

September Teaching Theme: The Sermon on the Mount

讲员 Speaker: Pastor William R. Horne & Pastor Steven Fang

题目 Topic: Upside-Down Discipleship

经文 Scripture: Luke 9:18-27, Mark 8:34-9:1

Monthly Theme: We just completed a long series on the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7), and this week we are exploring another one of Jesus' teachings that help us further understand the call to follow Jesus and live out the call of the Sermon of the Mount. Jesus is the Messiah who is enthroned as King through suffering and dying for the sins of his people. We are called to walk a similar path of suffering, service, and putting others before ourselves. To follow the servant Messiah, one must become a servant themselves.

九月 **September** - 登山寶訓系列 **The Sermon on the Mount Series**

September 5th – 假先知與真門徒 False Prophets & True Disciples (Matthew 7:13-23)

September 12th – 聰明的匠人與愚卓的匠人 The Wise & Foolish Builder (Matthew 7:24-29)

September 19th – 做門徒的代價 The Cost of Discipleship (Luke 9:21-27; Mark 8:34-9:1)

September 26th – 因款待客旅而遇見耶穌 Jesus Revealed in Hospitality to a Stranger (Luke 24:13- 35)

Resources:

[Sermon Video](#) (Pastor Steven Fang starts at [51:50](#); Pastor Will starts at [2:18:36](#))

[Pastor Will's Sermon Slides](#)

[Bible Project: "Son of Man"](#) [English - 5:50]

Primary Claim: The King of the Upside-Down Kingdom is calling us to Upside-Down Discipleship.

Discussion Questions (Pastor William R. Horne)

- (1) Read Luke 9:18-27 together. What observations do you make, and what stands out to you? How would you summarize Jesus teaching here? Now read Matthew 16:13-28. What does this add to the conversation and your understanding?
- (2) How does Jesus redefine the Messianic role? In other words, what does Jesus say his path will be? Read Isaiah 53:3-8 together. How does this passage paint the Messiah?
- (3) Watch the ["Son of Man" video](#). How does the "Son of Man" title help us understand who Jesus is?
- (4) Re-read Luke 9:23. This verse contains three commands: (1) Deny, (2) Take-Up, (3) Follow. How does it look to live out each of these commands in everyday life?
- (5) Re-read Luke 9:24-26. How would you describe/explain the paradox of verse 24? How do verses 25 & 26 help in understanding?

Important Notes (Pastor William R. Horne):

Notes on Q1: Peter's response in Matthews's account makes it abundantly clear that the disciples did not yet understand what type of path the Messiah would take, even though they rightly recognized Jesus as the Messiah.

Notes on Q2: Though Peter correctly identified Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah, Jesus almost immediately has to begin redefining the disciples' understanding of his Messianic path. Jesus makes clear in Luke 9:22 that his path was one of suffering and death. Jesus is breaking all of their messianic categories.

The religious leaders looked to texts like Psalm 2 and Daniel 2, giving them a picture of a Victorious Messiah who would cast down the pagan oppressors and vindicate God's people. Suffering was not a part of Jewish messianic hope. And Peter has this same military-type leader in mind when he hears the word, Messiah. Jesus, however, points to a different passage to understand his Messianic role that both the religious leaders and the disciples miss - The Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53. Isaiah 53 tells us that the Messianic King will be enthroned through suffering and dying for the sins of his own people. The disciples did not have categories for a Messiah that would face suffering, be rejected, and die - and really, if we are honest, we struggle to find categories ourselves.

See, so much of our lives and our ministries are shaped by what Martin Luther called a "Theology of Glory" instead of Jesus' "Theology of the Cross." We want to gain and exercise power and influence, not humility and service. We value numbers and bottom lines instead of people and authentic community. We gloss over appropriate lament and grief in exchange for endless exceptionalism and shallow celebration. We treat the church like a product to sell and try to expand the Kingdom through coercion, while Jesus calls us to give ourselves up on behalf of others. The Suffering Servant Messiah named Jesus is a category breaker. **Bonus question:** What ways are we tempted to live with a "theology of glory" (path of power) instead of Jesus' "theology of the cross" (path of suffering, service, others before self)?

