

Matthew 16:21 - 17:27

Day 1

Jesus Tells of His Death. Read Matthew 16:21-28

1. What did Jesus begin to *explain* to His disciples? 16:21 List the things that He said He *must* do (“*it is necessary*”).

FYI: “Up to this time Jesus has been showing the people and religious leaders who He truly is. Beginning now His eyes will be looking southward toward Jerusalem. He has referred to His death and resurrection indirectly along the way, such as by type or symbol (e.g. John 2:19), but He has not stated it plainly. (Cf. Mark 8:321.) Now His method changes. His ministry will be mainly to His disciples, and He will instruct them plainly about His approaching death and resurrection.”
- Irving Jensen (64)

“The phrase from that time...occurs twice in the Book of Matthew, here and in 4:17. In 4:17, it introduced the beginning of Jesus’ ministry in announcing the nearness of the kingdom. Here it introduces the Cross and the ultimate rejection of the Messiah.”
- The Nelson Study Bible (1605)

2. How did Peter feel about this? 16:22 What do you think he had in mind for Jesus?

- What did Jesus’ followers need to be reminded of later? Luke 24:6-9

3. Why do you think Jesus called Peter “*Satan*?” 16:23a (Cf. 4:10)

- What did Jesus say Peter was doing? 16:23b (Cf. Colossians 3:1,2)

Digging Deeper

For how long had Jesus’ death been planned? 1 Peter 1:19, 20; Ephesians 3:11

FYI: “To Peter these ideas seemed contradictory. Surely the Christ could not die! He expected Him to be recognized by the Jewish people and given the throne of His father David. Jesus would then subdue the world, beginning with the Romans, and would rule the world on God’s behalf from Zion. Peter had no concept of a suffering Messiah, and so he took Jesus aside to rebuke Him.”
- Africa Bible Commentary (1143)

4. Interestingly, what did Peter write later? 1 Peter 4:1-2

5. List the things Jesus said a person must do to “come after” Him? 16:24 (Compare Galatians 2:20)

FYI: “Human nature wants to indulge self, not **deny** self...Death to self is the radical command of the Christian life. To **take up** your cross meant one thing: you were going to a certain death, and your only hope was in resurrection power.”
- David Guzik

6. What is the great benefit of following Christ? 16:25 (Cf. 10:39. See John 10:10)

7. How do Jesus' questions in 16:26 explain and expound on the idea of saving and losing one's life (16:25)? How much is this losing worth?

- How is this concept explained in John 12:24-26?

Digging Deeper

How precious and valuable is a man's soul? Genesis 9:6; Psalm 49:7,8; 1 Peter 1:18,19

8. What is an eternal benefit to serving Christ? 16:27

9. Underline the assurances we are giving in serving Christ.

- 2 Corinthians 4:17 For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. NIV
- Colossians 3:23-24 Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, 24 since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. NIV
- Hebrews 6:10 God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them. NIV

10. What would some of the disciples see? 16:28

FYI: "before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom" Some commentators think this is a promise which is conditional and dependent upon belief of the nation of Israel. Others think Jesus is pointing to the transfiguration described in Matthew 17 which Peter, James and John saw. Still others think this may be referring to Jesus' resurrection or to Pentecost or "to the entire manifestation of the glory of the resurrected Christ both in person and in His power shown through His apostles (Africa Bible Commentary 1144)."

Applying the Word: *What is something that you need to die to/let go of/forsake in order to follow the Lord more fully? What fears are keeping you from doing that?*

Or:

Many people feel that carrying a cross - submitting to God's will and loving God above all else is a harder way to live than not following the Lord. How would you respond to that?

Day 2

The Transfiguration. Read Matthew 17:1-13

11. Who went with Jesus up on the mountain? 17:1

- In what other things were only these three disciples allowed to participate? Mark 5:36; 14:32-33

12. What changes did Jesus undergo? 17:2 See Rev 1:14-16 (See other descriptions in Mark 9:3; Luke 9:29)

- Of what did Jesus divest Himself to come to earth? Philippians 2:6-8

FYI: Transfigured NT:3339 *metamorphoo*; to transform (literally or figuratively, "metamorphose"):

"**He was transfigured before them.** The word speaks of a *transformation*, not merely a change in outward appearance. The effect was extremely striking; Jesus became so bright in appearance that He was even difficult to look at. Essentially, this was not a *new* miracle, but the temporary cessation of an ongoing one. The real miracle was that Jesus, most of the time, could keep from displaying this glory." - David Guzik

13. Who else appeared? 17: 3

- From Luke 9:30,31, what was the topic of their conversation?

FYI: Moses and Elijah "They represent the Law (Moses) and the Prophets (Elijah). The sum of Old Testament revelation comes to meet with Jesus." - David Guzik

14. How did Peter react when he saw this sight? 17:4 Why do you think He would want to make tabernacles? (What else does Luke add to this? 9:33b)

15. How was Jesus' ministry confirmed? 17:5 (Cf. 3:17)

- How were the disciples' encouraged?

16. What does the disciples' reaction say about this event? 17:6

- How did Jesus reassure them? 17:7

Digging Deeper

When had God appeared in a cloud in the past?

- Exodus 13:21
- Exodus 34:4-5
- Exodus 40:33-35 - filled the tabernacle

17. How did Peter describe this event later? 2 Peter 1:16-19

- How did this event confirm the apostles' ministry?

