ, but then in a secondary sense it has application for all Christ's followers.

This is not a problem for true believers who willingly deny self, take up their cross, and follow Christ. But for people like Judas this is a problem. You see Judas was all in as long as the kingdom was immediately in view. He was all in for what he could get out of it in the here and now— including what he could get out of the treasures bag.

But this talk of a cross he wanted nothing to do with. He didn't sign up for a cross – only the kingdom movement. But the truth of the matter is the only way to the kingdom is by way of the cross. This is what Jesus now shares with His disciples.

Yes, He as the Christ, the Son of the living God was going to the cross, but there is also a cross to bear for all who would be true followers of His. The way of Christ, the way to the kingdom, is via the way of the cross.

**Matthew 16:24–28 (NKJV)**

**24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.**

The parallel passage in Mark 8:34-38 makes it clear at this point that in addition to His disciples Jesus was also addressing other people who had gathered. The NASB translates it as “*multitude*” and the ESV as “*crowd*”. So, this is a general statement that has broad application.

The nuance here would seem to be similar to when Jesus said to those who claimed to believe in Him in John 8:31, “*If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.*” There are outward disciples who profess and, on some level, seem to follow, but then there are those who are “*disciples indeed*”. This is what Christ goes on to describe, namely those who are “*disciples indeed*”. True believers are true followers!

As used by Jesus to be a true disciple – a disciple indeed, means to be a true believer who is a true follower of Christ. We know this very clearly from Christ's definitive statement in what is called “*The Great Commission*” as seen in the end of Matthew.

### **Slide # 2**

**Matthew 28:19 (NKJV)**

**19** Go therefore and **make disciples** of all the nations, **baptizing them** in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

Here is the point: The mission is to make disciples and having made a disciple we are to baptize them. As the early Church began to carry out this commission as seen in the book of Acts the pattern invariably was this. People came to be believers and immediately they were baptized. The point is they did not wait until later when they supposedly would come to a deeper level of being a disciple. NO! Immediately believers were considered to be disciples and therefore they were immediately baptized as Christ instructed in The Great Commission. This is the pattern without exception in the NT.

What I am saying is this: To be a believer results in being a disciple, and to be a disciple is to be a believer and the NT pattern carried out according to Christ's instruction proves it. There has been errant teaching that says you can be a believer without being a disciple, but Christ in His great commission shows that is absolutely not true.

The word "**disciple**" means one who is a believing/learning/follower. It is that combination of nuances. We are not saved by following but true faith follows – not perfectly but certainly. Following Christ is the inevitable fruit of true faith.

### **Slide # 3**

#### **John 10:27–28 (NKJV)**

**27** My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

**28** And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.

One commentator calls Matt. 16:24-25 the "clearest" statement on discipleship in the Bible, another calls it the "strongest" statement. It is perhaps both.

In verse 24 Jesus lists 3 interrelated things that are indicative of being true followers of His. He began by saying, "***If anyone desires to come after Me***" – in other words if ANYONE wants to be His follower here is what is required. Note this is addressed to ANYONE. The invitation is to ANYONE! It is in relation to anyone who DESIRES. You gotta wanna. This is going to involve a serious commitment. "***If anyone desires***" implies a volitional act. It is a commitment of the will.

### **Slide # 4**

#### **Revelation 22:17 (NKJV)**

**17** And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

Jesus said, "***If anyone wants to come after Me, let him deny himself...***". To deny SELF is not the same as self-denial. To deny yourself a chocolate craving is a form of self-denial but that is not DENYING SELF in the sense that Christ is describing.

To DENY yourself is to say NO to self and YES to Jesus. SELF is the real center of a person's sin life. It is SELF-CENTEREDNESS. That is the essence of sin. We most naturally live for SELF. We do our self-centered way in contrast to God's way.

**Slide # 5**

**Isaiah 53:6 (NKJV)**

**6** All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, **every one, to his own way**; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

SELFISM defines us as sinners. We are SELF-oriented beings. In our natural state SELF is at the center of our entire orientation and not Jesus. To deny oneself means to say NO to self as the dominant principle of life and yield to Jesus' authority as our ruling principle.

