In the late 1940s the United States government commissioned the building of an $80 million troop carrier for the navy. The purpose was to design a ship that could speedily carry 15,000 troops during times of war. By 1952 construction on the SS United States was complete. The ship could travel at 44 knots and could steam 10,000 miles without stopping for fuel or supplies. It was the fastest and most reliable troop carrier in the world.

“The only catch is, it never carried troops.

“Instead, the SS United States became a luxury liner for presidents, heads of state, and a variety of other celebrities who traveled on it during its 17 years of service. As a luxury liner, it couldn’t carry 15,000 people. Instead, it could house just under 2,000 passengers. Those passengers could enjoy the luxuries of 695 staterooms, 4 dining salons, 3 bars, 2 theaters, 5 acres of open deck with a heated pool, 19 elevators, and other comforts of the world’s first fully air-conditioned passenger ship. Instead of a vessel used for battle during wartime, the SS United States became a means of indulgence for wealthy patrons who desired to coast peacefully across the Atlantic.

“The church was designed for battle. The church’s purpose is to mobilize a people to accomplish a mission - to make disciples. Yet we seem to have turned the church from a troop carrier to a luxury liner. We seem to have organized ourselves not to engage in battle for the souls of peoples around the world but to indulge ourselves in the peaceful comforts of the world.” [David Platt, Radical Small-Group Study, pp. 142-43]

for discussion
What do you think about David Platt’s words above? Do you agree or disagree? Why?

encounter
Read God’s Word so that He can speak to you.

Matthew 10:24-39

24 "A student is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. 25 It is enough for the student to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebub, how much more the members of his household!

26 "So do not be afraid of them. There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. 27 What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs. 28 Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. 29 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. 30 And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. 31 So don't be afraid; you are worth more
God's Word by asking questions of what you saw.

1) How would you summarize the message of Christianity?
   • How would you summarize the cost of Christianity?
   • How would you summarize the reward?

2) Christians might be able to state the message of Christianity with full conviction, yet not quite be willing to pay the cost. Why is that? Why do we have a gap between what we believe and putting faith into action?
   • What might FBC look like if we bridged the gap and were devoted to making disciples because we are disciples becoming like the Master?

3) Read Matthew 10:16-25. What's the most sobering part of this passage to you?
   • What do you find encouraging in this passage?
   • In light of the needs before them and the danger around them, the disciples knew they were entering battle. Do you have that same sense of urgency about Jesus’ commands? Explain.
   • What in your life might be dulling that sense of urgency?
Jesus also told us not to fear, and He gave at least four reasons (10:26-33). Explain what each means, and how that helps to remove fear.

- Truth will be revealed
- God has more power and authority
- Your Father cares for you—you are more valuable
- Jesus will confess you before the Father

How does this truth help you to live as a Kingdom citizen and represent the King to this world: “A student is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master” (10:24)?

How are you to take up your cross and follow Jesus (10:38-39)? What does He expect of you? To what extent are you taking up the cross?

- How is the reward worth it? Is it a motivation for you? Why or why not?

notes on the passage

(Adapted from Thomas Constable, Expository Notes)

24-25 - Persecution should not surprise His disciples. They had seen the scribes and Pharisees, and even John's disciples, oppose Jesus. They could expect the same treatment. Beelzebul was Satan, the head of the household of demons (12:24-27). The word "Beelzebul" probably came from the Hebrew baal zebul meaning "Prince Baal." Baal was the chief Canaanite deity, and the Jews regarded him as the personification of all that was evil and satanic. The house in view is Israel. Jesus as Messiah was the head of that household. However, His critics charged Him with being Satan (cf. 9:34). Therefore the disciples could expect similar slander from their enemies.

26-27 - The basis for confidence in the face of persecution is an understanding that whatever is presently hidden will eventually come out into the open. This proverbial statement applies to the truth about Jesus that the fearful disciple might seek to keep hidden for fear of opposition. It also applies to the disciple himself who might want to hide instead of letting his light shine. It applies also to the preceding teaching about persecution. What Jesus told His disciples privately would eventually become public knowledge, so they should declare it publicly. In Palestine common flat-roofed houses were good places from which to make public addresses.

28 - It also helps to conquer fear if the disciple will remember that the worst a human adversary can do does not compare with the worst God can do. Jesus was not implying that true believers might go to hell if they do not remain faithful to God. His point was that God has power over the disciple after he dies whereas human adversaries can do nothing beyond killing the disciple's body. The believer needs to remember that he or she will stand before God one day to give an account of his or her stewardship.

29-31 - Third, the same God who will not permit a sparrow to fall to the ground will certainly take care of His faithful servants. The Jews were very familiar of this illustration. The poor in Israel ate sparrows since they only cost a fraction of a day's wage (Adolf Deissmann, Light from the Ancient East, pp. 272-75). The mention of the disciples' heavenly Father (v. 29) stresses His care that extends to the numbering of his or her hairs. Often people think that God cares only for the big things in life and is unconcerned about the details. Jesus taught the opposite. God's concern with details should give us confidence that
One thing we can do to train ourselves to remember, is to memorize a part of what our Father has said to us. The Holy Spirit can use this to change our thinking so that our “heads” are more like Jesus.

This week, memorize Matthew 10:39.

39 Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.