

Luke Chapter 9 v 57 - 62

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[0 : 00] Good morning. Welcome. Good to see you all. I'm just trying to see if we've got any, yes, some visitors. Lovely to see you. Welcome in the name of the Lord. And it's good to be back. Thank you.

I think we all had a good Easter and it's good again that we can continue to walk with the Lord and to praise him. Why are we here? Why are we met together on this Sunday morning?

Well, we're here to praise God, praise him. And this is what David tells us why we should praise him. Praise the Lord, my soul, all my inmost being. Praise his holy name.

Praise the Lord, my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgives all your sins, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, who satisfies your desires with good things.

Let's stand and sing praise to our God. Oh, my soul, arise and bless your maker, for he is your redeemer and your friend.

[1 : 09] 625. Let's stand as we sing. Let's pray together. Let's come to God in prayer.

Lord, we do want to come to you this morning, oh Lord, our maker, our creator, our God, our savior and redeemer and friend, our master.

We come to you, oh Lord, because Jesus is precious to us. His name is precious. His person is precious. He is the greatest treasure in all the earth.

To know him is to know life itself. To know his forgiveness is to know joy unspeakable. To be able to share and talk and walk and live with him is more than anything this world can offer.

Lord, if we were to have all the riches in the world, all the tea in China, if we were to have everything we could possibly think that would make us happy, they could never, ever compare to knowing Jesus, to knowing him and receiving his life, his love, his grace.

[2 : 20] Oh, Lord, we thank you that he is the greatest gift that you could ever give the world when you gave your only begotten son. We thank you that you gave him out of love for us, love for this broken world, this sinful world, this, yes, wicked world.

And we confess that we are a part of it this morning. For we know in our own hearts there is selfishness and pride and greed. And Lord, there is an attitude of hate at times.

And Lord, jealousy and envy, so many things. We know that they're there. We hide them away. We suppress them as best we can. But Lord, they keep breaking out, as it were, in our speech or our attitudes or our language or our actions.

And oh, Lord, we know that without you, we will just continue to be the same people, probably growing from worse to worse. But Lord, we thank you that by the grace of God, by the love of Jesus, by the power of the Holy Spirit, Lord, you have transformed and changed us.

You've made us new creations. You've made us those who are alive from the dead. You've made us to be people who have a new direction, new purpose, a new way.

[3 : 31] And Lord, we thank you that this is all of you and none of ourselves. We thank you again, oh Lord, that it was by Jesus that our sin has been forgiven. By Jesus, the power of sin in our hearts and lives can be broken.

And by, Lord, the very love of God to us, Lord, we can be men and women who live lives of love. Lord, that's our desire. We're here to give you thanks and praise for all that you are to us and all that you've done for us.

But again, we're here, oh Lord, to meet with you, to sing your praises, yes, to hear your word read and preached, yes. But Lord, more than that, to meet with you, to know you're speaking to us individually and personally, to know you're changing us.

Thank you that you're still in the work of transformation and change in our lives. And that, Lord, we long that you would do that, that we would be malleable, that we would be those that are pliable in your hands, those that are willing to be shaped and changed.

We pray, oh Lord, that you'd give us such an attitude, knowing that we can trust you, that whatever you bring about in our lives, Lord, is for our good and for your praise. We pray, Lord, again, that you would help us this morning.

[4 : 42] We've had busy weeks, many of us, back to school, back to work. Lord, many of us have concerns and cares, Lord, for the week ahead.

But Lord, we ask that you would help us to lift our eyes and our hearts up to you, that we would concentrate on what is important and vital this morning, that is our walk with you, your word, your truth.

We pray, Lord, that you would help us in this. Grant us, Lord, we pray, this help then that we need. And grant us your blessing, we pray, for we ask it in the name of your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. Amen. Amen. Our Bibles, and we're going to read from Luke and Chapter 9, where we left off a couple of three weeks ago.

We've had Easter since then, and then Gareth Crossley was here last Sunday morning preaching while I was on holiday. So we're going to pick up from Luke and Chapter 9.

[5 : 42] If you have one of the Church Bibles, that's page 1040, page 1040. And we're going to read something that we've read already, but we're going to go on to the end of the chapter.

So we're going to read from verse 43. If you have one of the NIVs, it breaks the verse up into two parts.

So there's a subtitle, Jesus predicts his death a second time. So we're going to read from there through to the end of the chapter. But I ask you to pay particular attention to the last paragraph, which is the cost of following Jesus.

So verse 43. While everyone was marveling at all that Jesus did, he said to his disciples, Listen carefully to what I'm about to tell you.