In view, here is not about denying stuff, it's more fundamental. It's about denying you! It is saying "no" to self as Lord and saying "yes" to Jesus as Lord. It is believing on Jesus as "***My Lord and my God***" as expressed by Thomas in John 20:28.

In 2 Timothy 3 Paul describes last days' perilous times which are characterized by apostasy. The very FIRST thing he mentions is that people will be "lovers of themselves". Self-love is the essence of all sin and the source from which all the other sinful characteristics arise. "Self-love results in desires that consume the soul." (Ron Bigalke)

In contrast those who are born again have a whole new orientation.

**Slide # 6**

**2 Corinthians 5:15 (NKJV)**

**15** and He died for all, **that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him** who died for them and rose again.

In view here in Matt. 16:24 is a description of what constitutes a true saving faith which involves the element of repentance which means to have a change of mind. In repentance we change our mind about sin, about self, and about Christ. And that is a radically life changing reality. This is what Jesus is here describing – He is describing the nature of a true saving faith which involves repentance.

To truly believe on Jesus as Lord involves a person "denying himself". You can't have it your and God's way at the same time.

Repentance is a change of mind that denies self and aligns with God's truth. We are saved by FAITH ALONE, but it must be the right kind of faith. And a true saving faith involves denial of self. It will cost you your innate self-willed rebellion.

And only the GRACE of God can bring us to this point. We naturally love self above all else. For the natural man it's all about SELF. SELF defines the unsaved person. But in conversion there is a DENIAL of self that is a life changing reality. Properly understood, it is an exchange of all that I am in my natural rebellion (SELF) for all that Christ is as Lord & Savior!

SELF is always the issue. In order to get to heaven, we must get over SELF. We must deny ourselves and denying SELF involves taking up a cross. As described by Jesus denying self and taking up our cross go together with the inevitable outcome being that of following Him.

Some combination of denying self, taking up our cross, and following Christ is a dominant recurring theme in the teaching of Jesus.

### **Slide # 7**

Matt. 10:37-39 – take cross and follow – find life/lose it

Matt. 16:24-25 – deny self/take up cross/follow Me – lose life/find it

Mark 8:34-35 - deny self/take up cross/follow Me – lose life/find it

Mark 10:21- take up cross and follow Me

Lk. 9:23-27- deny self/take up cross/follow Me – lose life/find it

Lk. 14:25-27 – bear cross/come after Me

Lk. 17:33 – save life/lose it

John 12:25-26 – love life/lose it – follow Me

- All these passages deal with the concept of death to self and following Christ.
- All of these passages use similar terminology.
- Jesus clearly links these parallel concepts to salvation/discipleship.

Some have tried to say salvation does not necessarily have a direct relationship with discipleship. But clearly what Jesus had to say contradicts this. In Mark 10 the rich young ruler came clearly wanting to know how he could have eternal life. That is the whole basis for his interaction with Jesus (Mk. 10:17).

In effect Jesus told him he would have to exchange his god of materialism for the Lordship of Christ.

There would have to be a denial of self and an embracing of Christ for WHO He is as Lord. He would have to make the great exchange from having SELF as his God to having Jesus as His God!

### **Slide # 8**

#### **Mark 10:21 (NKJV)**

**21** Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, “One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, **take up the cross, and follow Me.**”

This language of “take up the cross and follow Me” is the very same type of language Jesus used in all these other parallel passages and here in Mark 10 the issue is undeniably that of eternal life.

The Jews knew full well what the idea of taking up a cross meant. A cross signified EXECUTION. It meant death for self. The Romans customarily compelled someone condemned to death by crucifixion to carry their cross. Doing so gave public testimony that this person was now under submission to the rule of Rome which he had previously rebelled against (cf. Mt. 27:32). So the idea of taking up a Roman cross implied the recognition of Rome’s ruling authority.

Bearing a Roman cross signified submission to the authority behind the cross. Likewise taking up our cross and following Christ is an acknowledgement that we have yielded to His authority. Our denying self is a death to self in view of the sovereign authority of Christ.

