

The Way of Jesus
Week 3 Discussion Guide
Matthew 10:24-39

Courage for the Costly Way

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus, give us ears to hear your words clearly and hearts willing to follow you faithfully. Teach us courage, rightly ordered love, and trust in the Father's care. Amen.

Read Matthew 10:24-25

Observe

1. What two relationships does Jesus use to describe discipleship in these verses?
2. What does Jesus say is "enough" for the disciple and the servant?
3. What warning does Jesus give about how his followers may be treated?

Interpret

4. What does it mean that "a disciple is not above his teacher"?
5. Why should disciples not be surprised when following Jesus brings opposition, misunderstanding, or rejection?
6. Jesus says it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher. What parts of Jesus' life are easy for us to want to imitate? What parts are harder?

Reflect and Apply

7. Have you ever been surprised by the cost of trying to follow Jesus faithfully?
8. Why is it important to distinguish between suffering because we belong to Jesus and suffering because we have acted foolishly, harshly, or arrogantly?
9. Where might Jesus be calling you to deeper faithfulness, even if it is misunderstood?

Read Matthew 10:26-27

Observe

10. What command does Jesus give at the beginning of verse 26?
11. What does Jesus say will happen to what is covered or hidden?
12. What does Jesus tell his disciples to do with what they have heard from him?

Interpret

The Way of Jesus
Week 3 Discussion Guide
Matthew 10:24-39

13. Why would the promise that hidden things will be revealed help disciples who are being slandered or misunderstood?
14. What is the difference between being bold and being obnoxious?
15. What does it mean to proclaim openly what Jesus has taught?

Reflect and Apply

16. Are there places where fear of being misunderstood keeps you silent?
17. How can followers of Jesus speak openly with both courage and gentleness?
18. What truth from Jesus do you need to live more openly this week?

Read Matthew 10:28-31

Observe

19. Who does Jesus say not to fear?
20. Who does Jesus say we should fear?
21. What examples does Jesus use to show the Father's care?
22. What does Jesus say about the value of his disciples?

Interpret

23. What does Jesus mean when he says people can kill the body but cannot kill the soul?
24. How does the fear of God put the fear of people in its proper place?
25. Why is it important that Jesus moves directly from fearing God to talking about the Father's care for sparrows?
26. What does the sparrow image teach us? What does it not promise?

Reflect and Apply

27. Which fear most often shapes your decisions: fear of people, fear of loss, fear of conflict, fear of rejection, fear of failure, or fear of God?
28. How does knowing the Father sees and values you give courage?
29. What would change if you really believed you are not forgotten, invisible, or disposable to God?

Read Matthew 10:32-33

Observe

30. What promise does Jesus give to those who acknowledge him before others?
31. What warning does Jesus give to those who deny him?

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Matthew 10:24-39

Interpret

- 32. What does it mean to acknowledge or confess Jesus before others?
- 33. Why is this about more than simply saying the right words once?
- 34. How does Peter's later denial and restoration help us understand this warning carefully?

Reflect and Apply

- 35. What are some ways we can acknowledge Jesus in ordinary life?
- 36. Where are you tempted to hide your allegiance to Jesus?
- 37. What would faithful, humble, public allegiance to Jesus look like in your family, workplace, school, friendships, or community?

Read Matthew 10:34-36

Observe

- 38. What surprising thing does Jesus say he came to bring?
- 39. What relationships does Jesus mention as examples of division?
- 40. Jesus is quoting Micah 7:6. What kind of division does this describe?

Interpret

- 41. How do we know Jesus is not commanding violence here?
- 42. What does Jesus mean by "not peace, but a sword"?
- 43. Why might allegiance to Jesus create division, even in close relationships?

Reflect and Apply

- 44. Have you ever experienced tension because of your commitment to Jesus?
- 45. How can we remain faithful to Jesus without becoming combative or unnecessarily divisive?
- 46. Why is fake peace sometimes easier than faithful obedience?

Read Matthew 10:37-39

Observe

- 47. What relationships does Jesus name in verse 37?
- 48. What does Jesus say about loving family more than him?
- 49. What does Jesus say a disciple must take up?
- 50. What paradox does Jesus give in verse 39?

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Matthew 10:24-39

Interpret

51. Is Jesus against family? Why or why not?
52. What does it mean for every love to be ordered under love for Jesus?
53. What would “take up your cross” have meant before the cross became a Christian symbol?
54. What does Jesus mean when he says whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for his sake will find it?

Reflect and Apply

55. What good love in your life is most tempted to become an ultimate love?
56. Where are you tempted to protect comfort, reputation, approval, or control instead of following Jesus?
57. What might it look like to “lose your life” for Jesus’ sake in a faithful, ordinary, daily way?

Connecting the Whole Passage

58. What repeated commands, themes, or ideas did you notice throughout the passage?
59. How does Jesus prepare his disciples for the cost of following him?
60. How does Jesus comfort his disciples in the middle of that cost?
61. What does this passage teach us about fear?
62. What does this passage teach us about allegiance?
63. What does this passage teach us about the Father’s care?
64. What does this passage teach us about the way of Jesus?

The Way of Jesus

Throughout this series, we are asking how each passage forms us into the way of Jesus.

1. What kind of thing is this passage?

How does Matthew 10:24-39 function as part of Jesus’ instructions to his disciples?

2. Where am I in the story?

Do you relate most to the disciple who is afraid, the disciple tempted to stay silent, the disciple worried about family tension, or the disciple clinging tightly to control?

3. What echoes does this text carry?

How do the references to Beelzebul, sparrows, Micah 7:6, and the cross deepen the meaning of Jesus’ words?

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4. What does this reveal about God and King Jesus?

What does this passage show us about Jesus' authority, honesty, worthiness, and care for his followers?

5. How is this forming me into the way of Jesus?

Where is Jesus calling you to courage, confession, rightly ordered love, or cross-shaped faithfulness?

Closing Prayer

Father, thank you that you see even the sparrow fall and that we are known and valued by you. Jesus, give us courage to confess you openly, love you above every other love, and follow you even when the way is costly. Teach us to lose our lives for your sake so that we may truly find life in you. Amen.