



### **INTRODUCTION:**

What are the characteristics of a “selfish” person?

What are things we can be selfish about?

### **TAKE A LOOK AT THE BOOK:**

Read Matthew 16:24-28

What does Jesus mean when he says “must deny himself and take up his cross”?

Don Carson in his book *Scandalous* says about v.25 “It is at this juncture that Jesus universalizes the principal that is at stake...This expression “to take up ones cross” is not an idiom by which to refer to a trivial annoyance—an ingrown toenail, perhaps, or a toothache, or an awkward in-law: “We all have our crosses to bear.” No, in the first century, that sort of interpretation would have been impossible. In the first century it was culturally unthinkable to make jokes about crucifixion as it would be today to make jokes about Auschwitz. To take up your cross does not mean to move forward with courage despite the fact you have lost your job or your spouse. It means you are under sentence of death; you are taking up the horizontal cross-member on your way to the place of crucifixion. You have abandoned all hope of life in this world. And then, Jesus says, and only then, are we ready to follow him.”

What does that even look like in our lives? Is it even possible? How?

### **TAKE IT HOME:**

Is there ever a time that you have to put yourself first? When? How does that square with this passage?

If you denied yourself for the sake of Christ, would anything change in your life? What?