18. Why do you think Jesus didn't want anyone to know about this event (including the other disciples) until after His resurrection? 17:9 (What would the people have been expecting of a Messiah?)

19. Why were the disciples confused about Jesus' talk of death? 17:10 (See (Mark 9:10)

- What had been prophesied about Elijah? Malachi 4:5-6

FYI: "Elijah was expected to restore all things--to bring about a state of justice and true worship. If that were so, how could it be that Messiah would be killed in such a restored environment?" - Expositor's Bible Commentary

20. What did Jesus reassure them about? 17:11

- In a sense, how had "Elijah" come? 17:12,13 (See Luke 1:17)
- Likewise, what would happen to Jesus? 17:12b

21. How would this "mountain-top" experience have helped prepare the disciples for what was to come?

Applying the Word: How does this account of the revelation of Christ's awesome glory combined with His willingness to give His life affect your understanding of Him and all that He did?

Day 3

Healing a Demon-possessed Boy. Read Matthew 17:14-21

22. What problem did Jesus have to deal with when He came down from the mountain?
17:14,15 What does this contrast with what just happened?

- How much danger was the boy in?

23. What help had the father sought? 17:16

- From Jesus' response, what was the problem with the disciples' inability? 17:17 What was the solution?

FYI: *Perverse* *diastrepho* Strong's NT:1294, "to distort, twist... "perverse," lit., "turned aside, corrupted"
- Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words

24. In Mark 9:23,24, what other assurance was given to this man? What request did the man make after that? (Consider: How open and honest was this prayer?)

25. How was the boy healed? 17:18 What kind of power does this show?

FYI: "A prime purpose of Jesus' earthly ministry was to overcome the power of Satan. This included His conquest of the demonic realm (Matt 12:25-29...) This explains the fierce conflict between Jesus and these evil spirits while He was on earth."
- Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary

26. Underline what Jesus' coming to earth was going to accomplish in dealing with evil:

- John 12:31 "Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. NASU
- Colossians 2:15 And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross. NIV
- Heb 2:14-15 He too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death - that is, the devil- 15 and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.NIV
- I John 3:8 the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil. NASU

27. What reason did Jesus give for the disciples' inability to cast out the demon? 17:19,20
What do you think they didn't believe?

FYI: "At a superficial level the disciples did have faith: they expected to be able to exorcise the demon. They had long been successful in this work, and now they are surprised by their failure. But their faith is poor and shoddy. They are treating the authority given them (10:1, 8) like a gift of magic, a bestowed power that works *ex opere operate*. In Mark (9:29) Jesus tells them that this case requires prayer--not a form or an approved rite, but an entire life bathed in prayer and its concomitant faith. In Matthew, Jesus tells his disciples that what they need is not giant faith (tiny faith will do) but true faith--faith...of a deep, personal trust." - Expositor's Bible Commentary

28. How much faith did the disciples need? 17:20a (In whom? Mark 11:22; John 4:50)

- How did Jesus illustrate the power of faith in Him? 17:20b

FYI: "Removal of mountains was proverbial for overcoming great difficulties...Here it refers to the accomplishment of the works of the kingdom for which they had been given authority." - Expositor's Bible Commentary

29. What does "this kind" (17:21) seem to indicate about a hierarchy of spirits? See Ephesians 6:12 (*Matthew 17:21 does not appear in some of the original manuscripts. Compare Mark 9:29*)

Applying the Word: When you struggle to trust God, what do you find you are focusing on more: the circumstances, yourself, or the Lord? Why is the object of our faith so more important than our strength or performance as a believer? See Hebrews 11:6

Day 4

In Galilee. Read Matthew 17:22-27

Jesus Again Predicts His Death

30. As Jesus gathered with the other disciples in Galilee, what did He repeat? 17:22 What is added from 16:21? (How is this emphasized in Luke 9:43,44?)

- What does knowing all this beforehand say about Jesus' control of the situation? His courage? His determination?

31. How did the disciples react? 17:22 Compare Luke 9:46 (What part of that revelation should have given them hope and joy?)

Jesus Pays a Tax

32. What was Peter questioned about? 17:24

- Who was to pay this tax and for what? **Exodus 30:13-16 (See also Number 18:21)**

FYI: "Although the point is disputed, the *didrachma* (lit., "two drachmas") was probably not a civil tax in support of Rome but a Jewish "tax" levied on every male Jew between the ages of twenty and fifty in support of the temple and its services....The imposition of this "tax" lacked the sanction of Roman law, but it was understood that the Jews would pay it." - Expositor's Bible Commentary

33. What situation did Jesus ask Peter about when he came to the house? 17:25 (What significance is there to the phrase "*Jesus spoke first*"?)

- How did Peter's answer apply to their obligation to pay the tax? 17:26

FYI: "Jesus argues that as the Son of god, He does not need to pay the tax, since the temple was the house of God. The temple tax was intended for the maintenance of services to Him." - Africa Bible Commentary (1145)

34. Why did Jesus say they would pay it? 17:27

- Compare Paul's attitude? 2 Thessalonians 3:8,9

35. How did Peter get the money? 17:28 (What does that indicate about his financial state? See Acts 3:6)

- What would fishing to get the money say to Peter?

36. How many miracles do you see in this event?

Applying the Word: *When have you gone above and beyond not to offend someone or burden someone even though it wasn't required of you? What was that like for you? What was the result?*