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Blocking Jesus

Our response to injustice isn't always a God-like, pure response. Often it is **selfish** and **selective**.

📖 Matthew 16:21-26

❖ **God prepares His unlikely disciples for both opposition and victory.**

"...Jesus began to explain to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that He must be killed and on the third day be raised to life." v21

We are happy that Jesus came to give us life and freedom but we don't expect it to come through **suffering** and **submission**.

The only way for the Church to survive would be if evil was defeated through Jesus' suffering and submission.

Those who follow Christ will face injustice but they will also experience **great grace** and **final victory**.

Are you willing to lay down your life and trust in Christ to lead you to victory, His way?

❖ **Sometimes unlikely disciples block the way of Jesus instead of making the way straight for others to follow.**

Because we are sure of one thing does not mean we understand everything.

"... 'Never Lord! This shall never happen to you!' " v22

Peter was certain he was on the side of justice, and so he was. The problem was it was **selective** justice.

Peter wanted freedom without **submission** and life without **sacrifice** and so do we.

"... 'Get behind Me Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.' " v23

Peter wanted Jesus to deliver them from the experience of injustice. Jesus came to deliver us from a **heart** of injustice.

We see the injustices around us but we do not see the injustice **within** us.

We believe that we can only experience freedom in our hearts when God deals with the injustices of life. This is **selective** and **selfish**.

Only when we repent of the injustice of Jesus Christ having to die for **our** sin, can we be free to desire justice for all in a pure and God-like way.

❖ **Unlikely disciples take up their cross, die to self and live for God's glory.**

Peter thought he was fighting for justice when all along he was controlled by his self- life.

"... '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. What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?... " v24-26

When we come under the justice of God first, we discover our need for undeserved **mercy** and unmerited **grace**.

We learn to **surrender** our rights based on our self-life and discover the liberating freedom to live for God's glory.

Instead of trying to lead Jesus in your way, begin to follow Him, in His way. His way is the way of the **cross**.

When we take up our cross, we begin to be **transformed** into the beauty of Jesus who suffered and died, the just for the unjust.

The heart of justice which God requires comes only through repentance from sin, faith in Christ our Saviour and transformation by the Spirit.

Questions for Reflection:

- What specific spiritual freedom do I need to experience in my heart that will move me from my self-life to the cross-life?
- What would a practical response to injustice look like based on the freedom I have in Christ to reflect His glory?