The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men. They did not understand what this meant. It was hidden from them. So that they did not grasp it. They were afraid to ask him about it.

[6 : 47] An argument started among the disciples as to which of them would be the greatest. Jesus, knowing their thoughts, took a little child and made him stand beside him. Then he said to them, Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me.

Whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. For it is the one who is least among you all who is the greatest. Master, said John, we saw someone driving out demons in your name and we tried to stop him because he is not one of us.

Do not stop him, Jesus said. For whoever is not against you is for you. As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem.

And he sent messengers on ahead who went into a Samaritan village to get things ready for him. But the people there did not welcome him because he was heading for Jerusalem.

When the disciples James and John saw this, they asked, Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them? Jesus turned and rebuked them.

[7 : 51] Then he and his disciples went to another village. As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, I will follow you wherever you go. Jesus replied, Foxes have dens and birds of nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.

He said to another man, Follow me. But he replied, Lord, first let me go and bury my father. Jesus said to him, Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God.

Still another said, I will follow you, Lord, but first let me go back and say goodbye to my family.

Jesus replied, No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.

And may the Lord help us as we undertake to think through these things. If you'd like to open your Bibles again, back to Luke in chapter 9, and those verses that we read, particularly, as I said, those verses 57 to the end of the chapter, this event in the life of the Lord Jesus, as he's on his way to Jerusalem, walking with his disciples.

You can't escape advertising. You can't escape billboards. I was noticing when I was watching some of the Tour de Yorkshire yesterday, I'm sure all of you were, I was particularly upset, because I went out when they were coming down the bottom of the hill there, and I went out especially to get

on telly.

[9 : 34] And I phoned my mum and said, Watch the telly, because me and John and Ange, we're going to be there cheering them on, and you might get to see us. I even made a sign saying, Hello, Mum. And I held up. And what did they do?

As soon as they came up, just before the roundabout, they switched to another view of the helicopter somewhere. And I wasn't on telly. And then they put it back on just after the corner. And I was particularly upset as well.

I wanted to see Lawrence and Hannah and the kids outside their house. As they came down into, because you were there, weren't you? I was still standing at Cloughton. And what did they do? As soon as they were coming down the hill into Cloughton, they switched to another view again.

So anyway. Anyway, but if you were watching the tour to Yorkshire, you'll get to that point. There was also advertising was going on. Advertising, I think, from a meal in a mug or something. And along the way, on the telly, there was adverts for various up-and-coming events, advertising for various bits and pieces.

But not just there. Of course, on the telly, in the newspaper, billboards, shops, advertising is everywhere. And of course, advertisers have to tread a very fine line between truth and lies.

[10 : 41] Because if they don't tell the full truth about what they're advertising, they can get into trouble. But they want to arouse your attention. Obviously, they want you to think that their product is the very best you can possibly get.

And so they want to make it attractive. So you'll be interested in it and want to buy it. But at the same time, they can't exaggerate what their product can do or portray it in any false way.

And so you get the cleaning agent, the bleach on telly, that claims to kill only 99% of all household germs. It can't claim to kill 100% because perhaps in your house, you'll want to have one of those very rare germs that's resistant to their product.

And of course, when you watch a car advertisement on the telly, you'll always have this amazing, fantastic-looking vehicle gleaming and shining with all these incredible add-ons and so on.

And they'll advertise, you know, this range. You can buy this range from £9,999. But in the very tiny words along the bottom of the screen, actual model shown is the deluxe, you know, turbocharged, super-duper metallic paint version which costs £25,000.

[11 : 55] But that's not the one they've shown you, but they told you £9,000. Now, Jesus was never in the selling business. Jesus was never in advertising.

And he never used any small print when he spoke to people about what it meant to follow him, what it meant to buy into, if I can put it that way, the kingdom of God.

He wasn't somebody who put it up as one amongst many potential products or one amongst many similar theories. He didn't use techniques or sales pitches to entice people to follow him or free gifts. Like the Apostle Paul later on in his letter who said, I did not come with eloquence of human wisdom as I proclaim to you the testimony about God.

So Jesus was plain in his teaching about what would happen to those who put their faith in him and followed him. On more than one occasion to emphasise the truthfulness and the reality of what he was saying, he would begin a sentence in the words, Truly, truly I say unto you.

[13 : 17] Or as the AV, verily, verily I say unto you. I'm not trying to pull a blanket over your eyes. I'm not trying to fox you or to fiddle you or to con you in any way.

And that honesty in the teaching of the Lord Jesus about being his disciple comes out here again in this passage that is before us, Luke 9, 57.