There are three verbs in this discipleship challenge.

### **Slide # 9**

***Deny*** = aorist imperative (decisive action)

***Take up*** = aorist imperative (decisive action)

***Follow*** = present imperative (continuing action)

The sense is that denying self and taking up our cross involves a decisive act (commitment) which results in following Christ as a way of life.

In these twenty centuries after Jesus, we have done a pretty good job in sanitizing and ritualizing the cross. Yet Jesus said something much like this: “Walk down death row daily and follow Me.” Taking up your cross wasn’t a journey; it was a one-way trip. There was no return ticketing; it was never a round trip. – **David Guzik**

What Jesus is describing is an “all in” commitment – a way of the cross commitment. A true saving faith commitment to Christ is a once for all commitment – till death do me part.

Allegiance even to death is demanded of Christ’s followers.  
– **Charles Ryrie**

Death to self is the radical command of the Christian life. To take up your cross meant one thing: you were going to a certain death, and your only hope was in resurrection power. – **David Guzik**

Note: This decisive act of denying self and taking up our cross does not mean we from there on out follow as we should. No, the great challenge in the Christian life is to now live more and more consistent with the truth we have come to know and bow before.

We sometimes joke that the problem with a living sacrifice is that it so often wants to crawl off the altar (cf. Rom. 12:1-2). It is worth noting that between the great chapter of Romans 6 which emphasizes being dead to sin and the great chapter of Romans 8 which emphasizes being empowered by the Holy Spirit, is the in-between chapter of Romans 7 which deals with the reality of our great struggle with the flesh. All are true.

And yet, even in Romans 7 we note that the very sin Paul wrestles with he HATES, signifying that indeed there has been a decisive commitment that has forever altered his life. Part of the evidence of salvation is that we now hate the very sin we struggle with. This too is part of following Christ as a way of life (cf. Lk. 9:23).

Obviously, a new believer does not begin to even understand all the ramifications of the truth He has come to believe as found in Jesus. But if he/she is a true believer they have bowed before the truth of Christ as Lord and Savior and they now have a new nature in combination with the Holy Spirit that desires to obey. Yes, we still struggle with the flesh, but the reality of a decisive faith commitment will continue to demonstrate itself in perseverance in the faith.



Someone has well said that there is a difference between Judas and Peter. Peter had a bad day, but Judas had a bad heart. Peter came through it – Judas did not. Peter did end up literally dying for the Lord while Judas died in his sin.

What Jesus is saying is this:

### **Slide # 10**

Matt. 16:24 Paraphrased:

Jesus said, “If anyone wants to come after Me (be My disciple) they must say **NO** to self (repentance) and **YES** to My ruling Lordship authority (take up his cross) which is then demonstrated in FOLLOWING Me as a way of life.”

This is descriptive of the nature of a true saving faith and the fruit of following that then comes from it.

In the evangelical world there are two distinctive views when it comes to Matthew 16:24. There is what I call the “Easy Believism” view and there is what I call the Lordship view. All agree that salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. The great ISSUE and debate is over the nature of saving faith.

Easy Believism says you can accept Christ as Savior while rejecting Him as Lord. That’s why I also call this “The Lordless Gospel”. Easy Believism makes a hard distinction between being a believer and a being a disciple saying one can be a believer without ever becoming a disciple (follower). In contrast, I hold to what is called the Lordship position. This says in saving faith a person accepts Jesus as both Lord and Savior. This is a package.

Jesus came to seek and to save the lost (Lk. 19:10). Never in His ministry does Jesus address a two tier model of believer versus disciple. The Lordship view says that to be a true believer is to be a true disciple. Thus, according to the Lordship view Matthew 16:24 is describing a saving faith commitment that recognizes Christ as Lord. Taking up your cross is a recognition of the Lordship of Christ. This is the equivalent to believing on the Lord Jesus Christ or calling on the name of the LORD. Here Christ is describing a saving faith commitment that recognizes Him as Lord with the result being to follow Him.

Verse 24 is further explained by verses 25-27. Note verses 25-27 each begin with the explanatory word “For” showing the further development of the thought started in verse 24.

