

## The Cost of Discipleship: Getting Buy-In

Matthew 16:13-28(NKJV) 13When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" 14So they said, "Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." 15He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" 16Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." 17Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. 18And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. 19And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." 20Then He commanded His disciples that they should tell no one that He was Jesus the Christ. 21From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day. 22Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!" 23But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men." 24Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. 25For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. 26For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? 27For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works. 28Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."

### Series Introduction

Jesus was sent to save mankind from the penalty of sin. He came to seek and save that which was lost. God was in Jesus reconciling the world back to himself. His single greatest task was completed with his death on the cross. For three years leading up to his work at Calvary, Jesus chose disciples and taught them the ways of God. When his work of redeeming the world was completed, he met with his disciples and commissioned them to go and make disciples just as he did with them.

That Great Commission still stands for disciples today. We are to go into the world, and make disciples baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We often get the baptizing part right. It doesn't require a lot of commitment to fill the pool, immerse people in water, and sing a few songs. It's the other part that we often struggle with. The other part of the commission is making disciples. Making disciples requires certain sacrifices and efforts. It requires buy-in, freedom from distractions, and hard work. The three sermons I will share in March are structured around these three concepts.

We are going to explore the Cost of Discipleship. Today we begin with Getting Buy-In

### Introduction:

When we read Matthew 16 we find several statements that are famous in the church. We hear Jesus ask "who do men say I am", and Peter saying "thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God". We hear Jesus say "get behind me Satan" and "deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow me". We also hear Jesus ask "what profit is it for a man to gain the world and lose his soul".

I'm sure we have all heard sermons on each of those statements at some point in our lives. But today, we will focus on the broader context of the chapter because it has a lot to teach us about buy-in. Let me define buy-in.

*Buy-in is where we get people to commit to a coalition or a plan.*

If for example we say our church should be reaching out to the community some members will agree and buy-in by praying and participating in that goal. Others may not feel the same and will not buy-in. They may not support the effort, speak negatively about it, or become indifferent.

*Transition*

So how do you get buy-in?

Jesus does four things to get buy-in from his disciples in this chapter. We are going to use an outline provided by John Maxwell. We will cover these four steps and conclude for the day. They are:

1. Identify the problem and tell the group.
2. Give them the chance for input.
3. Invite them to participate.
4. Include them in the solution.

Let's look together at the first part of the plan, which is Identify the problem and tell the team.

### **1. Identify the Problem and Tell the Group**

**Matthew 16:1, 5-6, 12(NKJV)** <sup>1</sup>Then the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and testing Him asked that He would show them a sign from heaven.

<sup>5</sup>Now when His disciples had come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread. <sup>6</sup>Then Jesus said to them, "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees."

<sup>12</sup>Then they understood that He did not tell *them* to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

In this passage, Jesus warns his disciples about the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees. The teaching, ideas, concepts, and interpretations of the religious community at that time were not in line with the will of God. It was a problem because those doctrines could easily corrupt the disciples or cause them to waiver in their faith.

*The Pharisees for example were separatists who believed in the strict letter of the law. Their orientation toward the law would make it difficult for people to believe by faith.*

*The Sadducees didn't believe in the resurrection or angels. So they denied the work of the Holy Spirit which was the power of salvation itself.*

So when Jesus gets the chance he issues a warning to the disciples. He says "beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees".

Leaven was used to make bread rise like yeast. They would take a small amount of dough from bread made earlier and allow it to ferment. When they got ready to make new bread they would put some of this old, fermented, acidic dough in the new dough to make it rise.

*“It only takes a little leaven to leaven a whole lump.”*

It only takes one or two bad ideas to weaken our faith. It only takes one or two friends with bad advice to corrupt our thinking. It only takes one or two traditions that are not founded on the word of God to stifle a church. It only takes one or two false doctrines to lead us astray.

When God seeks for us to buy-in to his will, we can't also buy-in to what the world has to say. Jesus wanted his disciples to be careful about what they allowed to be deposited into their spirits. What we put into ourselves will always be ready to come out at the wrong time. Never forget that the laws of the harvest teach us that the good will only come to harvest if we work it but the evil will come to maturity on its own.

Getting the disciples to buy-in would take more than just identifying the problem. It also required the Lord to give them a chance for input.

