

Matt.16:21-23 Ash Wednesday @ Immanuel, Mercedes Feb. 18, 2026

Jesus' Personal Passion Prophecies Refute Earthly Expectations

INTRO: Each of these six Wednesday Lenten services has a common theme - Jesus' personal Passion prophecies... During His ministry on earth, Jesus spoke about what He was doing, and about what was to come. I have chosen six such statements by Jesus concerning Himself. The first is that of tonight's text. (*read text*)

I...TEACH WHEN CIRCUMSTANCES ARE APPROPRIATE...

A. After three years of teaching and observation

1. had called then from humble Jewish origins
2. with them day and night for three years
3. showed His divinity in feeding 5,000, healings, exorcisms, etc.
4. showed humanity in emotions and daily living
5. showed His wisdom in teachings and refutations
6. applied O.T. to Himself; explained it; showed Himself to be God

B. After Peter's confession of faith at Caesarea Phillipi

1. Who do men/you say that I am; Thou art the Christ...
2. praised Peter: Blessed art thou...
3. tempered bad news with good news
4. weeks before the event, to allow contemplation, reflection
5. to educate and inform, for their preparation, maturing

C. As we ought to do likewise

1. common sense, judging mood and maturity of hearer
2. starting with Jesus as God and Savior, with the immature
3. teaching sin and guilt privately, thus not defensive
4. sometimes, though, "When the iron is hot"
5. above all, not neglecting opportunities to prepare
6. because we care about the other person's future

II...TO GUARD THEM FROM ERROR AND TEMPTATION

A. Like confusing literal and figurative places in Scripture

1. "destroy this temple...three days..." (John 2:19)
 - a. at beginning of ministry; this text much later
 - b. would have distracted from learning
 - c. now plainly says "be killed"
 - d. further details of His death not yet given
2. entire Messianic concept gets confused
 - a. an earthly political kingdom wanted (even yet today!)
 - b. plans today for world order, social utopia; wipe out poverty
 - c. My kingdom is not of this world (to Pilate - John 18:36)
 - d. kingdom...within you (Luke 17:31 elaborate)

- B. To prepare against despair in difficult times to come
1. why Son of God arrested, crucified?!
 2. yet He went to Jerusalem; not them coming for Him
 3. why death of loved one? or any other hardship?
 4. easy to dwell on cross; short change the resurrection, ascension
 5. even His followers (then/now) are tempted with doubts
 6. prior preparation may help see one through hardships

C. Or against private interpretations

1. on our own, we bring in our own ideas
2. hence Peter: Far be it from Thee, Lord
3. sadly, later stated, "I know not the man"
4. too often do I hear "I don't think that God..."
5. as if we know better than the inspired writers
6. thus losing the simplicity of salvation *propter Christi*

III. PROPER DISCIPLESHIP...

A... Understands God's plan of salvation

1. He demands/deserves perfection; heaven is a holy place
2. even the closest of disciples fall short (Peter, pastors)
3. If any man sin... Advocate with the Father...(1 John 2:1)
4. must go...suffer...be killed **(for us)**
5. words and promises convey to us exactly what they say
6. absolution, real presence, benediction
7. gift of faith appropriates these blessings from Christ

B... Confidently facing the future

1. understanding the glory of resurrection (His, and ours)
2. experiencing fulfillment of Jesus' personal prophecies
3. knowing God cares much about us even yet now
4. confident of our personal forgiveness and eternal outcome
5. knowing of deliverance from all evil, eventually
6. sure of every promise that God has made

C... Empowered for living under Him in His kingdom

1. listening to His promises w/o prior notions
2. knowing God's revealed plan of salvation
3. voluntarily following, knowing probable hardships
4. sure of His promised presence
5. prepared for whatever lies ahead in our lives
6. knowing His kingdom now, and to come

CONCLUSION: Jesus told what would happen to Him and to us.

He suffered, died, was buried, rose; redeemed us.

So we trust, accept, follow, and patiently wait. Amen