**25 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.**

“Life is psyche, the Greek term covering both English concepts of “life” and “soul.” – **Wycliffe Bible Commentary**

Whoever chooses to save his life for SELF will end up losing it. In contrast whoever loses their life by denying himself, taking up his cross, and following Christ – as Jesus says here in verse 25 “**for My sake**” will find it.

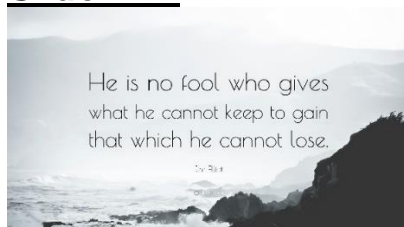
In the end there are two kinds of people: Those who live for self and in the end lose everything; and those who die to self to live for Christ and in the end have everything as joint-heirs with Christ.

It is really pretty simple: **Who are you ultimately living for?** If it is purely for SELF then you are not saved. True believers live for Jesus, some more faithfully than others but all true believers have some fruit – certainly they have a changed heart and are new creations in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17; 1 Cor. 4:5; Phil 1:6; Heb. 12:7-11). Certainly He Who began a good work in them will complete it (Phil. 1:6). Certainly God disciplines all His children to build holiness into their lives (Heb. 12:7-11). Certainly all are being conformed into the image of Christ (Rom. 8:29).

We must follow Jesus this way, because it is the only way that we will ever find life. It sounds strange to say, “You will never live until you first walk to your death with Jesus,” but that is the idea. You can’t gain resurrection life without dying first. - **David Guzik**

The whole flow of thought here in Matthew 16 is all about Who Jesus is and His claim on our life. The great issue is WHO He is which is followed up with how does one become a disciple.

### **Slide # 11**



**26 For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?**

Jesus here asks two rhetorical questions that make the same ultimate point.

He asks “what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?” The obvious answer is that in the end this profits a person nothing!

**1 Timothy 6:7 (NKJV)**

**7** For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

You can't take anything with you! In the end if you are clinging to this life and what it has to offer you are going to lose it all. In the book of Revelation a technical term for unbelievers is “earth dwellers” is used 10 times (Rev. 3:10; 6:10; 8:13; 11:10; 13:8, 12, 14; 14:6; 17:8). 1st John 2:15-17 shows that loving the world and the things of the world defines the world.

But as Jesus will go on to show, those that lose their life by denying self and living for Jesus will have an eternal reward in the kingdom. You can't take anything with you – but you can send it on ahead.

It is interesting that similarly the devil tried to offer Jesus the kingdom without the cross. He tried to tempt Him with everything this world has to offer by bypassing the cross.

**Slide # 12**

**Matthew 4:8–9 (NKJV)**

**8** Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him **all the kingdoms of the world and their glory.**

**9** And he said to Him, “**All these things I will give You** if You will fall down and worship me.”

The old line of the devil is that you can have your best life NOW if you will just do things his way. Christ's way is that the BEST of everything is offered in the kingdom, but it comes by way of the CROSS. That's Christ's way. The cross first then the glory. That was true for Christ in a unique way, and it is also true for His followers in a secondary sense.

**Slide # 13**

**Romans 8:32 (NKJV)**

**32** He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also **freely give us all things**?

**Revelation 21:7 (NKJV)**

**7** He who **overcomes shall inherit all things**, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.

It is pointed out that the exact parallel of Christ's first question here in Matt. 16:26a is found in the parable of the rich fool in Luke 12:15-21.

**Slide # 14**

**Luke 12:19–21 (NKJV)**

**19** And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry." '

**20** But God said to him, '**Fool!** This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?'

**21** "So is he who lays up treasure **for himself**, and is not rich toward God."

The second rhetorical question in Matt. 16:26 asks what can a man give in exchange for his soul? In the end what can we offer God in exchange for our soul? Of course, the answer is absolutely NOTHING. To start with we have nothing of value to offer! Second, a soul is worth infinite value – so valuable that only the blood of Jesus can purchase it.

