

# Walking in God's Paths

## Matthew 17:22-23

Supposed to be pleasant

> OR <

Being pleasant isn't the point



## What are we to do?

### Cry out to the God we trust

Though trouble is part of the journey, trouble is never the end of the journey in Christ

Trouble can open the door to deeper fellowship with God

### Fellowship with God as we persevere

"deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me."

Matthew 16:24

"If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you." 1 Peter 4:14

"Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming." 1 Peter 1:13

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## Reflection Questions for later today or this week...

1. What has been your expectation for how pleasant (or not) it should be to follow Jesus? What has shaped you in this way?
2. What makes it hard to accept a Messiah who truly suffered and died? What made it hard for the first apostles to accept it?
3. What makes it challenging to accept a path of following God that includes trouble?
4. What does it mean to set our hope on the joy that is before us when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming (see 1 Peter 1:13)?
5. What does it look like today for you to take up your cross and follow Jesus? Remember that each person's path is very different, yet all are called to "deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow".
6. How have you experienced fellowship with God in hard times? What might that look like?

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## Conversation starters with people in daily life, whether or not they are Christians

What helps you through times of trouble, when it is hard to see any good coming in the future?

### The disciples' journey in Matthew

#### 1) Follow Jesus

"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people." At once they left their nets and followed him."

Matthew 4:19-20

#### 2) Know that Jesus is the Son of God

Jesus asked: "Who do you say I am?"

Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

"Blessed are you..." Matthew 16:15-16

#### 3) Know that Jesus will suffer and die, then be raised to life

"From that time on, Jesus began to explain that he must... suffer... die... on the third day be raised to life."

"Disciples must deny themselves, take up their crosses, and follow me"

Matthew 16:21: Denial

Matthew 17:22-23: Grief

Matthew 20:17-19: Seeking greatness in His Kingdom (!)

Matthew 26:1-2: Indignant over anointing for burial (!)

#### 4) Meet Jesus who is risen from the dead

"They worshiped him" Matthew 28:17

"Go and make disciples of all nations" Matthew 28:19

### Matthew 17:22-23

## The Big Idea

In Christ, trouble is part of the journey  
until there is overwhelming

and unending joy in God's presence

"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." John 16:33

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it." Matthew 16:24-25