At first glance it appears as if Jesus is rejecting potential followers, potential disciples. But in fact he's doing something quite different. These three people who meet with Jesus as he journeys to Jerusalem, two of them we're told are men.

One we're not told whether it was a man or a woman. But each one of them either said they would follow him or he called them to follow him.

We don't know what the outcome was for any of them. We're not told whether they all followed him or they all left him or anything or one or two of them. We're just told how Jesus responded to them and the replies that he made them in those conversations.

[14 : 28] What we do see clearly though is that Jesus was unwilling for anyone to commit to following him until they had counted the cost. He was unwilling for people just willy-nilly to say, Oh yes, this seems like a good idea.

I think I'll become a follower of Jesus. Well it's the latest trend. It's the latest app on my phone. Follow Jesus app. It's something that everybody else is doing. So I think I'll just get on the wagon and join in. And Jesus would not have any of that. And he makes it very clear that there is a tremendous cost to following him. And that anyone who's thinking about it should seriously count that cost before they commit. Before they say, yes I will become a Christian. Yes I will follow Jesus. And it is the same today. And it must be the same today. Why has Luke put these three people together in this place?

[15 : 29] Well almost certainly because that's what happened. Like all of his narrative, all of his records of the life of the Lord Jesus. We know this is true.

Because at the very beginning he tells us he made a very careful examination. And he carefully researched all that he was about to say. But it seems that he was very careful in putting things together in one sense a theme.

A themed way. And it seems that these three people who are potential followers of Jesus. Are here because of what had happened immediately before this event.

And what is going to happen immediately following. We know from verse 51. That Jesus was determined to go to Jerusalem to die.

We looked at that a little while ago. As he said to his disciples in verse 44. The son of man, that's himself, is going to be delivered into the hands of men. Given over to die.

[16 : 30] That's what he means. In verse 51. He resolutely set out for Jerusalem. Determined to go to that place. Knowing what was awaiting him there. Knowing what he would suffer.

Knowing what he would go through and endure. For the sake of his disciples. And in one sense, as if to confirm what was awaiting him in Jerusalem.

Even as he travels through Samaria. He's rejected by the people there. And opposed. Verse 53. But the people there did not welcome him. Because he was heading for Jerusalem.

And now these three possible followers of Jesus meet him along the way. He's on the journey. He's walking. Either through Samaria. Or another part of the country.

And he's on his way to Jerusalem. He's on a path. And to be a disciple of Jesus means that you have to walk the same path.

[17 : 30] Being a disciple of Jesus. Being a Christian means that we are to go in the way of the master. The way that he's led. That's surely what the word follow means, doesn't it?

We used to play follow my leader as a child. You'd go around and about. And you'd go exactly in the same place. In the same way. That the person who is leading. The message of Jesus all the way through.

The gospels to his disciples has been that. That they are to follow him. And the way that he lived. They were to live. And the way. The things that he experienced. They would experience themselves.

He says to his disciples in John 15. Remember what I told you. So he'd obviously said it before. And we know he did. A servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted me.

They will persecute you also. If they obeyed my word. They will obey yours also. So what Jesus is telling these three people is this.

[18 : 28] Is if you want to follow me. Then you will have to experience what I have experienced. You will have to have a similar attitude to life.

As I have to live. You have to make a similar commitment. As I have made a commitment. He's not rebutting these people who wish to follow him. He's simply calling them.

To recognize the cost. Not in small print. Not on the back of the envelope. Not as it were. Hidden away. In pages and pages. Of boredom.

But plain and clear. Black and white. Loud. For all to hear. So let's look at these brief conversations. That Jesus has with these three people.

And Jesus tells the first man. Or rather the first man comes to him and says. I will follow you wherever you go. And Jesus replied. Foxes have dens and birds of nests.

[19 : 26] But the son of man has nowhere to lay his head. What is he saying? He's telling this man. If you want to follow me. You will become unwelcome. If you follow me.

You will become unwelcome. Unwelcome. Jesus was traveling through this world. To his home. In heaven. And along his way. There was a constant path.

Of rejection. Wherever he went. People rejected him. And he was unwelcome. Remember. We've looked at this. Just through the Gospel of Luke. As we've been reading.

And studying it. Right back in chapter four. The first time he stands up. To preach. In the synagogue. Of his hometown. The village he'd grown up in. The town he'd grown up in. All the people who'd known him. Since he was a child. All the people who'd been. Maybe friends. And friends of his family. And his parents. And so on. As he stands up. And speaks to them. In the synagogue. We're told their response is this.

[20 : 23] Luke 4. 28. All the people in the synagogue. Were furious. When they heard this. They got up. Drove him out the town. Took him to the brow of the hill. In which the town was built.

In order to throw him off the cliff. Think about that. When Joel preaches his first sermon here. That was the response that he gets.

It won't be Joel. Or if he did that back in his own church. But then there was not just the people of his own town. When he performed miracles.

When he healed people. And delivered people. The attitude was the same. Remember in chapter eight. Turn over to that. If you can in Luke. In verse 37. There was a man that Jesus met.

Remember him? The man at the garrisons. Called Legion. He had. He used to cut himself. And howl in the night. And break chains. He was. He used to run around naked. Scaring everybody. He was a man who was possessed by demons.

[21 : 25] Jesus delivered him. And set him free. So what did the people do? Verse 37. Then all the people of the region of the garrisons. Asked Jesus to leave them. He'd done this amazing miracle.

It transformed this man. So that we find that he's a man who's sitting at Jesus' feet. Dressed and in his right mind. And their response is. Go away.

You're not welcome here. And then as I've already mentioned there. In chapter 9. As he goes through Samaria. On his way to Jerusalem. Because of their prejudice. People there.

Verse 53 of chapter 9. Did not welcome him. Now this man who comes to Jesus. And says I'll follow you wherever you go. He may have been very sincere.

He may have meant what he said. You know. He may have been genuine. In what he said. Jesus doesn't reply to him. To intimate. Anything other than that.

[22 : 26] However Jesus. Says to him. Before you join my disciples. You've got to be warned. That a life of popularity. And a life of acceptance. Do not await you.

Wherever I go. I haven't got a home. In one sense. Yes. Even the foxes. Even the birds. They've got homes. Where they're accepted in one sense.

But I don't. In this world. I'm never going to be accepted. In this world. I'm always going to be unwelcome. And you are going to be unwelcome too. All of us at times.

In our lives. Have committed ourselves. To do something. Without a great deal of thought. We've jumped in. Where angels fear to tread. Because it was exciting at the moment.

Or our emotions were engaged. We committed ourselves to buy something. Which appeared too good to be true. We went into a relationship. A new job.

[23 : 25] Into a hobby or an activity. Something even more serious. Before we've really thought through. The consequences. Of our actions.

The consequences of that commitment. It seemed so attractive at the time. It seemed so. Desirable to us. That we gave no real thought to.

Whether we could follow it through. And what would happen. Jesus wants no one to follow him. On a whim. On a feeling.

Because the reality is this. If you follow Jesus. You will be unwelcome. In this world. You will be rejected. By people. You will have difficulty. There will be suffering.

There's a cost. See this world was not Jesus' home. And neither is the home. Of any of his disciples.

[24 : 21] We're just pilgrims. In this world. We're traveling through this world. As Jesus did. We have an eternal home. A home with God. A home in heaven. That's where we're welcome.

That's where we'll be received. Yes there will be of course people. That welcome us. The church will welcome us. God's people will welcome us. And we shall be. Shown hospitality.

And care. And all that sort of thing. But on the whole. If you declare yourself to be a Christian. And commit yourself to Christ. Then there are many people. Will make you unwelcome. We don't want your kind here.

We don't want your Bible bashing. Here. We don't want you telling us. And showing us. Just how wicked we are. Here. Jesus was rejected.

So will we be. Now the second man Jesus meets with. He actually calls to him. Follow me. First man said. I will follow. Now Jesus calls to him.

[25 : 21] Gives this command. Follow me. And the man seems willing to obey. But he's got a very important matter.

That he must deal with first. Before he can obey Jesus. Lord. First let me go and bury my father. It seems he has some funeral arrangements.

That he has to take care of. Now it's not altogether clear. What he meant. When he said. First let me go and bury my father. Does it mean that his father. Has already just died.

That very day. Or the day before. Because of course. As you're aware. In the Middle East. People will be buried. As soon as possible. After they've died. On the very day.

They've died if possible. If not the very next day. Does it mean. That in fact. His father is close to death. That he's not very well. Well. And he's expecting his father.

[26 : 20] To die at any moment. And he's got to wait. To fulfill his responsibilities. We don't know that either. Or is it. Simply that his father is perfectly well. And healthy. But he's forestalling.

It's just an excuse. Well. You know. When I've dealt with my father. When he's died. Because of course. You know. He doesn't want to leave his father. Before the will is read. And his father dies. And he gets his portion of the will.

