



Life Group Discussion Guide
“The Way of the Cross” – Matthew 16:13-27
Scott Paulson – May 17, 2026

Main thought:

Jesus calls His church to be centered on the true identity of Christ and shaped by the way of the cross, denying self, trusting Him above worldly success, and following Him in daily surrender and eternal hope.

Ice-Breaker

If you had to delete all but three apps on your phone, which ones would you keep?

Questions

1. What stood out to you from Matthew 16:13-27?
2. Jesus asked His disciples, “Who do people say I am?” and then, “Who do you say I am?” Why is the second question the most important question every person must answer?
3. The confession of Peter makes it clear that the church is built on Jesus, not personalities, popularity, or human strength. Why is it easy for churches or Christians to drift away from keeping Jesus central? What is the danger of losing this focus for the church and for Christians?
4. What insights or truths about the church stand out to you from this passage that are important to know?
5. Peter understood that Jesus was the Messiah, but he misunderstood what kind of Messiah Jesus would be. Why do people, including Christians, sometimes resist the idea of suffering, sacrifice, and surrender in following Jesus?
6. One of the practical warnings from this passage is against chasing the “spectacular” instead of faithfully following Jesus. Why can Christians sometimes confuse success, size, or visibility with spiritual power?
7. Jesus calls us to deny ourselves, but we live in a culture that constantly pushes us toward “getting more” – more recognition, success, possessions, or influence. How do you combat this pressure in your own life?
8. What do you think Jesus means when He says, “Whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it”? Have you ever experienced that paradox personally?
9. What is one practical way you can “follow Jesus” more intentionally this week in your relationships, priorities, or daily decisions?

Prayer: Take some time to pray for each other.