

3

See the CALL

Text: Matt. 16:25-27

Galatians 2-5

Key Verse: Gal. 2:20

When you
see the
CROSS...

OPEN

The resurrection isn't a theory and more than just a historical or religious truth but a CALL to live today according to Jesus' power. So far in this Easter series, we have seen the cross from the perspective of a Roman centurion, through Jesus' final words in giving up his life, through the actions of two men who had kept their faith secret (Joseph & Nicodemus), and through the women who first discovered the empty tomb...all to help us see from their vantage point the LOVE, COST, HOPE, and POWER of the CROSS.

This week, we see the CALL of the cross, as we consider Jesus' words in Matthew 16 and what the apostle Paul teaches in his letter to the Galatians, where he reminds us that the freedom of the cross is experienced by faith through the promise of being given God's Spirit. Paul writes, *"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."* In Galatians, Paul takes us on a journey of seeing that the cross of Jesus leads to the promise of the Spirit, who produces in us the fruit of freedom and transformation – the experience of new life. Have you taken up that call and invitation?

REFLECT

- In Jesus' words in Matthew 16:24, what 3 things does Jesus say we must do to be his disciple? What does Jesus say he will do in v. 27 for those who do these 3 things? How would you explain each?
- In Galatians, Paul unpacks for us what the call of the cross looks like. In Gal. 2:20, how does Paul now see his life? Who is now in charge? How does he now say that he lives? What would be the opposite?
- In Gal. 3:14 and 4:6, Paul talks about the Holy Spirit. What are some of the things Paul teaches us about the Holy Spirit in these verses?
- In Gal. 5:1,5, Paul talks about freedom. What kind of freedom?

DISCUSS

- As a discussion opener, if you have been tracking with this series, out of the various individuals and perspectives on the cross that have been preached on, which story or perspective have you found the most impactful or provoking thus far?
- In Matthew 16:25-27, Jesus talks about 3 things someone must do to be his disciple. How would you explain each? Which one do you find the most challenging in your faith journey?
- When you consider the things Jesus says we must do to be his disciple, do you think most people understand the necessity of these 3 things? Which one is most neglected? What keeps people from taking up Jesus' call and how might those obstacles be overcome?
- When Paul talks about following Jesus, he links it to the cross. He says, *"I have been crucified with Christ."* What do you think he means by that? How do you think his words relate back to Jesus' words in Matt. 16?
- As Paul explains living out the call of the cross in Gal. 2:20, what do you think he means when he says, *"I no longer live, but Christ lives in me"*? What does that look like practically in daily life do you think?
- In the context of Galatians, Paul talks about life by the Spirit vs trying to attain 'righteousness' or new life in God *via* observing strict religious rules (ie, the Law). How would you describe the difference between a faith that focuses on 'do's and don't's' or being 'rules' minded vs living by faith by the Spirit? Is there a place for rules? A balance between the two, or one or the other?
- Finally, what kind of freedom does the Spirit bring us, and what does it look like according to Gal. 5:1, 5, and 16-25?

APPLY/PRAY

1. **Putting your faith in what Jesus did on the cross leads us to receiving the promise of the Holy Spirit.** Spend some time as a group welcoming the Holy Spirit to bring to you more of the life of Jesus.
2. **Ask for Jesus' help to live according to his Spirit, not the 'flesh.'**
3. **Pray for specific areas of breakthrough and dependence on the Holy Spirit where needed.**
4. **Pray this week for our church leadership.**