

Message 9: **Take up Your Cross**

Matthew 16:21-27

Date: 05/02/2020

We started our series on the Day of Pentecost when God poured out His Holy Spirit and the New Covenant was inaugurated, and the church was born.

When the Apostle Peter stood up to preach, and he began his sermon by quoting the O.T. prophet Joel saying, "In the last days, God says, 'I will pour forth of My Spirit on all mankind.'" (**Acts 2:17**)

The promise of the Holy Spirit had come, and Peter preached that the promise was to every person whom God would call to Himself.

Now, through the completed work of Jesus Christ, entrance into God's Kingdom had been made possible through a new birth by the Spirit of God.

God's work in us begins with conversion, and It continues through discipleship. As God works in us, He seeks to work His will through us, and to those who love Him and are called according to His purpose, He remains faithful to always be at work for us.

There is one variable that constantly threatens interference to the accomplishing of God's will in one's life, and that variable is non other than one's self.

Message Context:

Matthew 16:21-23

Jesus foretells His death.

⁽²¹⁾ 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. ⁽²²⁾ Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "God forbid *it*, Lord! This shall never happen to You." ⁽²³⁾ But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's."

- Jesus must go to Jerusalem
- He must suffer many things
 - Betrayal
 - False accusations
 - Injustice
 - Mock and ridicule
 - Severe physical pain
 - Death
- He would be raised to life on the third day

Think of the results of what Jesus accomplished: Our Salvation.

But if Peter would have had his way, the damnation of our soul would have been sealed.

On the surface, Peter's response, appears affectionate, and devoted.

Peter was basically saying that these things would not happen to Jesus on his watch.

However, what Peter wanted was in contrast to God's will and purpose.

What God was accomplishing through Jesus Christ went way beyond the desires and feelings of one man.

What we want for our self, may not be what God has in Mind for us. God's work in us and through us goes way beyond what we could ever want or imagine.

Jesus replied to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's."

The Lesson:

Following Christ requires the denial of one's self

Matthew 16:24

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.

God's work of salvation through Jesus Christ was pre-determined before the foundation of the world.

Jesus Christ was willing to deny Himself.

- He left His place of glory with the Father
- He limited Himself taking on the form of a servant
- He became a partaker of flesh and blood.
- He endured the experiences of man, even death.

John 10:17-18

⁽¹⁷⁾ "For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. ⁽¹⁸⁾ "No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father."

God has pre-determined a purpose for your life.

Psalms 139:13-17

⁽¹³⁾ For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother's womb.

⁽¹⁴⁾ I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Your works, And my soul knows it very well. ⁽¹⁵⁾ My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, *And* skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth; ⁽¹⁶⁾ Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; And in Your book were all written The days that were ordained *for me*, When as yet there was not one of them. ⁽¹⁷⁾ How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How vast is the sum of them!

The Objective:

Take Up Your Cross

You must get your self out of the way to take up your cross. In fact, you must overcome and remove all hindrances that threatens to impede God's will for your life.

As Jesus had said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me."

We must also say to every hindrance, "Get behind Me!" "Get out of my way!"

We must acknowledge every would-be stumbling block as Satan, for as Paul would say,

"Our struggle is not against flesh and blood,
but against the rulers, the powers, the world forces
of this darkness, and every spiritual *force* of wickedness.
(*Ephesians 6:12*)

We must not be thwarted in the Taking Up of Our Cross!

What cross or crosses will you have to bear?

- Sacrifice(s)
- Burdens
- Endurances
- Sufferings

Discover the Power of Weakness

The Result

God's work in us and through us can go way beyond what we could ever want, desire, or imagine.

Consider Peter's wishes in light of what God was doing through Christ.

God cannot work through us unless we allow Him to. He will never force or coerce us to do His will.

When Jesus returns, He will judge every man according as his work shall be.

Matthew 7:21

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

Who is saved? He who endures to the end, and the one who fulfills the will of God in their life.

What reward it will be to hear the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant."