

MATTHEW



STUDY GUIDE

Introduction

The theme of the sermon this Sunday was, “Take up your cross.” The central idea was that the way of the cross is a way of suffering. This is obviously a heavy topic, so please exercise care for one another as you discuss this. But to begin, I invite you to share with one another some experiences of suffering. You may choose to share small or middle-sized suffering; some may choose to share about great pain. Do remember to give people time and space to process and don't push anybody to share more than they are comfortable. But also remember your small group could be a powerful place to process in a healthy way and even, through vulnerability, to find healing and growth.

Text: Matthew 27:27-44

Here are the central ideas considered from the text in answer to the question, “What does it mean to take up our cross?”

- In life, suffering is inevitable, but joy is optional.
- To “take up your cross” is a voluntary choice.
- No matter how great your suffering, in Christ’s kingdom, it can be used for an even greater purpose.
- To redeem your suffering for the sake of Christ is a sure path to meaning and joy.

Which of these ideas struck you most?

How have you experienced the redemption of suffering? Have you experienced it?

For those who have, what has been helpful for you to find this path to joy?

YOUR MOVE

Three practices were suggested, we live our faith:

Publicly – Is my faith obviously visible to others?

Personally – Am I walking my own journey with Jesus, or trying to imitate others?

Perseverance – Have I given up on something when Christ invites me to persevere?

What is the pain or suffering in your life that Christ invites you right now to bring to him so that he might redeem it for Kingdom purposes?