



The Gospel of Matthew

“The First Lesson on the Cross”

Matthew 16:21-28

From that time Jesus Christ 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 be raised up on the third day.

And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, “God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to You.”

But He turned and said to Peter, “Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God’s interests, but man’s.

Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, let Him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.

~~For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it;~~ but whoever shall lose his life for My sake shall find it.

For what will a man be profited, if he gains the whole world, and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?”

“For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and will then recompense every man according to his deeds.

~~Truly I say to you, there are some of those who~~ are standing here who shall not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom.”

Matthew 16:21-28



First Lesson on the Cross

A. The Necessity of His Sufferings

1. Plan of God

- *“must”* – Jesus’ willing submission to His Father’s will in fulfillment of the Scriptures
- *“things of God”* – Jesus’ death is the Father’s plan for redemption and future glory



First Lesson on the Cross

A. The Necessity of His Sufferings

2. Presumption of Peter

- the idea of Messiah suffering and being killed was unthinkable to Peter (and the disciples)
- messianic glory without suffering and death is a satanic notion



First Lesson on the Cross

B. The Nature of Our Following

1. The Essence

- a call to an ongoing death to self-interest, even unto physical death
- a call to treasure Christ more than your own comfort and safety and gratification



First Lesson on the Cross

B. The Nature of Our Following

2. The Reasons

- self-denying following of Jesus is the path to real life; self-preserving forsaking of Jesus is the path to ultimate death



First Lesson on the Cross

B. The Nature of Our Following

2. The Reasons

- Jesus is coming in glory to reward all who have persevered in a self-denying following of Him, and recompense all who have forsaken Him



First Lesson on the Cross

Implications

1. Following Jesus is a call to lose your life for His sake
2. Supreme love for self or this life is suicidal
3. In following Jesus there is no ultimate loss of any good thing