MYSTERY & MAJESTY
– 19 –
Is It Worth The Cost?

All verses are in the English Standard Version (ESV)

Matthew 16 Summary

- Pharisees and Sadducees demand a sign.
- Jesus warns of their influence.
- They go to Ceasarea Philippi where Jesus asks who do people and you say I am?
- Peter declares he is Christ, son of the living God.
- Jesus foretells his death and resurrection.
- Peter tries to tell him it won't happen
- Jesus responds **Matthew 16:23** But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."
- Peter is not simply saying it out of concern.

- He is rejecting the will of God because it includes suffering.

Matthew 16:24 Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

- "If anyone" – all believers and interested persons.
- Anyone who wants to follow Him must reckon with what follows.
- When you follow a person there is a commitment that comes with their leadership and your following.
- Self-denial – Following Jesus means surrendering the right to make yourself the centre of your life.
- It is replacing your self-determination with obedience to God and dependence on him.
- I no longer recognize myself as the supreme authority over my life.
- Self-denial is not saying, "I am worthless."
- It is saying, "I am no longer Lord."

- As a disciple you are seeking the will of God every day.
- The goal is faithfulness.
- The next three verses begin with “for”. Jesus is asking rhetorical questions and providing reasons why as disciples we will need to take up our cross.

Matthew 16:25 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

- This isn’t just about trying to avoid dying.
- It is describing someone who is all about self-preservation at the cost of following God.
- It may be understood as “Whoever considers his own life to be of supreme importance will never experience true life. But whoever denies the importance of his own life in order to become my follower will experience true life.”

Matthew 16:26 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?

- This is not Jesus condemning material possessions.
- If gaining something requires losing what ultimately matters, it is a terrible bargain.
- If you lose your soul, what can you use to buy it back?
- What is the value of Christ himself to you?

Matthew 16:27 For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.

- Jesus is promising his return.
- Daniel 7 reference to the Son of Man.
- There is a future day of payment. For those who follow God, it is a reward. For those who follow their own will, it is judgment.
- Jesus places Himself at the centre of that coming judgment.

Matthew 16:28 Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."

- This is a reference to the transfiguration (Matthew 17), not the second coming.
- Some of the disciples will witness Jesus be transfigured and see a glimpse of his kingdom and glory.
- 2 Peter 1:16-18 describes this moment.
- Jesus is creating a completely different vision of human flourishing.
- The passage is about lordship.
- Who gets to decide what happens with my life?
- Is what I am gaining worth what I am giving up?