## **2. Give them the Chance for Input**

Look at Matthew 16:13-16

13When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, “Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?” 14So they said, “Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” 15He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” 16Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

After issuing his warning, Jesus checks the disciples to see if the teachings of the Pharisees has taken hold on them. He asks “who do men say that I the Son of Man am?” They knew what the people had been saying about Jesus. But Jesus needed to know what they had to say about him. So *he specifically asks them “who do you say that I am”.*

*Preacher Example*

*How many of you have ever heard a preacher say “if you say amen, the sermon will be shorter”?*

*What they are saying is, if you don't respond by saying amen when you hear the truth, then they assume you don't know what they are talking about. They have to either repeat themselves or give you another example.*

The input we give or don't give will show our level of buy-in to what God is doing. In some cases we may agree in word but not in deed. We shake our heads “no” while we are saying “yes”.

I can say “we need to love everybody, amen?” We shake “yes” because we still don't like some of the other church members. We won't speak up and share our feelings so we can get past our hurts.

Here's another one.

“We need to serve the Lord, amen?” We shake “yes” because we already have a list of excuses for why we can’t participate in the work of God. We won’t buy-in and share some solutions on how the church can make service meaningful or convenient for us.

“We need to worship the Lord, amen?” We shake “yes” because we don’t buy-in unless someone sings a song we like. We won’t speak up and tell anybody. We won’t provide any input. We will quit the choir before we share how we feel.

Giving input is vital to the success of every effort in the church. That is especially true if you have information that others don’t have.

*Association Example:*

*At the Winter Board Meeting for the Auburn District Association we got into a discussion about attendance at the annual session. Our Moderator commented that he would see preachers from our district at the state and national conventions but they wouldn’t come to the local association.*

*Well the truth is, many of our preachers work and have families and can’t just pick up and go to the conventions, districts, associations, and department sessions 12 times a year. They can’t just go to meetings in the middle of the day in the middle of the week.*

*So they choose which meetings they will attend. The problem is, we don’t have enough preachers who buy-in to the success of the association who are willing to give input. If the preachers and the members spoke up and said “this doesn’t work”, then we could move to a better solution that helps everybody.*

So given the chance for input, Peter replies: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Jesus recognizes the Holy Spirit has revealed his identity to Peter. Because of Peter’s input, Jesus knows that his disciples have heard what the world has to say but they still buy-in to the truth.

*Now the Lord can move forward by inviting the disciples to participate in his plan.*

### **3. Invite Them to Participate**

Look at Matthew 16:21...

21From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.

Jesus has just laid out the plan for his ministry. He has shared with the disciples the goal of his mission on earth. The big picture plan is that Jesus must die for the sins of the world.

This is the disciples chance to participate in the work of God. This is where they can truly show their buy-in.

Look at verses 22-23...

22Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, “Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!” 23But He turned and said to Peter, “Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.”

Peter, the same Peter who said “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God”, hears God’s plan and responds by taking Jesus off to the side and rebuking him. When it came time to participate in the plan, Peter didn’t buy-in. Why didn’t he buy in? Jesus said because he was mindful of the things of men.

You see, Peter and the other disciples had their own ideas about the Messiah.

**Matthew 20:20-21(NKJV)** <sup>20</sup>Then the mother of Zebedee’s sons came to Him with her sons, kneeling down and asking something from Him. <sup>21</sup>And He said to her, “What do you wish?” She said to Him, **“Grant that these two sons of mine may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on the left, in Your kingdom.”**

**Luke 24:18-21(NKJV)** <sup>18</sup>Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, “Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?” <sup>19</sup>And He said to them, “What things?” So they said to Him, “The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, <sup>20</sup>and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. <sup>21</sup>**But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel.** Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened.

**Acts 1:4-8(NKJV)** <sup>4</sup>And being assembled together with *them*, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, “which,” *He said*, “you have heard from Me; <sup>5</sup>for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” <sup>6</sup>**Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?”** <sup>7</sup>And He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. <sup>8</sup>But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be <sup>£</sup>witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

The disciples had their own plans for Jesus. They wanted the kingdom benefits of being with Jesus. They wanted national redemption. They wanted freedom from Roman oppression. Peter wanted what everybody else wanted. He wasn’t thinking about the things of God.

Are we thinking what God is thinking? Do you ever think about what God wants? Do we make decisions based on what God wants? Do we even know what God wants? Do you even care what God wants? Or are you content like Peter to continue with church as usual because it suits you just fine?