If you think you are going to wheel and deal with God and somehow spring your soul in the end – think again? Consider this haunting rhetorical question: ***What will a man give in exchange for his soul?***

**Slide # 15**

**Psalm 49:8 (NIV)**

**8** the ransom for a life is costly, no payment is ever enough—

The great exception to this is the blood payment of Jesus Christ!

J.C. Ryle said, "***The first step towards heaven is to find out the worth of your soul.***" And by this he meant we must discover that our soul is of infinite worth and that the only way our soul can be saved is by the SINGULAR way that God has provided – namely through saving faith in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Redemption is found ONLY in Jesus.

**Slide # 16****1 Corinthians 6:19–20 (NKJV)**

**19** Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?

**20** For you were **bought at a price**; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

**1 Peter 1:18–19 (NKJV)**

**18** knowing that you were not **redeemed** with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers,

**19** but **with the precious blood of Christ**, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

There is NOTHING we can give in exchange for our souls. And yet, paradoxically, in context Christ in the spirit of “Come now, and let us reason together” (Isa. 1:18) is presenting the possibility of a paradoxical exchange whereby we die to SELF and thereby find our life for all eternity in Him. This is the only EXCHANGE that God will honor – saying NO to SELF and YES to Him - denying self in order to find our life in Him– losing our life that we might find it in Him.

To put it directly in Christ's words, “***For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it***”.

Nothing can be given in exchange for one's soul. Therefore, if one wishes to preserve his life, paradoxically it must be given up to follow Christ. – ***The Moody Bible Commentary***

What Jesus is presenting is the ONLY possible way to the kingdom! You can't have the kingdom without the cross. That is true in relation to Christ's cross-work, but it is also true in relation to the necessity of a saving faith commitment which involves the element of repentance. Paul described it in this way....

**Slide # 17****Philippians 3:7–9 (NKJV)**

**7** But what things were gain to me, these **I have counted loss for Christ**.

**8** Yet indeed **I also count all things loss** for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus **my Lord**, for whom I have suffered **the**

**loss of all things**, and count them as rubbish, that **I may gain**  
[GREAT EXCHANGE] Christ

**9** and be **found in Him**, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through **faith in Christ**, the righteousness which is from God **by faith**;

Paul denied self and took up his cross in counting all things LOSS and exchanged that for FAITH in Christ as His Lord. It cost him everything (so to speak) and yet in EXCHANGE He gained everything; namely Christ and the righteousness which is from God by faith.

This is the EXCHANGED LIFE. We exchange all that we are in our SELFISM for all that He is as Lord and Savior! There is NOTHING you can give in exchange for your soul, and yet paradoxically you can exchange your SELF LIFE for His life. Thus, Christ offers us the exchanged life on the condition of denying self, taking up our cross and following Him.

So does this mean then that the person who denies himself, takes up his cross and follows Christ loses out?

NO! He may lose out on what this life has to offer in some respects, but he will be rewarded in the kingdom. With Christ, losing our life and following Him results in gaining it for all eternity. In the exchanged life we not only have eternal life, but we will have an eternal reward for following Him.

**27 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.**

We sing a song that says, ***"It will be worth it all when we see Jesus!"*** That's exactly what Jesus is saying here as rewards in context are promised in relation to those who follow Him.

He describes the Son of Man (a Messianic title – see Dan. 7:13-14) as coming in the glory of His Father with His angels. He shares in the same glory as the Father which testifies of His deity (cf. Jn. 17:1-5). And speaking of the Son of Man (the subject of the sentence) the angels are spoken of as ***"His angels"*** once again showing His deity. Only God owns and uses angels according to His prerogative (cf. Matt. 24:30-31; 2 Thess. 1:7).

And when He comes ***"He will reward each according to his works."*** (Isa. 40:10; Rev. 2:23; 20:13; 22:12).

This serves as an incentive for taking up one's cross and following Him. ***"It will be worth it all when we see Jesus."***

The language of rewarding each one according to his works comes from Psalm 62:12 and Proverbs 24:12 (cf. Zech. 14:5). There we find that God rewards His people commensurate with how they have served Him.

