

For the Love of an Imperative Verb Matthew 16:21-28

The Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost, Year A, RCL

²¹From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. ²²And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you.” ²³But he turned and said to Peter, “**Get** [ὑπάγε, **hýpage**] behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.”

²⁴Then Jesus told his disciples, “If any want to become my followers, **let** them **deny** [ἀπαρνησάσω, **aparnēsásō**] themselves and **take up** [ἀράτω, **arátō**] their cross and **follow** [ἀκολουθείτω, **akolouthéitō**] me. ²⁵For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. ²⁶For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life?

²⁷For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done. ²⁸Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.” [NRSV89]

16:23

ὑπάγε, **hýpage**; *vb: pres act imperative 2nd pers sg from ὑπάγω:*

translations: **get** [NRSV89, ESV, NAB, NGEINT, NIV11, NJB, NKJV, NRSVue; Albright & Mann, Filson], also **vete** [IAAdNT]

16:24

ἀπαρνησάσω, **aparnēsásō**; *vb: aor mid imperative 3rd pers sg from ἀπαρνέομαι:*

translations: **let . . . deny** [NRSV89, ESV, NGEINT, NRSVue; Albright & Mann, Filson],

must deny [NAB, NIV11, NKJV], also **let . . . renounce** [NJB], **niegue** [IAAdNT]

Levine & Brettler: “The statement is paradox: holding tightly to something risks loosing it; letting it go preserves it.” [JANT, p. 42.]

Albright & Mann: “To pursue earthly security at this juncture of the ministry is to lose all in the time of The Man’s coming.” [p. 200.]

ἀράτω, **arátō**; *vb: aor act imperative 3rd pers sg from ἄρω:*

translations: **take up** [NRSV89, ESV, NAB, NGEINT, NIV11, NJB, NKJV, NRSVue; Albright & Mann, Filson], also **tome** [IAAdNT]

ἀκολουθείτω, **akoloutheítō**; *vb: pres act imperative 3rd pers sg* from ἀκολουθέω:
translations: **follow** [NRSV89, ESV, NAB, NIV11, NJB, NKJV, NRSVue; Albright & Mann,
Filson], **let . . . follow** [NGEINT], also **signa** [IAdNT]
Filson: The present imperative calls for steady continuing faithfulness in the
way of costly obedience. [p. 189.]

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