

5. Jesus is healing people and casting out demons. As word gets out, it's easy to see how some would get caught up in the thrill of it all. How does Jesus challenge them to ponder more deeply the decision to follow him?

6. At what point in your life did you begin to ponder the cost of following Jesus?

7. As the crowds grow, Jesus decides to go to the other side of the lake. We know from the gospels that he often would withdraw from the crowds to pray or to teach his disciples. What practices or boundaries can we implement to maintain spiritual and emotional well-being while serving others?

---

## SERMON APPLICATION GUIDE

---

### Meeting Jesus

"Pondering the Response and Cost of Following Jesus"

Matthew 8:14-22

Meeting Jesus is a transformative encounter that \_\_\_\_\_ us in a new and exciting direction.

Ponder: to think about something \_\_\_\_\_, especially before making a decision or reaching a conclusion.

"If you don't ponder, you are not in control of your life, someone else is. If you don't ponder, then you will end up in places, situations, health issues, conversations, and even relationships you don't want to be in. All because you didn't ponder." (Bethany Tolley)

1. What is my \_\_\_\_\_ to God's grace toward me?

Could that be said of us, that because of the grace Jesus has given us, "We got up and began to wait on him"? Think of starting a day with "I will get up and wait on Jesus."

Isaiah 53:3-5 He was despised and rejected by mankind,  
a man of suffering, and familiar with pain.  
Like one from whom people hide their faces  
he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.  
Surely he took up our pain  
and bore our suffering,  
yet we considered him punished by God,  
stricken by him, and afflicted.  
But he was pierced for our transgressions,  
he was crushed for our iniquities;  
the punishment that brought us peace was on him,  
and by his wounds we are healed.

---

Where is God leading you with your BLESS list this week?



"He did it willingly so that, as his children, you and I would be able to live in the hope and peace of knowing that no matter what we face in the human community, we are perfectly and eternally loved by him. He endured rejection so that we would know God's accepting love forever and ever and ever. How amazing is this grace?" (Paul Tripp)

2. Do I recognize Jesus's \_\_\_\_\_?

Daniel 7:13-14 "In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

3. Have I counted the \_\_\_\_\_ of following Jesus?

Jesus clearly was saying that "If you want to be in my kingdom, you will come into conflict with the world. There will be \_\_\_\_\_, but not the ones you are expecting. Many of the things you desire, like health, status, popularity, and wealth, may never come because the kingdom of God doesn't consist of those things. You want to follow me; enter my kingdom. I'll pay the cost of admission, but to follow me, you will need to walk; no free rides."

4. Am I \_\_\_\_\_ on the fence?

"O, Lord make me good...but not yet." (St. Augustine)

## Personal Reflection & Small Group Questions

Please complete this study on your own, then bring it to your small group for discussion.

1. Looking back over your notes from this week's sermon, what particularly caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?
2. Think of two extremes: on one side, you have people who ponder a lot and do nothing; on the other, you have people who take action without thinking, following their first instinct or their emotions. Where are you on that spectrum?
3. Read Matthew 8:14-22. If you were in Peter's mother in laws place, how do you think you would have responded? (Remember, there's surely more to her response than what Matthew records.)
4. How can we cultivate a heart of servanthood and willingness to serve Jesus, as exemplified by Peter's mother-in-law?