Notes on Q3: The Bible Project video, the "Son of Man," is spot on and crucial for helping us understand what Jesus means when he uses the term. This "Son of Man" character will renew the partnership with God that humanity lost. But, more than that - this is not just an ordinary human, but he is worshipped alongside God by all the people. He is not just human but divine. God and Man. Jesus is not just the human Messiah but also this Divine "Son of Man" spoken of in Daniel 7. He is not just human, but God. Category-breaker.

Notes on Q4:

- (1) *Deny Oneself* - Denying oneself is a call to reject a life of pursuing self-interest at the expense of others or the way of Jesus. But, beyond this, self-denial calls us to construct a completely new identity, based not on our family origin, networks, status, or wealth - but in the new community of God's people under King Jesus' rule. Thus, to deny oneself is to take on a new identity as a Kingdom citizen.
- (2) *Take Up Their Cross Daily* - To understand this command, we must grapple with the essence of a cross in the Roman Empire. The Cross was a tool of Roman execution used to maintain power and control. Crucifixion was a horrifying display: a painful and humiliating death. Ultimately one was crucified for being an enemy of the state. This

reality clues us into the nature of Jesus Messianic claims - that he is a King bringing about a new Kingdom. Therefore, his followers must be ready and willing to walk the same path of potential suffering, rejection, and even death.

The word “**daily**” transforms “take up your cross” into a metaphor, shifting us away from a death wish to sacrificial living - a posture we take. We must make a “daily” choice, resolve, and commitment to walk in the way of Jesus. The command, “**take up,**” makes it clear that this life of “carrying one’s cross” is a voluntary choice to embrace suffering for connection with King Jesus and the way of the Kingdom as opposed to general suffering you do not choose. So the Christian life is not a life of “passive suffering,” but like Jesus, suffering in opposition to all that is evil and suffering as a path of solidarity with those who suffer in our present evil order. “To Take Up One’s Cross Daily” is to choose a life of standing against systems of evil and bearing the suffering to come with that stance.

- (3) *Follow Me* - Once a person has the two basic orientations of the disciple in place - “denying oneself” and “taking up one’s cross,” - they are now freed to follow Jesus and live in the Upside-Down Kingdom. “Following” involves both submission to and relationship with a leader. The leader becomes both a guide and a model for the follower to implement. Jesus and the Kingdom reverse all of our values, and we now seek to walk in this new way.

Notes on Q5:

V24 The chase “to save one’s life” is two-fold: (1) “To want to save one’s life” is taking a posture of idolizing safety - that is, to avoid death and danger at all cost. There is a very real sense in Jesus’ context that following him would require a willingness to potentially face death for the cause of the Kingdom. Now, Jesus is not calling his disciples to seek after death or to operate without the wisdom of safety - but he is calling us to take a posture in life that is willing to face danger and death if that is what is required to walk faithfully in the way of the Kingdom. (2) “To want to save one’s life” is to be caught up in the chase to “find life” in the narratives of the world. We have all been taught these narratives on multiples levels. If you just get a good job and education, life will be great. If you just have enough money in the bank, you can really begin to live life. If you have a good family - a wife, a house, kids, and a dog - there is true life. If you have fame, status, a long list of accomplishments, then life is worth it. The problem with all these narratives is that they contain a devastating lie that we can find true life and ultimate joy in them. As I have said before - we may not intentionally live by these narratives, but we can become passively formed by them. Formation happens daily. Make sure it is the person you want to become.

V25 Here, Jesus uses the language of business and commerce to reveal two levels of threats to discipleship: (1) On one level, as Jesus has done so often, we are warned about the threat and danger of wealth and possessions on the life of faith. Wealth and the drive to constantly accumulate wealth at the expense of others choke out faith and living as a Kingdom Citizen. One can break this stronghold by living with radical generosity. (2) On another level, Jesus uses financial language to reveal a posture or disposition of self that will cost us true life. Those who seek to “gain the whole world,” whether that is through money, fame, or accomplishments - ultimately lose or forfeit themselves in the process. This verse helps explain the paradox

expressed in verse 24 - that to save one's life means to obtain as much as the world has to offer, and to lose one's life is to miss out on true life found in Jesus and the way of the Kingdom. You may gain the whole world - but at the end profit nothing - as you missed out on true life in the chase.

