

Our Lord Preparing His Disciples for His Crucifixion Matthew 16:21-28

by R.A. Torrey

Jesus teaches His disciples that to follow Him, they must deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow Him, for this is the only way to enter the kingdom of God and find true life.

Scripture: Matthew 16:21

Topics: "Discipleship", "Sacrifice"

Description

R.A. Torrey emphasizes the preparation of the disciples for Christ's crucifixion, highlighting Peter's misunderstanding of Jesus' mission and the necessity of suffering before glory. He explains that true discipleship requires self-denial, taking up one's cross, and following Christ, contrasting the temporary gains of the world with the eternal loss of the soul. Torrey points out that while Peter initially spoke as God's spokesman, he later became a stumbling block by prioritizing human concerns over divine purpose. The sermon underscores the importance of understanding the cost of discipleship and the inevitability of suffering in the Christian journey. Ultimately, Torrey calls believers to embrace the path of sacrifice that leads to eternal life.

Transcript

(Compare Mark 8:31 to 9:1; Luke 9:22-27)

DISCOVERY OF THE FACTS

1. "Get Thee Behind Me, Satan," vv. 21-23 For what was Christ preparing His disciples in bringing out so clearly the doctrines of His deity and the security of the church in the immediately preceding verses? Why "must"? (John 3:14; 14:19; Ro. 4:25; 5:9, 10; Heb. 9:22; Is. 53:4-6; 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Peter 2:24.) Had He ever told them of His death and resurrection before? (John 2:19-21.) Is it credible that after He had so plainly foretold His resurrection that His disciples should find it so hard to believe in it when it actually occurred? (Luke 18:34; 24:25.)

What in the present day will help us to understand this? Which of the disciples came to the front again at this point? What did he do? Do any of the disciples of the Lord nowadays think they know better than He what He ought to do? Was Peter concerned for Christ or for self? Of whom had he been the mouthpiece in v. 16? Of whom was he the mouthpiece now? Where else do we see a like spirit in Peter? (Matt. 26:51;

John 13:6-8.) How was his protest met by our Lord? On what other occasion had He used the same words? (Luke 4:8.)

Why did He call Peter "Satan"? When did this fearful error and awful rebuke of Peter occur? (vv. 17, 18.) Is there any lesson in this? Was our Lord really tempted by Peter's suggestion (v. 23)? Where was the root of the difficulty with Peter? Is it a serious thing to mind the things of man? (See R. V. and Phil. 3:19; Ro. 8:5-8.) 2. Before the Crown, the Cross, vv. 24-28 To whom did our Lord then speak? What does He tell them? What does "deny" mean in Bible usage? (26:35, 75; Mark 14:31; Luke 12:9; 22:34; Titus 2:12.)

What then does "deny himself" mean? What was the cross literally? Why did our Lord take up the cross? What then does "take up his cross" mean? What does "follow Me" mean? (1 Peter 2:21; Phil. 2:5-8.) Is there any way to be a disciple of Christ and enter the kingdom but by denying self, taking up the cross and following Him? ("Any man"; Acts 14:22; 2 Tim. 3:12; 1 Thess. 3:3.) Is the Pope more truly Peter's successor as we see him in vv. 17, 18 or as we see him in vv. 22, 23? What is the special connection between v. 24 and the verses which immediately precede?

Does it pay "to come after" Christ when we consider these severe conditions? (John 12:26; 2 Tim. 2:12; Ro. 8:18.) What general principle did Christ now announce? What words does Mark add? (Mark 8:35.) What is the meaning of this principle? What searching question did Christ put to them? What does "soul" mean? Is the contrast here between the present and future? Does the man who loses his soul lose the future? What kind of future? Does he gain the present? Does the man who saves his soul lose the present?

Does he gain the future? What second question did Christ put to them? What is its meaning? By reference to what event does Christ enforce His teaching? What will be the manner of His coming? What will He do at His coming? What evil-doing is to be especially punished at that time? (Mark 8:38.) What occasion was there at this particular point to mention being ashamed of Him? What did He further tell His disciples? Is the same event referred to in v. 28 as in v. 27? What is referred to? (27:1-8; John 8:52.)

NOTE.--This lesson is one of the easiest to understand and hardest to practice. Not so many questions as usual are needed to bring out the teachings; more grace than usual will be needed to perform them.
CLASSIFICATION OF TEACHINGS

1. Our Lord

His deity, 27; humanity--Son of man, tempted, 27, 23; temptation--its source a disciple, its issue instant and complete victory, 22, 23; shrinking from the cross, 23; loyalty to duty--repelling every tempter that would lead Him from the cross, 23; consideration of man's weakness, and skill as a teacher--confirms faith before revealing coming trial, 21 (Compare vv. 13-20); sufferings, death and resurrection--their necessity, 21; coming--its certainty ("shall come"), manner ("in the glory, etc."), purpose ("to render unto every man, etc."), 27; its prefiguration (the transformation), 28.

2. Peter

His carnal mind and consequent failure to see and enter into the divine plan of suffering love, immediately after the hour of wondrous revelation, noble confession and lofty commendation, 22, 23; utter failure, stupendous presumption, unsparing rebuke, 22; a stumbling block to the Saviour, 23; when he minded the things of God he was God's spokesman, but when he minded the things of man he became Satan's

spokesman, 23 (compare 16, 17).

3. What Follows

Suffering and death followed by resurrection and glory, 21, 27;

Denial of self and cross-bearing followed by union with Christ and participation in His kingdom, 24;

Sacrifice of temporal life followed by the gain of life eternal, 25;

Holding on to temporal life followed by the loss of life eternal, 25;

Seeking for the world followed by the loss of the soul, 26.

4. Eight Rules that Have No Exceptions

Every one who would save his life shall lose it, 25;

Every one who shall lay his life down for our Lord's sake shall find it, 25;

Every one who forfeits his life to gain the world makes a poor bargain, 26;

Every one who forfeits his life to gain the world loses it beyond recovery, 26;

Every one who would go where our Lord went must go by the road He took, 24, 25;

Every one who would come after our Lord must utterly renounce self, 24;

Every one who would come after our Lord must face without wavering and bear without flinching the suffering, shame and death that lie in the path of obedience to God, 24;

Every one who would come after our Lord must walk as He walked, 24.

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