



# Summer Blockbuster Reading Challenge

3 months—4 Gospels—Go!

## THURSDAY, JUNE 16, 2022



### Take your Pulse

What song can you listen to all day as it gives you great joy?

What music will you turn off as fast as you can?

### Today's Reading

Matthew Chapter 16

The cross, an ancient form of the death penalty, reserved for traitors against the empire, is the central image of our faith. Jesus doesn't yet say he will be crucified, just that he will be killed. But then he says to his disciples they are to pick up their cross. They would have been familiar with the cross. They would have understood that to be executed on a cross meant they were traitors. And now they are wondering why Jesus would tell them to be traitors against the empire — what is this faith he is teaching them?



### Start the Thinking

Christianity in America is considered the cultural norm. Yet not all that cultural Christianity proclaims truly follows Christ, most aligns with the very empire Jesus spoke against. How do we take up our cross today, to stand with Jesus, against empire?



### Conversing with God

God of the heavenly Kingdom, you stand against the evils of empire when empire is harmful against creation and your beloved children. Help us to take up our cross, that what needs to die may and what needs to experience new life may as well. In Jesus' holy name we pray.

Amen



### Be blessed

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine brightly upon you that you experience all God's grace. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

In the name of the Father, and the + Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen