

I Am A Disciple of Jesus Christ

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[0 : 00] Take your copy of the scriptures and turn to the Gospel of Luke. The Gospel of Luke. And chapter 14. We'll be reading verses 25 through the end of the chapter.

! Luke 14, 25. Large crowds were traveling with Jesus. And turning to them, he said, If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters, yes, even his own life, he cannot be my disciple.

And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it?

For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, saying, This fellow began to build and was not able to finish. Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king.

Will he not first sit down and consider whether he is able with 10,000 men to oppose the one coming against him with 20,000? If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace.

[1 : 21] In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple. Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again?

It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure pile. It is thrown out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear. When Meghan Markle said, I do to a Brit named Harry, her life drastically changed, didn't it? Indeed, whenever a commoner marries royalty, their new identity reshapes the whole of their lives. So now what she wears, what she says, where she goes, and what she does is all to be governed by who she is, a member of the royal family.

And so her new identity as a royal carries with it both huge privileges and great responsibilities. I suppose she'll never wait in line again, do you?

But she also has huge responsibilities. There's the expectation of a whole new code of ethics or etiquette, I should say, of how to behave in this situation and that situation.

[2 : 43] And if she would not make a fool of herself and of her prince husband and of the queen, then she will want to be remembering often who she is. Indeed, to wake up each morning reminding herself who she is, that she might act accordingly.

Even so, the Bible, according to the Bible, being aware of who you are, Christian, is to have a profound effect upon how you live.

Your identity is to powerfully shape your life and that's why we find God so often in scriptures reminding us of who we are. And so we're studying this new identity that is ours from being united to Jesus Christ, the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords, the ultimate royal one.

And we're going to our Bibles to see how God defines us. Some of the names, some of the titles he gives us, some of the ways he describes us, telling us who we are. That we might live lives consistent with who we are.

Living up to our privileges and responsibilities to the honor of our gracious King. Well, last week we learned and I shouldn't say learned, I suppose, we were reminded that we are believers.

[4 : 07] We're believers. It's part of our new identity in Christ. Therefore, our lives are to be marked by believing. We walk by faith, by believing, not by sight like the rest of the world around us.

Believers is what we are. Believing is what we do. Now today, God reminds us that we are disciples. So say with me, Christian, I am a disciple of Jesus Christ.

I am a disciple of Jesus Christ. Now in the ancient world, a disciple was a follower. And I suppose that's just the most basic way to describe.

What is a disciple? He's a follower. a dedicated follower of his master teacher. Committed to learning and practicing his teachings, imitating his way of life, but also committing to spreading his ideas, his truths, his teaching to others.

So you had philosophers walking around. You had a gaggle of followers going along behind him. They're listening and they're learning and they're embracing what he says and they're watching him and they're imitating him.

[5 : 31] And then they're spreading his ideas and ways. And so there were disciples of Aristotle and disciples of Plato and other leaders.

Within the New Testament itself, we read of disciples of John the Baptist, disciples of the Pharisees who claimed themselves to be disciples of Moses.

And then we read of the disciples of Jesus Christ. Nearly 300 times in the New Testament there is a reference to Jesus, disciples. And the Lord Jesus himself refers to his followers as disciples.

So let's dig in this morning and learn what we are as disciples of the Lord Jesus and how this is to shape our lives. Now of the 300 uses of this word, most often it refers to the 12 apostles.

Those, that inner band of 12 disciples as they're sometimes called. Other times this word disciples is used of the larger group that followed Jesus and willingly heard him.

[6 : 45] And we find these two groups of disciples mentioned in the same passage in Luke 6, 13, when Jesus spent the night praying to his father. And when morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose 12 of them whom he also designated apostles.

So there we have disciples, the two groups out of the larger groups of disciples, followers on, those learning of him. He chose 12 disciples to be with him continually, to train them, to pour his life into them, and then to send them out with authority to speak and act on his behalf.

So you had the larger crowd of disciples and the inner band of 12. Now some of these disciples in the larger band were true disciples and some were false disciples.

disciples not all were true disciples in the inner band of 12, were they? One was a traitor. But the larger crowd of disciples and the inner band of disciples, many of these in the larger crowd of disciples, the hangers on, many of them were sifted out by the flesh-withering teaching of Jesus and by his setting forth the demands of his discipleship.

And that had a way of separating the true from the false. They were interested in following Jesus but for the wrong reasons.

[8 : 18] They had their bellies filled or they had their diseases healed and that was about it for them and they only would follow as long as they could do so and still have their own ways and their own ideas that they could pick and choose which teachings to believe and which commands to obey.

But the Lord Jesus did not give that option to his disciples. John 8 31, to the Jews who had believed him, that is they believed certain claims of his, Jesus said, if you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples.

It's continuance in the word, it's holding fast to my word, it is practicing my word, that is the litmus test, the acid test of true discipleship.

John 6, Jesus has taught the crowd of disciples important truths about himself and about themselves and then it began.

Many of his disciples were grumbling and complaining about these hard teachings. We can't accept that, they said.

[9 : 40] But Jesus wouldn't budge on his word. And so we read next, from this time, many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.

They failed the acid test of discipleship. They showed what they had always been. False disciples, professing to be disciples, but not the real deal. Because real disciples hold fast, continue in the word of Christ.

You're very familiar with the great commission in which Jesus spoke to his disciples, his last words to them on this earth. And his words to his disciples were to go and make other disciples, weren't they?

You go and make disciples from all the nations. And how you do that? By preaching the gospel to them, telling them what I have done for sinners, and calling them to repent and believe.

You go and make disciples and then baptize them and then teach them to obey whatever they find convenient with them. No, teach them to obey everything that I have commanded you.

[10:56] That's a disciple. someone who has been going his own way and turns and repents and puts all of his weight for heaven on Jesus and then is baptized into a local church where he or she is then taught for the rest of their lives to obey everything that Jesus commands.

the Lord Jesus in the New Testament knows nothing of unbaptized disciples of Jesus, isolated from church life, who pick and choose which teachings to believe and which commands to obey.

All true disciples submit themselves to the word of Jesus. They put themselves under his word as learners. They put their minds under his mind.

They put their desires under his desires, their will under him and they learn of him. That's a disciple and they continue in his word. Now as you read the four gospels, there's a pattern that emerges very clearly and it's this, that as the crowd of disciples swelled and as numbers increased, Jesus didn't just ride the wave of enthusiasm and sign up as many disciples as he could.

in the heat of emotion, they were ready to make him king, weren't they? Their kind of king, but not God's kind of king. He would have nothing of it.

[12:31] But Jesus didn't hide the cost of discipleship. He didn't hide the demands upon disciples in some little footnote way down in small print in the contract.

Rather, the Lord Jesus brought it right up front. Bold letters, loud words, what it costs to be a real disciple. What it costs to remain true to Jesus, to keep following him all your life.

And we saw it in the passage read for us in Luke 14. It begins in verse 25. Large crowds, crowds of disciples, these who were coming to learn from Jesus.

large crowds were traveling with Jesus and turning to them, he said, if anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters, yes, even his own life, he cannot be my disciple.

And again in verse 25, and anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. And again, after two parables on counting the cost, whether you're building something or a king going to war, the same message is sit down and count the cost first before you leap.

[13:59] After those two parables, he says, in the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple. Now, that might sound awfully radical.

These demands of discipleship might sound awfully radical to us today. Jesus often used startling words to punch someone in the gut, to wake them up, to bring a truth home to them, to make them think.

And that's surely what we have here. If you don't hate father and mother, you can't be my disciple. Now, kids, Jesus did not mean that they were to literally hate father and mother.

How do we know that? His commandment is honor your father and mother. And his commandment is to love everyone. Indeed, that's the second greatest commandment, is loving your neighbor as yourself. And Jesus even tells us to love our enemies.

No, we're to love our mother and father. What does he mean by unless you hate them, you cannot be my disciple? Well, this is, there's a parallel passage in Matthew's gospel, and it helps shed light and shows us that Jesus is using these words as an exaggerated contrast to drive home his message.

[15:18] In essence, they mean that you must love them less. In Matthew 10, 37, he who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, cannot be my disciple.

If you love mother or father more than me, and he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And so his meaning is clear that whenever you must choose between father and Jesus, Jesus always trumps father.

Whenever you must choose between mother and Jesus, Jesus must always be chosen and remain faithful to Jesus. And even if it means losing the favor of father and mother or brother or sister or even the dearest of earth, husband and wife, Jesus must be so far ahead that compared to your love for Jesus, your love for your parents and wife and children looks like hatred.

I've heard Derek Thomas, a pastor, tell of a young lady who was in the same Christian student group as he was at university.

Jane was the brightest Christian he had ever met. She would zealously witness, boldly walk up to other students and just tell them the gospel.

[16:51] She'd pass out tracts. She loved theology. She bought banner of truth books written by the Puritans and contemporary authors about solid biblical truth and would share them with Derek Thomas and he just profited greatly from those books.

And a week before she graduated, her unbelieving father, who was very opposed to her biblical Christianity, promised her that he would buy her a very beautiful house if she would just give up her evangelical religion.

And she did. She quit following Jesus. She didn't hate father. She loved father more than Jesus. She loved father's money more than Jesus and proved herself unworthy to be Christ's disciple. She chose her father over Christ and walked away from him and his word and she's never returned since. Such family pressures are found all over the world.

We have missionaries and they tell us, don't they, the pressures, Stan Zerbatovich, the pressures there in Nixich to remain in the Orthodox Church and when someone leaves, the family can write them off.

[18:23] Many, many countries, that's the way it is. You can't be my disciple unless you choose me over parents and over every other human relationship.

And you must hate your own life also. That's in there too, isn't it? Ooh. we must choose to be faithful to Christ even over preserving our own life.

Now it's the sixth commandment to not do murder to ourselves and so we're to take care of ourselves and our bodies and our lives. But never should that be more important than remaining true to Jesus.

We should be rather willing to die in order to remain true to Jesus. And that's happening all over the world today too, isn't it? whoever wants to save his life will lose it.

It's a call to be willing to lose your life, to resist sin to the point of shedding your blood. Luke 14 33, any one of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple, who does not renounce and say goodbye to all that he has, opens his hand and says, there it is, Lord, it's yours.

[19:43] Whatever the Lord Jesus wants, whatever it takes to stay faithful to him, even if it costs all that I have, all my house, all my possessions, and that has happened countless times and is happening, isn't it?

I'm willing to lose it all to have him. In the words of the Apostle Paul, to count all things loss for the sake of Christ. Rubbish compared to the all surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord and being found in him, not having my own righteousness, righteousness of keeping the law, but righteousness which is by faith in Jesus Christ.

It's not, okay, I'll let go of that and that, but not this. This is mine. I'll go that far, but no further. Jesus has no bargaining disciples, only full surrender, only full surrender.

None of this, if it gets too costly, I'm out of here. No, I'm sorry. You better sit down right up front and come all the way to the end and say, if it costs all that I have, even my own life also.

Every relationship on earth, every possession, every dream I've had about my life here, it's there. It's yours. I want you, Jesus. Nothing can compare with you.

[21:13] And if you can't do that, you cannot be my disciple, Jesus says. Now, some might think this willingness to lose everything, even our lives, surely must be an exaggeration.

Surely, Jesus doesn't mean that. He can't really mean that, can he? to require that of all his followers? Well, try telling that to Paul, who really did lose everything to gain Christ.

Try telling that to the twelve disciples, most of whom went to a martyr's death to be true to Jesus.

Try telling that to present-day disciples of Christ over in China and in Syria and Iran and Iraq and places where their blood is shed to remain true to Jesus.

Tell that to countless host of martyrs. Tell it to those faith-filled disciples listed in Hebrews chapter 11 who were tortured and refused to be released.

Why? So that they might gain a better resurrection. Some faced jeers and flogging while others were chained and put in prison. They were stoned. They were sawn in two.

[22:24] They were put to death by the sword. They went around in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted, and mistreated. The world wasn't worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains and in caves and holes in the ground.

Yeah, tell it to that guy down there living in a hole in the ground. There's not much cost to this discipleship business. You can follow Jesus. It won't cost you much of anything.

No, disciples are those who have counted the cost and have found Christ far more precious than anything their own lives included.

And they make that choice not reluctantly as, oh, well, I guess if I have to part with, they see themselves as gainers, not losers in the bargain. Now, if these passages sound radical to our ears,

I would say it's because discipleship to Jesus Christ is a radical thing.

And it's only our soft and cushy form of Christianity in the West in the 21st century that's taken the cost of discipleship right out of the equation and has turned Christianity into a hayride to heaven.

[23 : 36] Just jump on and join the fun. With nothing to lose, no surrender to make, no cost to count, no price to pay in relationships and finances and plans and world's esteem, no resisting of sin to the point of shedding blood, no lifestyle of holiness that draws the hatred of the world, no persecution for Jesus' sake, no insults, nobody being counted a fool, no upstream swim against the current.

If Jesus Christ walked among his churches today, would he recognize all people who are professing to be his disciples, as true disciples?

Turn over to Luke chapter 9. It's here that we find Jesus' terms of discipleship just spelled out again. I mean, it was pretty clear there in Luke chapter 14, wasn't it?

But Luke chapter 9 has these words that are found in Matthew and Mark and several places in our New Testament.

I want you to just look at them from Luke 9, 23. He said to them all, if anyone would come after me, that is, if anyone would attach himself to me as my disciple, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

[25 : 05] I want you to notice just by way of introduction, it's a must. It's not an optional extra. It's not, if you really want to be a super duper disciple, this is the plan for you.

No, it's you can't be my disciple at all unless you do this. Okay? It's a must. It's an absolute necessity for anyone who would be my disciple.

And the first thing is you must deny yourself. Now, some people hear these words and they think of self denial such as some do during Lent, denying yourself of some innocent pleasure for six weeks leading up to Easter, maybe doing without chocolate or not eating your favorite food, not going to the movies, not drinking caffeine, not using the internet and so on and so forth.

But when Jesus lays this demand of discipleship before us, it's far more radical than just denying yourself of such innocent pleasures for a short time. It's rather a lifetime denial of your self.

Not just chocolate, but yourself. To renounce the old self as you came into this world, yourself apart from Christ, that anti-Christ self, the self that was under the rule and domination of sin and Satan, the self that used to have its way with you.

[26 : 36] In every decision, in every matter that came up, what did you do? You went to self to see what self wanted. And whatever self wanted, you gave self. And it trumped everything else.

If it didn't want to do something, you didn't do it. If self wanted something, you did it. You were ever so careful to please king's self. And it's that self that must now be dethroned and replaced by a new king, the Lord Jesus Christ.

And that includes your own thoughts on how to be right with God. That mind that thought, well, surely I'm good enough to please God.

Surely I'm not as bad as I could be and as bad as others are. God will accept me because I'm good. No, that's the self that must be denied. That's the mindset, the thoughts, the desire, the will.

It must be denied. To be my disciple means denying that self. Flat out rejection. Just no. No. The word deny here is a strong word.

[27 : 46] You'll remember it's the same word that's used of what Peter did to his Lord three times. He denied.

That is, he renounced any attachment at all to Jesus. I don't know the man. Who are you talking about?

Don't know him. He's as good as dead to me. We have no relationship whatsoever. And that's what you must do with yourself. That old person you are without Jesus.

If you would be his disciple, you must renounce him. And you must say, I have no attachment to you anymore. I don't know you. And every time it tells you what it wants, you say, I don't care what you want.

You're nothing to me anymore. Shut up. I don't even want to hear it. I have a new master. I'm a disciple of Jesus and I'm following him now.

[28 : 48] You're over with. I'm his. Jesus. If anyone would become one of my disciples, he must deny himself. Now that's a crowd thinner, isn't it?

Especially to a people who wanted Jesus who will only improve their self life and give them more of what themselves want, what their self wants and what the world offers them.

But Jesus isn't done, is he? If you would be my disciple, you must not only deny yourself, you must take up your cross daily and follow me. Anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.

Now a man carrying a cross was a common thing in the Roman Empire. The cross, it didn't adorn any buildings like it does today.

It was never worn as jewelry. Now when Jesus spoke these things, the cross was not the universal symbol of Christianity. The cross meant one thing, death by execution.

[30 : 01] A painful and shameful death of the cross. It was the death penalty. So when you hear the cross, I suppose you should think a firing squad, a guillotine, an electric chair, something even worse, not so sudden but rather a long torturous death would fit the bill.

There was no misunderstanding in Jesus' crowd on this point when he said, you must take up your cross. To see a man carrying his cross meant that he was going to his death.

This man will not be coming back this way. Life over for him. And Jesus had just told his disciples that he himself must suffer many things and be killed by the Jewish religious leaders in Jerusalem. He too must experience death. And now it's like he says, that's where I'm going. I'm going to Jerusalem to die.

And now he's saying that if anyone would come after me and be my adherent, my disciple, you better get your cross too. Not my cross. We don't carry Jesus' cross.

[31 : 16] It's not what he says. He said, you must take up your cross. I'll carry my cross. You must carry yours if you're following me.

There's a death for you to die if you would be my disciple. And that was quite literal for many. For the twelve disciples. Church history records it all, but John died a martyr's death, remaining true to Jesus.

It was a real death that they must die. If they're to be true to Jesus and keep following him, it would mean a cross. It would mean death. Most literally.

And discipleship to Christ has in every age meant death for a multitude of believers over the past 2,000 years. So we shouldn't whitewash this passage of what it on the face of it means.

If you're going to follow Jesus, you better be ready to die for him. That's why I think it was William Carey ministering the gospel in India said, if you're ready to die, to those coming to him to be baptized, if you're ready to die, I'm ready to baptize you.

[32 : 35] I'm just following Jesus' words that if you want to be Jesus' disciple, you better take up your cross. Stop, count the cost, take up your cross, and follow me.

And as the cross stands for the most severe persecution of death, it also includes all lesser forms of suffering for Christ's sake. We sometimes wrongly say, well, that's just my cross to bear.

Maybe we've got a disease or a problem that has nothing to do with following Jesus. That's not a cross to bear according to the gospel. A cross to bear is suffering, pain, persecution, death that comes to you because you're following Jesus and you're not budging.

You're being faithful. You're not hiding your light under a bushel. That's the cross that Jesus says you must pick up and carry. It's something you willingly take up.

And notice it's something you do daily. Daily. I need to have more conscious moments in my week.

[33 : 51] Indeed, in every 24-hour period where I am consciously taking up my cross. that's what Jesus is saying. Pick it up every day.

Have you picked yours up today? Jesus, I would be true to you today no matter what. Take my life. Take my family.

Take my church. Take my reputation. Take my money. My house. Take everything. Take my money. You are worthy. You are worthy. Just to open your hand and to give it up to Jesus afresh. So that when the rub comes, you've already got your hands this way. You've spent time taking up your cross. Prepared.

Willing. To forsake all to follow him. Must Jesus bear the cross alone in all the world go free? No, there's a cross for everyone and there's a cross for me.

[34 : 54] So disciples of Jesus, you you be careful to obey all that Jesus has commanded. You refuse to conform to the present evil age around you and they'll mock you.

They'll be a cross for you. They'll poke fun at you. They'll call you a religious fanatic. Cast out your name is evil. If in this pluralistic society where we're told that every religion is good as the next religion and we must never think of one superior to another.

Well, if in that pluralistic society you proclaim that there is salvation only in Jesus name. You believe Jesus words when he says no one, no one, no one comes to the father except through me.

You'll be called a narrow minded bigot. A hater of men. Hater of Muslims. Hater of Jews. Hater of Hindus. Hater of people.

You proclaim that God created the heavens and earth in six days and they'll snicker at you in the university classroom. And if you're seeking a career in science you might need to find another job.

[36 : 01] It's just that bad in some places. Read this week of David Coppedge working as a team leader on computer systems for NASA's casino mission to Saturn. And he's a believer and he believes Genesis 1-1.

And so he has some DVDs that he carries around with him on intelligent design on the privileged planet just how unique this planet is positioned in the whole universe and how everything has to be just right for it to support life.

And when there was interest he would share up one of these DVDs. Well, with a co-worker.

Someone was offended and told the boss and said that she felt harassed.

The boss said he was pushing religion, filed a harassment claim with human resources, and a month later he was disciplined and demoted. Now that's a cross that David Coppedge was willing to pick up to remain true to Jesus and his word in the difficult workplace where God had put him.

Where does the rub come for you? Where does the cross show itself for you? That it hurts. There's some loss. There's some cost if you're going to be true to Jesus and not hide your light under a bushel.