V26 Jesus takes this idea of "losing oneself" a step further - and reveals why the warning of verses 24-25 cannot be ignored. Ultimately, to "lose one's life" is to be denied by Jesus. Jesus has painted a vision of living that is Upside-Down from the standards of the world-at-large. Those who choose to follow it can expect a level of conflict and social dishonor on this narrow path. The alternative is to reject King Jesus and the way of the Kingdom, and avoid this shame, to try and "gain the whole world." But, how one responds to Jesus is how Jesus will respond to them when he brings the Kingdom in full and rid his good creation of evil. To enter the Upside-Down Kingdom requires Upside-Down Discipleship.

V27 In the immediate context, Peter, John, and James get a taste of this glory of the Kingdom of God in the Transfiguration event right after our passage. But, the rest of the disciples got a taste of the Kingdom of God as well in their witnessing Jesus Resurrection from the dead and ascension to the right hand of God. And really, we too get a taste of the Kingdom of God through the present work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church, bringing about transformation in our lives. And when we walk in the ways of Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit, we can give others a taste of the Kingdom of God.

Sermon Summary (Elder Yin of Chinese Service Sermon):

真门徒

房牧师 9/19/21

经文：“于是叫众人 and 门徒来，对他们说：「若有人要跟从我，就当舍己，背起他的十字架来跟从我。因为，凡要救自己生命的，必丧掉生命；凡为我和福音丧掉生命的，必救了生命。人就是赚得全世界，赔上自己的生命，有什么益处呢？」”

马可福音 8:34-36

真的门徒和认真的门徒，讲到十架似乎要受苦，不让孩子做传道人。

主问门徒我是谁，彼得：你是基督。

耶稣和门徒出去，往凯撒利亚·腓立比村庄去；在路上问门徒说：「人说我是谁？」他们说：「有人说是施洗的约翰；有人说是以利亚；又有人说是先知里的一位。」又问他们说：「你们说我是谁？」彼得回答说：「你是基督。」耶稣就警戒他们，不要告诉人。”

马可福音 27-30

但接下来，这经文写到，耶稣钉十架，三天后复活。“从此，他教训他们说：「人子必须受许多的苦，被长老、祭司长，和文士弃绝，并且被杀，过三天复活。」耶稣明明地说这话，彼得就拉着他，劝他。耶稣转过来，看着门徒，就责备彼得说：「撒但，退我后边去吧！因为你不体贴神的意思，只体贴人的意思。」”马可福音 8:31-33
这里彼得体贴人而不是神的心意，如何知道？平时和神的关系。

真门徒三个特点：

1, 努力学习神的话

2, 忠心服事教会事奉中生命成长，事奉中学工科，人的伤害不重要，靠神。不抱怨，。只是为神工作。这就是真门徒。保罗也受很多冤屈，但永远不变，坚持到底。一辈子紧跟主。预备付代价，但也会经历主的恩典。有荣耀盼望。这家是柱石和根基。

3, 主动传扬好消息。

行公义好怜悯

讨主的喜欢，做神眼中认为好的。

与主关系测试表，你在哪里？

仰望耶稣，十字架激励我们，把主的事做好，尽力。更加爱主。没有任何可阻碍。

舍己：忘记自己，在再以自我为中心。当口称耶稣为主，耶稣就是我们生命的中心。先求神的国和祂的义。每天醒来后第一个念头应该是主。真门徒是和神好的关系，

背起自己的十字架。值得付代价的。什么是我们的十字架？在北美没有这样的苦难。十字架道路是蒙福的道路。

可8:34-35:跟从主自己，不是人，

8:36:赚全世界赔生命有什么益处？

属灵的价值观念和属世的价值观念大不相同。门徒要分清。世界会过去，神是永恒的。荣华富贵会过去。

若是真门徒，不把福音当可耻。

问题

你是真门徒？

有没把福音当作可耻。

福音是我们的荣耀，喜乐，盼望，力量