

Life Group Study Guide
June 3-4, 2017
Dismissing Jesus: Take Up Your Cross
Dr. Kurt Bjorklund

Reference:

Open in prayer and read Luke 9:21-27.

Review:

What was one thing from this weekend's message that challenged, confused, or stood out to you?

Reflect:

1. Our culture has taken the idea of "carrying your cross," or having a "cross to bear" and applied it to dealing with difficult circumstances in life. How is this different from Jesus' command to "take up our cross daily?" (v. 23)
2. We often think today of the cross as a piece of jewelry, a decoration, or even symbolically as a burden to carry. In Jesus' day, it was a symbol of capital punishment; the same as the electric chair or lethal injection are today. Why do you think the perception of the cross has changed from something gruesome to something decorative?
3. Consider Matthew 16:21-27, another account of this story. Jesus clearly explains to His disciples what must happen to Him (v. 22). Why do you think they were so blind about what Jesus was trying to accomplish?
4. Just like the disciples, we can still be blind today to what Jesus was trying to accomplish through the cross. How important is this perspective in helping us take up *our* cross?
5. If you are a Christian, in what ways have you lost your life, for Christ's sake, in order to save it? (v. 24)
6. Jesus equates following Him with self-denial. In what areas are you currently trying to give up control over your circumstances in order to follow Jesus? What do you need in order to accomplish this?

Respond/Reinforce:

In many of Jesus' teachings, He sends people out into the world to live out their faith in the midst of those who don't believe. When facing shame or ridicule, most people would tend to withdraw, but Jesus says to engage. Think about the areas of your life where it has been particularly difficult to do this. Pray and ask God for His strength and perspective to obey Him.