[37 : 19] There's a cost. That's the very cross that disciples must be willing to pick up every day. Every day. Into the workplace we go.

Into this world where Jesus is hated. Remember what Jesus said? No servant is greater than his master. If they persecuted me, they'll persecute you also. Well, the demands and costs of discipleship to Jesus may just seem outright overwhelming.

They might seem to be something that would keep everyone from ever wanting to become a disciple of Christ. Let me just start by saying it does take a supernatural miracle of God to make one disciple.

They must be born again from the spirit of God. No one ever becomes a disciple just by the strength of their own mind, emotions, affections, and will.

Almighty God must put forth grace. For Jesus has no disciples. discipleship to King Jesus has privileges as well as responsibilities.

[38 : 31] In fact, when you ask those following Jesus about the cost of discipleship, they counted one of their highest privileges. To be suffering for Jesus.

So the apostles come forth from the beating they take. Rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer for the name. Privilege.

Privilege. To be a disciple of Jesus. To no longer be lost and condemned in my sin.

To belong to Jesus. To be following him. Are you kidding me? I've got to pinch myself to see if it's really true. This is amazing. I'm his disciple.

And they love their master. They love his service. They love his wages. And they regard the cross that they must take up. As a privilege.

[39 : 36] What's the glory of this person? Jesus Christ. That he has such disciples who are willing to lose everything. Even their own lives. To remain true to him.

Who died for them. That young slave girl. Blandina. In the early centuries. Tied up in a net.

And tossed repeatedly by a furious bull. And finally died by having her throat slit. Rather than worship the pagan gods.

And be untrue to Jesus. The only. Savior. The true and living God. Young slave girls like Blandina. Finding such preciousness in her savior. Old men like Polycarp. Taken to the Colosseum. And told by the Roman consul. To curse Christ.

[40 : 32] Or be thrown to the wild beast. Send for them. He said. If you don't fear the beast.

I'll send you to the fire. Curse Christ. Eighty and six years. Have I served Christ. He's done me no wrong.

How then can I blaspheme my king. Who saved me. Bring what you will. Bring what you will. And as the flames were lit. He thanked God for the honor of dying for him.

And for his cause. That's what we find. That's what. That's what's written across church history. Men and women. Old and young. Not counting their lives precious to themselves.

Counting their savior more precious to him. And true to him. Faithful even unto death. That they might receive the crown of life. C.T. Studd was a famous cricket player in England.

[41 : 32] But he walked away from athletic fame. And from inherited wealth. To take the good news that saves sinners. To China. To India. To Africa.

It was Studd who said. If Jesus Christ be died. If Jesus Christ be God and died for me. Then no sacrifice can be too great.

For me to make for him. If Jesus Christ be God and died for me. That's it. You see. That carries the whole.

The whole question. How can I withhold anything? There was hell. In his cross.

And there's none. In mine. There was God's wrath. In his cross. Born for me. There's none of God's wrath.

[42 : 28] In my cross. Born for him. No wonder his disciples. Have found Jesus to be worth everything. No cost too much. No sacrifice too great.

He's just that wonderful to them. It's pure privilege. To be his disciple. And this Jesus. Who once walked the earth. And invited men to follow him.

And become his disciples. Is still laying out that same invitation. Yes he is physically in heaven. But he is. He has sent out his. His preachers.

His mouthpieces. To carry his word. And to speak on his behalf. And you know what they're sent to say. Come to me. This is the word of Jesus speaking. Come to me.

All you who are weary. And heavy laden. And I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. And learn from me. For I am gentle. And humble in heart. And you will find rest.

[43 : 22] For your souls. For my yoke. It's easy. My burden. It's light. And so. We come to him.

Just as we are. Poor unworthy. Sinners. Stuck on ourselves. And having our way. But now ready. To deny ourselves. Now ready to say. I renounce that whole way of life.

I am come to be. To be saved by you Jesus. And what you have done for sinners. And I am come to. Ready to put my neck in the yoke with you. And to learn from you.

And so we came. Didn't we believers? And we threw ourselves upon his mercy. And what did we find? Well. Never did disciples have a more. Gentle. And humble master.

