

# Mystic



## ✓ Prepare in Advance

- Have the *Bible Background Video* ready to view.
- Retrieve, review, and have ready the videos listed below (links are provided on this session's webpage).
- Provide a focal point: Gather pictures of suffering and crisis in our world, and in individuals' lives. Place them in the center of the meeting area, with a candle.
- Print and make copies of the lyrics for the song "Wasted." (Link to lyrics is on this session's webpage).

## ✓ Deprivation

Listen to the following song *twice*: "Wasted" sung by Carrie Underwood. Before listening, provide a handout with the printed lyrics.

First listening: Just listen to the song to get the gist and feel of the story

Second listening: Invite people to jot down their thoughts on the following questions as they listen (provide time after the song is over for continued individual reflections):

At any particular point in the story of this couple (e.g. during the implied history of this couple, the current day, the point of decisions, the future):

- What life giving things are being given up?
- What life killing things are being given up?
- Share reflections on the song and questions.

Read the scripture passage for today, Matthew 16:21-28, then view the *Bible Background Video*.

Say: We usually read this as a sacrificial, martyr text, where we have to make hard choices to give up good things that bring us a sense of life. Discipleship becomes an exercise in deprivation. But Jesus says "Whoever loses his life for me *will find it*." Consider that this text asks us to give up nothing that is truly LIFE giving.

Lead a discussion using the following questions:

- What does Peter think Jesus is giving up? List as many things as you can.
- By being true to who he is, what is Jesus actually deciding to give up? (e.g. an assent to the accusations that he is a liar, a religion that has become empty for

many people, the idea that coercion is the answer to love, the idea that death has the final say, etc.)

- What is good and life giving (for ourselves and for others) about "taking up our crosses?"

## ✓ Personal Reflection

- What, if anything, are you being asked to give up that is life-killing (for you or others)?
- Why do you hold onto what is life-killing?
- What would it be like to give it up?

Spend some time silently talking with Jesus about these things. Remember that Jesus was tempted by Peter's words, and called them a "stumbling block to me." Share with him your questions, doubts, fears, struggles. Ask for the grace to give up all those things that keep you from living your life fully.

*Note: If the group desires to do so, have people share their personal reflections.*

## ✓ Closing Prayer

Pass the candle around and invite people to pray sentence prayers that voice a hope they have that stems from their reflections.

by Joy Yee

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