For the world, there is immediate gain but ultimate loss: for the disciple, there is immediate loss but ultimate gain. – ***John Walvoord***

Following is the **fruit** of true faith and will be **rewarded**.

### **Slide # 18**

#### **Matthew 7:21 (NKJV)**

**21** "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he **who does the will of My Father in heaven**.

#### **John 5:28–29 (NKJV)**

**28** Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice

**29** and come forth—those who have **done good, to the resurrection of life**, and those who have **done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation**.

Righteous deeds are not the source of salvation, but they are the objective verification that it has occurred. – ***John MacArthur***

### **Slide # 19**

#### **Isaiah 40:10 (NKJV)**

**10** Behold, the Lord GOD shall come with a strong hand, And His arm shall rule for Him; Behold, **His reward is with Him**, And His work before Him.

#### **Revelation 22:12 (NKJV)**

**12** "And behold, I am coming quickly, and **My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work**.

And then as a further statement of assurance Jesus made this claim.

**28 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.”**

Some have considered this an awkward statement that just doesn't fit smoothly here, but actually it does. Some have tried to apply it in a spiritual sense to the Church which came into being after the resurrection, which they claim is a spiritual form of the kingdom. Just one problem, Matthew never uses the kingdom in that sense. The kingdom throughout is the same Messianic kingdom prophesied in the OT that would literally come to earth in a physical sense.

The correct view is that the “transfiguration” described in chapter 17 is what is in view. It was in this transfiguration that some of the disciples would get a preview of the coming kingdom. They would literally see it in that sense. There are 3 key reasons to think this is the proper view.

- 1) In all 3 synoptic gospels (meaning the similar gospels of Matt, Mk, and Lk), all 3 in the context of Jesus making this statement immediately have the event of the transfiguration following (cf. Matt. 17:1-8; Mark 9:1-8; Lk. 9:27-36).
- 2) It was accurately fulfilled in that “some standing” there saw it – but not all. Peter, James, and John saw it as we see in Matt. 17.
- 3) The apostle Peter who was at the transfiguration referred to this event as actually seeing the COMING of the Lord.

### **Slide # 20**

#### **2 Peter 1:16–18 (NKJV)**

**16** For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you **the power and coming** of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were **eyewitnesses of His majesty**.

**17** For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

**18** And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him **on the holy mountain**.

Thus the mount of transfiguration has been called, “***a preview of the coming kingdom on earth***”. What assurance such a foretaste of coming kingdom glory would give you. You could die with that – and Peter did. It so affected Peter that he never got over it and testified of it in his last letter to reaffirm the reality of his testimony.



In one of the Napoleon wars, Lord Nelson defeated the French navy. The defeated admiral brought his flagship alongside Nelson's vessel and went aboard to make his surrender. He approached Nelson smilingly, with his sword swinging at his side. **He held out his hand to the victor.**

Nelson made no response to this gesture but said quietly, "**Your sword first, sir.**" Laying down the sword was a visible token of surrender.

In like manner we must lay down the sword of our rebellion and self-will and the illustration Christ used was that of a cross. We must deny self and take up our cross, acknowledging submission to His sovereign rule. Henceforth His will more and more becomes the rule of our lives as we follow Him.

*Make me a captive, Lord,  
And then I shall be free,  
Force me to render up my sword  
And I shall conqueror be.  
(George Matheson)*

Who are you living for: **Yourself or for Christ?** You can't have it both ways. As Jesus said, "**No one can serve two masters**" (Mt. 6:24). You are either going to serve SELF as your master or Christ as your Master. Who will the MASTER be?

**Matthew 16:25 (NKJV)**

**25 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.**

Christ invites you: Deny yourself, take up your cross and follow Him – and then as He said to the rich young ruler: "**and you will have treasure in heaven**" (Mk. 10:21). Thus, in losing your life you will find it. You will make the great exchange that has promise of everlasting life and everlasting reward in the kingdom.

Christ invites: If anyone desires... Come! You must come to Christ, and you must come on His terms. And His terms are receiving Him for WHO He is as Lord and Savior! Come!