

**FINDING OURSELVES IN PETER'S STORY**  
**HOW GOOD CHRISTIANS SOMETIMES DO THE DEVIL'S WORK**  
**Matthew 16:21-23**

**Why did Peter say what he said? Matt. 16:21-22**

- Peter's words came out of **emotions**. Matt. 16:21-22; Mark 8:31-32; Luke 7:11-17; John 11:21-47
- Peter's words came because he didn't **understand** God's plan. Matt. 16:13-16, 21-22, 12:40; Is. 55:8-9; Prov. 14:12; Ps. 92:5-6
- Peter's words came because he thought he **knew** God's will better than Jesus. Matt. 16:21-22, 13-16, 7:13-14; Luke 18:9-14, 18-25; Josh. 7:2-6

**Why did Jesus say what he said? Matt. 16:23**

- Jesus knew who stood **behind** Peter's words. Matt. 16:23; John 13:27, 8:44, 12:31, 14:30, 16:11; Gen. 3:1-7; Eph. 6:10; 2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:2
- Jesus knew that the **cross** was God's plan for redemption. Matt. 16:21-23, 1:21; Luke 2:11; John 1:29; Heb. 9:22, 10:9-12, 2:14, 17-18; 1 John 2:1-2; Col. 2:13-14; 1 Cor. 15:55-57; Rom. 8:3

**What do we learn? Matt. 16:21-23**

- We sometimes do the **devil's** work without meaning to. Matt. 16:21-23, 16:16, 4:1-10, 6:24; Eph. 4:32; Is. 55:8-9; Luke 9:23
- We have victories that are **often** followed by defeats. Matt. 16:13, 22; Josh. 7:2-6; 1 Kin. 3:6-13, 16-28, 11:1-13, 18-19
- We need to **realize** that our strengths and weaknesses lie side by side. Matt. 16:13, 21-23, 26:32-35, 51; John 13:36-37; Acts 2:14-47, 4:8-12; Matt. 26:69-75

- To Peter the cross was evidence of failure.
- To Jesus the cross was the purpose for which he came to earth.
- To Peter the cross meant that Jesus had been defeated.
- To Jesus the cross was the means by which Satan was defeated.
- To Peter the cross meant that evil had won the day.
- To Jesus the cross was the path to final victory over sin.
- To Peter the cross meant that Jesus was gone forever.
- To Jesus the cross led to the empty tomb.
- To Peter the cross was a badge of shame.
- To Jesus the cross brought salvation to the world.
- To Peter the cross meant they had no message to preach.
- To Jesus the cross became the message they would preach to the nations.
- To Peter the cross made no sense.
- To Jesus the cross displayed the wisdom of God.

“Jesus’ action, in singling Judas out for a mark of special favour, may have been intended as a final appeal to him to abandon his treacherous plan and play the part of a true disciple. Up to that moment, the die had not been irrevocably cast. If Judas wavered for a second, it was only to steel himself to carry out his fatal resolution, to become the willing instrument of Satan whereas he might have been the free follower and messenger of his Master. Satan could not have entered into him had he not granted him admission. Had he been willing to say ‘No’ to the adversary, all of his Master’s intercessory power was available to him there and then to strengthen him. But when a disciple’s will turns trader, when the spiritual aid of Christ is refused, that person’s condition is desperate indeed.”

The MacArthur New Testament Commentary