

Discussion Guide

June 29, 2025

Summer Series Week 3

Halfway Won't Work

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Main Idea

We live in a culture that struggles with commitment, where half-hearted effort is the norm and options are endless. From gym memberships to relationships, we often want results without full investment. But when it comes to our faith, halfway just won't cut it. You've never seen something great come from someone who was only partially committed. Jesus isn't calling us to casual belief—He's calling us to go all in. If you want all that God has to offer, it requires all of you. Today, we're asking a bold question: "What's holding you back from going all in with God?"

Anchor Passage

"Then Jesus said to his disciples, 'Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?'"
(Matthew 16:24-26, NIV)

Read John 10:10, Ephesians 3:20, Matthew 22:37, Luke 9:62, Revelation 3:16

1. **Deny yourself - surrender your will.**

True discipleship begins with self-denial—learning to lead your flesh instead of being led by it. You can't follow Jesus fully if you're still letting your desires dictate your actions.

Discussion: What is one area in your life where you struggle to deny yourself, and how might intentionally feeding your spirit help you gain victory in that area?

Read Jeremiah 29:13 and Matthew 16:34

2. **Take up your cross - sacrifice your desires.**

Following Jesus requires more than belief—it requires surrender. You can't pick up your cross without first laying something else down, because true discipleship always comes with a cost.

Read Luke 14:25-27 and Galatians 2:20

Discussion: What is something you may need to lay down in order to fully follow Jesus and pick up your cross daily? Why do you think so many people struggle to believe that what's on the other side of surrender is actually better?

“Jesus Christ will not have the half of a man.” - Charles Spurgeon

3. Follow Jesus - submit your entire world to him.

Following Jesus isn't a one-time decision—it's a daily lifestyle of surrender and movement in His direction. When you go all in, you don't just choose *a* way—you choose *The Way*, and He leads you into a full and abundant life.

Read John 14:6, Matthew 19:29, and Joshua 24:15

Discussion: What does it look like in your life to follow Jesus as a daily lifestyle rather than a one-time decision? What are some distractions or competing priorities that make it difficult to stay fully committed to “The Way”? (Bonis: How does Romans 1:16 apply?)

SUMMARY

This message challenges us to move beyond casual Christianity and embrace a life of full commitment to Jesus. It begins with denying ourselves—leading our flesh instead of being led by it. True discipleship also means laying down anything that competes with Christ and willingly picking up our cross, knowing that following Him comes with sacrifice. Ultimately, it's a daily choice and lifestyle of surrender, where we no longer lead our lives but follow *The Way*—trusting that what's on the other side of full devotion is always better.

CALL TO ACTION

IDENTIFY one area of your life where self-denial is needed, and take one intentional step this week to lead your flesh instead of following it.

ASK God to show you something you need to lay down—whether it's an attitude, habit, or distraction—and choose to surrender it in exchange for a deeper walk with Him.

Commit to a daily rhythm of following Jesus by starting each morning this week with a simple prayer of surrender: “Not my will, but Yours be done.”

GROUP LEADER RESOURCE

Chart Your Life

Give your group members pens and paper. Ask them to draw a line representing the movement of their lives between high times and low ones.

Invite people to think back as far as they can and mark significant moments along the line they have drawn. Ask them to consider the high points and low points, moments of inspiration, moments of despair, leveling-off times, and where they are now.

The charts will probably be a mixture of straight, slanted, jagged and curved lines. At the different points of their lines, have people either draw something or write a phrase to represent that season of their life. Ask people to make at least five different points on their chart to represent significant moments in their lives.

After everyone has drawn their lines, have people share what they've drawn and what it means with the group.

Tips: This one may take longer than many other activities. It might be good to have people draw their charts beforehand to bring with them. If people are willing to share honestly, this can be a great activity to help your group bond. Ask your group to share only one to three points on their graphs to save time, or have people share their whole graphs in smaller groups.