

Text: [Matthew 10:25-39 \(CEB\)](#)

Date: June 21, 2026

Title: “The Price to Be Paid”

Theme: Jesus invites us to find real life, but it requires change – and change has its enemies, including us!

1

It’s easy for us to forget about and ignore a lot of passages of scripture

This isn’t one of them

Jesus has a lot of things to say in these fifteen verses
And most of them are pretty unpleasant – for the twelve disciples,
and for us – to hear

Jesus is talking about persecution
He’s talking about priorities
He’s talking about sacrifice
About remaining steadfast in the face of trial
And the fact that the gospel will be divisive in ways you probably
didn’t expect

We don’t want to hear any of these things, any more than Jesus’
disciples did

We don’t want Jesus saying to us:
“Are you ready to be called the devil?
Because that’s that they say about me!”

I know that what many – perhaps most – people want out of
church is an hour of peace

An hour where we can focus on God and shut out all the
distractions

Where we don’t have to worry about the news cycle
Or all the division we experience beyond these walls

And so when we hear a passage like this – what we want to focus on is the part that says:

“Even the hairs on your head are all counted. So don’t be afraid.”
Because that’s the comforting thing
That’s the peaceful thing
On some level, that’s the easy thing

2

And, don’t get me wrong
We need the comforting thing, the peaceful thing,
The easy and hopeful thing
Especially now
But we also need to hear real talk about how hard it can be to
follow Jesus sometimes

These are words Jesus spoke to the disciples before he sent them out to do the work of the gospel
Before he commissioned them to preach and to teach and to heal,
He tried to warn them:
The good news isn’t going to be as popular as you might think

The idea that the love and grace of God is for all people
Threatens folks who have become overly invested in a division
between “us” and “them”

But maybe that direct resistance isn’t even the most powerful kind
What’s more powerful is the inertia that keeps us stuck
When you go to tell people how Jesus is inviting us into a brand-
new life
A lot of folks will say, “I’m good, thanks.
I like my life just fine as it is.”

If we're honest, maybe that's most of us, most of the time.
But Jesus says: "Those who find their lives will lose them, and
those who lose their lives because of me will find them."
If you feel like you've already found your life, you might miss out
on what Jesus is offering you

3

Sixty-plus years ago, Senator Robert F. Kennedy made this
observation:

"Progress is a nice word. But change is its motivator.
And change has its enemies."

We could say the same thing about the word "transformation"
The gospel aims at transformation
A renewal of heart and life
That's why it's part of our mission statement – "transform lives"

Which sounds all well and good until you realize that what we're
really talking about is change
And change has its enemies – including us

When we read Jesus' words here in Matthew 10
It's easy for us to hear them as judgmental
Even harsh
And we are not used to that from Jesus

"Every hair on your head is counted" we get
"I've come to turn a man against his father and a daughter against
her mother" – we don't

But I want you to understand:
When Jesus says, "Don't think I've come to bring peace"
He's not saying conflict is his *goal*, he's simply stating facts

And actually, those lines: “a man against his father,
a daughter against her mother,
a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law” are quoted directly
from the prophet Micah (7:6)
Jesus didn’t make them up

He’s just quoting what prophets have been saying – and
experiencing – forever:
Those who live in God’s way will meet resistance

4

Jesus calls us to change:
Whether we use the word discipleship
Or transformation
Or new life
The result is all the same: change

Change in us
And (we hope) change in the world
So that we begin to more closely resemble Jesus
And the world begins to look more like the kin-dom of God

But here’s the problem:
There are lots and lots of people - including us –
Who are heavily invested in how things are
We don’t want our routines
Or our beliefs
Or our judgments & biases
And certainly not our economics – to be disrupted

The problem is that Jesus has a tendency to do all those things
When we start making Sunday worship a priority
Or giving away a percentage of our income to God's work
Or we start caring about issues of justice, or about the poor,
in ways that we didn't before – because our faith compels us to

People will notice
And some won't be happy

5

Change has its enemies – including us
I mean, we all know how difficult it is to effect change in our own
lives

How many times have you started and stopped new diets and
exercise routines?

It's even that much harder
Because what Jesus asks us to do
To love all people unconditionally
To forgive even when someone's hurt us terribly
To speak the truth even if it costs us something
To serve people without expecting any reward or even thanks

What Jesus has asked us to do is hard
And while theoretically everyone loves love
When it's practiced in the way that Jesus teaches
The world finds it threatening

Wait...you love *them*?
You want me to believe God cares about *them*?
And that I should *too*?

If we want to be like Jesus
We have to recognize that there's a price to be paid

Jesus doesn't say that to scare us, or to threaten us
He's just telling the truth

6

The change that Jesus invites us into
Isn't change for the sake of change
It's an invitation to move from what's lesser to what's greater

We can choose to build our lives around loves that are lesser
Love for things
Love for money
Limited kinds of love that never extend beyond our immediate
family, or community, or nation

But that's not the love of Jesus
What he called his disciples into,
What he calls us into,
Is something much greater
A love for the whole world and ALL its people

It's a love we resist
Because it requires transformation
It requires change
And change has its enemies – sometimes even us

But what Jesus promises is that in that change
That's where we'll find life
"Those who find their lives will lose them, and those who lose
their lives because of me will find them"

He says this
Not because transformation is easy
Or that there's no price to be paid

He says it because he knows that when we choose to follow
We'll find the thing we've been searching for all along:
Real life.

Amen.

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