



fellowship church

Sermon Discussion Guide

Sunday, April 12, 2026 - Pastor Scott Allen

The Cross-Shaped Life: Dying to Live (Matthew 16:24-28)

Discussion Starter

- Question: What are some scenarios when you find yourself more tempted toward living in “selfie mode”?
 - Bonus Question: How many selfies are saved on your phone?
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Reflection Questions

- Question: What are Old Testament & New Testament examples of following these commands (renounce, reorient, & remember)? How do these examples encourage you to joyfully obey Jesus?
 - Question: If you are a follower of Jesus, what are some ways in which you’ve denied yourself in order to follow Christ? How have you lived open-handed with your plans, career, relationships, finances, etc.? If you haven’t lived open-handed in these areas of life, what have been the barriers/hindrances keeping you from moving in the direction Christ is calling you?
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Application Questions

- Vision Question: *We are a family of disciples on mission.* With that in mind, how can you intercede for & help one another in taking 1-2 steps of faith, in the power of the Spirit, toward renouncing yourself as you reorient your life around Christ as the One on the throne?

- (Personal implications): Scott's 3rd point in the sermon is this: Remember your reward. What are the rewards awaiting followers of Christ in Heaven? How does knowing these rewards await you help you to keep an eternal perspective as you sojourn through life on earth in the midst of various trials & sufferings?
- (Communal implications): What about Christian community helps you to resist the temptation to work for these rewards in order to try to earn God's favor, salvation, or the approval of others? What are 1-2 steps you can take toward following Jesus' command to deny yourself, take up your cross, & follow Him? How can your brothers & sisters in Fellowship encourage you, equip you, & hold you accountable toward taking practical steps?
- (Missional implications): A large part of following Jesus as a lifelong disciple is joining Him in His mission to pursue the lost. With that in mind, what are 1-2 missional steps you could implement this week? Who comes to mind as someone you could pursue in prayerful & sacrificial ways?

This week's guide written by: Joel & Lauren Purvis

Tips for Group Leaders

- DO ask open-ended questions. DON'T ask questions where a short "right" answer ends the discussion.
- DO encourage mutual participation by every group member. DON'T feel the need to respond or weigh in after every contribution. Avoid monologuing. As the leader, your goal is to facilitate mutual discussion between all group members (Eph 4:15–16).
- DO ask follow-up questions: "What do you mean by that?" "Tell me more!" "Has anyone else experienced something similar (or different)?"
- DO feel free to pick and choose questions that are a good fit for your group. DON'T feel the need to get through every question, and don't worry if you spend most of your time on a few questions that generate a lot of good discussion.
- DO keep the main thing the main thing. Steer your conversation toward the main theme of the sermon and the biblical text. DON'T get sidetracked on less important matters, theological debates, etc. A rabbit trail might sometimes be worth pursuing—if group members are wrestling deeply with the implications of biblical truth for their lives. Otherwise, steer conversation back to the main topic.
- DO get into the text. It could be helpful to read over the passage together or ask questions directly related to the text. Help group members engage the text for themselves and respond to what they see there.
- DO revisit important moments from the sermon—a memorable story, an impactful quote, a convicting point of application. "Remember when pastor X talked about Y? What impression did that make on you?"
- DO allow space for reflection, silence, and thoughtful answers. DON'T feel that you need to jump in or ask a new question just because the group has been quiet for a few seconds. A good rule of thumb is to wait until the silence gets awkward, then count silently to ten before jumping in.
- DO bring discussions home to practical, concrete everyday life. DON'T let discussion and application stay in the abstract realm. Steer discussion toward *what does responding to this sermon look like for me?* If comments are vague or general, ask "what would that look like, practically?"