

Stewarding the Message of the Cross

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I. Setting the Stage

¹³ Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” ¹⁴ And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” ¹⁵ He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” ¹⁶ Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” ¹⁷ And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock^[a] I will build my church, and the gates of hell^[b] shall not prevail against it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed^[c] in heaven.” ²⁰ Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ.

– Matthew 16:13-20

1. Scene One Summary

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 on the third day be raised. ²² And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “Far be it from you, Lord!^[a] This shall never happen to you.” ²³ But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance^[b] to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.” – Matthew 16:21-

23

2. Scene Two Summary

“On matters of church government, and the form of worship, men may differ from us, and yet reach heaven in safety. On the matter of Christ’s atoning death, as the way of peace, truth is only one. If we are wrong here, we are

ruined forever. Error on many points is only a skin disease; error about Christ's death is a disease of the heart. Here let us take our stand. Let nothing move us from this ground. The sum of all our hopes must be, that "Christ has died for us" (1 Thessalonians 5:10). Give up that doctrine, and we have no solid hope at all."¹

II. **The Message of Matthew 16:24-28**

Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. 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? 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. 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." – Matt. 16:24-28

A. **We Must Lose Our Life in Order to Find Life!**

1. **We lose our life through self-denial.**
2. **We lose our life by taking up the cross.**
3. **We lose our life by following Jesus.**

"My heart is set on keeping your decrees *to the very end*. – Psalm 119:112

B. **The Sacrifices Will Be Worth It!**

1. **Reward is Real!**

¹ John Ryle, English bishop

2. Don't lose the forest for a tree.

1. Is there a particular expression of self-denial he is calling you to today with your time, talent or treasure?
2. What is the "No" so that you can say "Yes"?
3. Knowing of his return...joyfully looking forward to his return. Where are you?