

**RADICAL LIVING PT. 5 - The Outro!**

Scripture used: Matthew 16:24 (NIV)

**OVERVIEW**

This is the final part of our series on Radical Living - the Outro! An outro is defined as the concluding section of a piece of music or a radio or television program. As Pastor Hurmon concludes this message series, we have learned what it means to follow Jesus in radical living, sacrifice, loving, and forgiving, and it is not an easy walk. Some people think that as soon as they choose Jesus, their lives will be easier and all their troubles will go away. This is not accurate. We are all faced with choices when following Jesus. He spoke to His disciples in this passage to see if they were REALLY willing to make a choice to follow Him. He asked them to consider the fact that He was setting the pathway of sacrifice for Himself as well as for anyone who claimed they wanted to be His disciple. The word picture He used was NOT a pretty picture because the Romans were regularly putting people to death by crucifixion. Instead of a life of ease, He told them that His way was the way of self-sacrifice. He put it all on the line - follow Me wherever I lead, even to death.

**KEY POINTS**

**The Big Idea: Following Jesus is extremely difficult.**

1. **The choice:** Short-term pleasure for long-term pain vs. Short-term pain for long-term gain. We've all been on diets and the concept is the same: revise our day-to-day eating choices to make more healthy choices. It's not easy for anyone and requires sacrifice and an active choice to change our lifestyle. We have to weigh the results of our current actions against the results of a better choice. Consider *Matt 16:24 - Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me." "Whoever wants..."* is a active choice to be made. Your life is guaranteed to get much more complicated when you make that choice to follow. So, why in the world would someone want to make that choice to follow Jesus?
2. **Following Jesus is extremely rewarding.**
  - a. A Life that lasts
  - b. A Life that fulfills

Matthew 16:25 "For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it." Jesus promises you that holding onto your current "doubts" or "areas of unbeliefs" will cost you your life, but by making the active, deliberate choice to believe and follow Jesus, wherever He leads, will result in you having an eternal life spent with Him. That is totally radical! That is upside-down thinking in the world's view! It is a WOW moment.
3. **Jesus has removed the requirement for flawlessness.** All of us are sinners and need a savior. Jesus promises us forgiveness when we turn to Him. Look at Romans 5:8, "*But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us*", and 1 John 1:9 *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.* Who doesn't want purity just by talking with God honestly about our failures and then asking for purity or cleansing?

**DISCUSSION**

- 1) **HEAR** - After this series, what does a radical life look like to you? Would you say you are living a radical life right now?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - Read Matthew 16:24-25. In verse 25, Jesus promises that we will find life when we choose to follow Him. What choices have we been making for short term gain? Do those choices take us down a path that is opposite where Christ wants us to follow?
- 3) **DO** - How does 'deny yourself, take up your cross and follow me' speak to you? Identify and write down one choice that God has been challenging you to take as your way of following Christ. Practice it daily for the next 14 days. Then stop. Take a detailed assessment of your new behavior and see what difference Jesus has really made in your life. *Be willing to be radical like Jesus!*