Just as he said. I'm gentle and humble. You can trust yourself. To a gentle and humble. Master. You can trust all your dreams. And what you want. He's got a better plan. Than you do.

[44 : 24] You can trust this one. And when we came. We found. That's exactly what he was. Thou hast the true. And perfect gentleness. We say. We've never seen it.

Like we see it in our master Jesus. He laid down his life for us. That's how humble he is.

That's how gentle he is. And his yoke of discipleship. Brings rest. To our souls. Soul rest.

Do you have that? You're lying in your bed at night. Do you have soul rest? Do you have sins nagging at you? Unforgiven sins.

Uncovered by the blood of Jesus. Ready to be punished by almighty God. Who's too holy to overlook one. Sin. Do you know soul rest?

[45 : 23] All my sins. Born by Jesus. He paid it all. I'm his. That's soul rest. And that's what you get. As you come to be a disciple of Jesus.

Rest for your soul. A yoke. Yes there's a yoke. Yes there's a yoke. In discipleship. Jesus has a yoke. He has commands to be obeyed. But in the yoke with Christ.

His yoke is easy. And in the yoke with Christ. His burden is light. Because he's empowering us. By his grace.

And by his spirit. He's motivating us. With his own sacrificial love for us. He's helping us. He's daily bearing our burdens.

You know what that means? I never know. The full weight of my burdens. Because he's bearing. Them with me. In fact he's got the heavy end of it. That's what you get.

[46 : 20] As you come to Jesus. Yes there's a yoke. Oh but it's light. And easy. Contrasted with the joyless. Disciples of the Pharisees.

And teachers of the law. Who all they heard from their disciple. Or from their masters. Was. Well you must do this. And earn your way to heaven. And Jesus says. They piled up. Weights. Upon their disciples. And they don't even. Lift a finger. To help them with it. What a heavy yoke. The disciples of the Pharisees had.

Oh. But what an easy yoke. Is Jesus. Yoke. And it's attached to him. That we learn. From him. What do we learn?

We learn to be like him. That's what. The servant does to the master. The disciple. To the teacher. We become like him. And what's the mark.

[47 : 19] Of those who are disciples of Jesus. By this you will know. By this. Men will know. That you are my disciples. If you have.

Love. For one another. You see. It's impossible. To put your neck. In the yoke. With Jesus. The loving Jesus. It is impossible.

To be yoked. In discipleship. With Jesus. And not learn to love. Like Jesus loves. Absolutely impossible. Because he gives you his spirit. And the very first. Of the ninefold spirit. Fruit.

Is what? Love. Love. And Jesus says. It's to my father's glory. That you bear much fruit. Showing yourselves. To be my disciples.

Proving yourselves. To be my disciples. How do you know. Somebody's a disciple. Well you see. You see the marks. Of Jesus in him. Don't you? Oh he loves. Like Jesus.

[48 : 17] Jesus. Joy. Jesus. Peace. Jesus. Patience. Jesus. Kindness. Jesus. Goodness. God. He's got it all. He's got the evidence.

That he's Jesus. Disciple. And as people see that evidence. It's to my father's glory. That you bear much fruit. Showing yourself. To be my disciple. John 15.

8. And so there are those disciples. Peter and John. And they're hauled in. By the Jewish authorities. And they're.

They're badgered. And they're threatened. And they don't seem to care. What those men. Threaten them with. It's like they're. Threat.

Proof. They're going to. Serve Jesus. And remain true to him. Even if they've got to die for it. And it says that.

[49 : 12] They. Saw. When they saw the courage. Of Peter and John. That courage. That doesn't. Matter what men say. Think or do to us. When they saw that courage.

And realized. They were. Unlearned. Untrained men. They took note of them. That they had been with Jesus. They said to themselves.

There's something about them. That reminds us of him. In a single eye. He didn't care. What we said to him. What we threatened him.

He just was so full. Of that peace. And that courage. And bold. On. He went. We see something of that. In these men. They took note. That they had been with Jesus.

Oh how that glorifies God. And glorifies Jesus. When. The disciple. Is becoming more and more. Like. The master. Father. Well that carries.

[50 : 14] A lot of weight. With Jesus. Disciples. Indeed. Our very chief end. For living. Isn't it? The reason we get up. In the morning. Is to glorify God. Here's what glorifies. Becoming like Jesus. Jesus. And then.