*Some of us have bought-in to the idea of what God can do for us instead of what we can do for God.*

We easily buy-in to God being a doctor in a sick room because that’s about us. We buy-in to God being a lawyer in a courtroom. We buy-in to God being bread when we are hungry and water when we are thirsty. We buy-in to God answering our prayers. We buy-in to blessings, and favor, and glory with God.

And we come to church sometimes angry and frustrated because we didn't get our blessings. **So we pull Jesus over to the side and rebuke him.**

Know this: God has a plan that is more about his will than it is about us.

To buy-in, we've got to accept his plan completely. We need to ask ourselves "what is God doing right now?"

What God is doing right now might be inconvenient. It might not be what makes us happy. God may be doing something we're not excited about. God may be doing something we're not interested in. God might be doing something that's not entertaining. God might be doing something right now that doesn't directly benefit you. He may be doing something to bless someone else.

If so, are we still willing to buy-in? The last step in getting buy-in from the disciples was to include them in the solution.

#### **4. Include Them in the Solution**

Look at Matthew 16:24.

24Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.

On the issue of discipleship, Jesus gives clear instructions: he says we have to deny ourselves, take up our crosses and follow him.

To deny ourselves means we have to disown ourselves. If we are going to be his disciples, Jesus says first we have to settle the ownership question. When we own anything in this world, we take control of those possessions. We govern what can be done with what we own. We dictate how it can be used and by whom. Our wills are imposed on any object we own.

The problem with this scenario is it is contrary to the will of God. Once Jesus is Lord of our lives, he is completely in charge of our lives. We are expected to surrender ourselves to his will instead of our own. At some point every believer has to deny and disown themselves in order to enter into true discipleship.

We have some habits that we need to disown. We have some attitudes that we need to disown. We have some ways about ourselves that we need to disown. We have some sins we need to disown.

*But Jesus also said we must take up our crosses.*

In the minds of people in New Testament times, the cross had a very distinct meaning in their minds. The cross was a symbol of everything they despised about their lives.

First of all, the cross was a curse to the Jews.

**Deuteronomy 21:22-23(NKJV)** <sup>22</sup>"If a man has committed a sin deserving of death, and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, <sup>23</sup>his body shall not remain overnight on the tree, but you shall

surely bury him that day, so that you do not defile the land which the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance; for he who is hanged *is* accursed of God.

Being crucified to the Jew was equal to being cursed by God himself. But that was not all. The Roman government chose crucifixion as a way of subduing the people. By making an open spectacle of any person who was an enemy of Rome, they were displaying their dominance over the Jews.

Basically, they could publicly destroy a person's life and there was nothing anyone could do about it. It was one of the most inhumane capital punishments the world has ever seen. Jesus tells his disciples they must willingly, deliberately, faithfully, take up their own crosses and follow him.

A disciple of Jesus must buy-in so completely that they are willing to pay the ultimate costs of turning their lives over to God. A disciple of Jesus Christ must be willing to take up a cross and die emotionally. Following Christ may mean some of us will die socially. It means we will make sacrifices financially. We may labor and become exhausted mentally. In the most extreme cases, we may even be called upon to die physically.

### **My question for you today is: Just how much do you buy-in to the will of God?**

Have you bought-in when it comes to the work of God in our church? Have you bought-in when it comes to living a holy life? Have you bought-in to serving others? Have you bought-in to growing in your faith? Have you bought-in to authentic worship? Have you bought-in to sharing your testimony with others? Have you bought-in or are you holding back on God? Are you selling God short? Are you shirking your responsibilities? Are you putting God on the back burner?

The cost of discipleship is high because our salvation was bought with a high price.

Jesus showed us how to buy-in, in the garden of Gethsemane. **Jesus the man** desired to continue living his life. Jesus the man desired to have the cup of death removed from him. In this moment when the Son of God needed to buy-in to the will of God, Jesus said ...

"Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done."

Jesus bought-in.

### **Conclusion:**

Discipleship has a high cost. I know you may not be there yet, but every day we live with Jesus he is calling us to surrender our lives to him. As we surrender to his leading we begin to have a closer walk with the Lord. We become more useful in his service. We become better witnesses to the world.

We all need to strive to have the testimony of the Apostle Paul who said in Galatians 2:20 ...

**Galatians 2:20(NKJV)** <sup>20</sup>I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Don't hold back on God. He didn't hold back on us.