Disciples. Must have a single eye. To following. Their Lord. Regardless of what others are doing. And others in the church. Not just what others in the world are doing.

But others in the church. They must take up their cross. Do you know. There might be more pain in your cross. Than in. Your brother's cross.

Across the way. Sitting beside you. The sister's sitting behind you. We don't. Look around and say. Well. Why did I get the heavier cross?

No. No. The disciple of Jesus. Must have a single eye. To bearing. Our own cross. That suffering. That we.

[51 : 13] Must bear. In our family. In our workplace. In our neighborhood. In our country. It varies. Doesn't it? We have brothers and sisters.

That. Are suffering. A whole. Heavier cross. Than. Than what we have. We must not be. Trying to look at. What others are doing. You remember. The disciple.

Peter. Doing that. The risen Lord. Jesus. Has. Has appeared. To his disciples. Again. There in John 21. He's publicly. He's publicly reinstated. Peter. As an apostle.

For this ministry. As a shepherd. Of his sheep. But he's also. Told Peter. What the. The cross. Of discipleship. Would mean. For him. Personally. It's going to mean.

A difficult. And undesirable. Death. Death. You're not going to die. The way you would like. It's going to go. Against your grain.

[52 : 10] To live. And Jesus. Told him. This. That he might. Know. The death. By which he would. Glorify. God. That was his cross.

Earlier. He had said. Well. I'm willing to die. For you. Jesus. And. He had denied him. And now. Jesus says. You will. You will die. For me. And will be in a way.

That you wish. Would. Would. Would. Not relish. Just being a human being. Wanting to live on. And then he reissued. His call of discipleship.

To Peter. And he said. Follow. Me. Follow. Me. And so. He's following Jesus. And he turns around. And he sees John.

Another disciple. Walking behind. He says. Lord. What about him? You know the answer.

[53 : 09] If I want him to remain. Until I come. What is that to you? You. Follow. Me. You.

Follow. Me. That's the disciples. Mindset. It may cost you more than others. To follow Jesus. In the place he has put you. That's.

Where he has chosen. For you. To bring most glory to God. Embrace the cross. Take it up. Never mind. What others. Are having.

To bear. Or not have to bear. A disciple. Is to keep one thing before him. Following Jesus.

Whatever the cost. Glorifying God.

So if. Disciple of Jesus. Is what you are. Than go on denying yourself. Go on. Taking up your cross. And following him. Remaining true to him. In his word.

[54 : 03] And do not think till death. To lay it down. For only he who bears the cross. May hope to wear. The glorious crown. And if you're not yet. A disciple of Jesus.

What are you waiting for? He's calling you today. Come. Follow me. Come. Follow me. Come. You see.

Somebody is going to be denied. In this deal. Either you. Or Jesus. Jesus says. Come. Follow me. Deny yourself.

And follow me. Will you do that? You haven't done it so far. Unbeliever. Why not? Because you've been denying Jesus. And pleasing yourself.

Now Jesus is saying. It's time for you to come to me. Deny yourself. And follow me. And enjoy all the life. That I have to give you. Here. And forever.

[54 : 57] And ever. You know. There is a high cost. In being a disciple of Jesus. We must be willing. To lose everything for him. But let me remind you.

Unbeliever. There's a higher cost. For not being his disciple. There's eternity. Under God's wrath. For all. Who have not come to Jesus. And thrown themselves. Into his arms of mercy. We invite you to do that. Even as we sing. This. Closing song.

Word. That. We could take right out of the mouth. Of our savior. Take up thy cross. And follow me. 507. Let's sing it. You do business with God. Even as we sing.

Together. 507. Let's stand. As we sing. Thank you Lord Jesus.

[55 : 56] For. Bearing that cross. Of sin and shame. For us. The cross of. Full of wrath. And hell. Give us now the grace.

To take up our cross. Right now. To count the costs. And to pick up the cross. And to follow you. And then to. To follow you again tomorrow. To take up that cross each day.

Father. Pour out your spirit upon us. And make Christ. More precious to us. That we might see him. More clearly. We might love him. More dearly. We might follow him.

More nearly. Day by day. We ask in Jesus name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.