We don't know exactly. What was. Behind all of this. But it doesn't really matter. Because. Whatever those possibilities are. The only thing that matters. That Jesus is speaking of.

Is. That he now follow him. Jesus is telling us. That to be his disciple. Requires urgency. Urgency. It's not something. That we keep being put. Off. It's something. That is. Urgent. Jesus came. To usher in. The kingdom of God.

[27 : 16] Nothing else. Matter to him. Not even his own life. Matter to him. When he went to the cross. It was to give his own. Life. He didn't put it off. He didn't sort of. Forstall it. For another day.

Say. Well. You know. When I'm. When I'm older. Then I'll. Then I'll go to the cross. And die. When it's near the end of my life. No. In the prime of his life. In his early thirties. He goes to the cross. Because there was an urgency.

To accomplish this mission. Bringing salvation. To sinners. Jesus was on a mission. To which he was entirely committed. That's why.

We read there. In verse 51. Jesus resolutely. Set out for Jerusalem. We looked at that. Didn't we? And it means. He set his face. For Jerusalem. It was as if.

He was saying. Right. I'm. I've got a race to run. And nothing's going to get in my way. I'm not going to stop off. For a couple of. You know. Imagine again. Those Tour de France races. When you saw them. The other day.

[28 : 10] Riding through Whitby. They weren't saying. Oh. I'm going to stop. And go for a little boat trip. Out into the harbor. While I'm here. And then I'll get back on my bike. And then I'll carry on. Or I fancy going to the magpie.

And getting some fish and chips. You know. Because everybody does that. When they come to Whitby. Or to trenches. There are other fish and chip shops available. No. They kept on going. They were determined. There was an urgency about the race. We've got to get there. We can't just stop off. And put it to one side. For other things. So has Jesus.

Just like that. He knew what awaited him in Jerusalem. Wasn't the finishing tape. And the glory. And the honor of the world. It was the finishing. Cross.

The finishing of his life. In this world. Yes. There's many necessary things in life. There's many things that. Have to be done. If we can put it that one way.

[29 : 05] Put it that way. Including. Taking care of funeral arrangements. For our family. But there's one thing that's vital above all else. One urgent thing that we must do before else.

We must follow Christ. We can't put that off. We can't forestall it forever.

And hope that at the right time. Or sometime. Then we can come to Christ. No. It must be.

Something that we consider to be urgent. It's to be our goal.

It's to be our *raison d'etre*. More important than even what seems to be other urgent things in life. No.

Says Jesus. Let the dead bury their own dead. But you go and proclaim the kingdom of God. Sounds somewhat callous. Doesn't it? To a certain degree. But it's not callous at all.

[30 : 06] Jesus isn't uncaring about this man and his family. He's not uncaring about these things. But he's expressing to the man. He's laying upon the man this urgent matter. There are things that other people can do.

When he means the dead. He means those who are spiritually dead. There are things that the world can do. There's many needs in the world. And sometimes as Christians. We can find ourselves caught up. And we see great needs within our society.

Amongst knife crime. Amongst young people. And all sorts of problems. We think. Oh who's going to solve all these problems? Who's going to sort out the needs financially.

And Brexit. And all that sort of thing. We can find ourselves. Even as Christians. Feeling we've got to engage with these matters. We've got to deal with these problems ourselves. But actually. Jesus says. The urgent matter. Is to proclaim the kingdom of God.

There's something that only Christians can do. That the rest of the world cannot do. Men and women of this world. Can do all sorts. They can. They can care for the sick. They can deal with the problems of knife crime.

[31 : 09] They can deal with the problems of. Teenage delinquency. And so on. But the Christian alone. Has the good news of Jesus. To take out. To tell people. There is a kingdom. And there is a God.

And there is a savior. And there is a hell. And there is a heaven. And though these other things are important. And we don't belittle them in that sense. We said that there is one thing that's most important.

One thing that's urgent. I wonder how many times do you and I find ourselves being caught up. With the necessities of life. The busyness of life even. And say well I'm just too busy to. Give somebody an invitation to that mission. I'm just too busy to get along.

To the prayer meeting. I'm just too busy to get along. To fellowship with God's people. Or I've just got so much on. And my question is this. What's your priority?

[32 : 09] If you're a Christian. Your priority. And my dear friends is this. To follow Jesus. To live for Jesus. To seek Jesus. To be a true disciple of Jesus. That's my priority. Not because I'm a pastor or a minister.

It's because I'm a Christian. And yet I can get diverted. Go off down. The wrong route.

Are we living for the kingdom of God dear friends? Are we living for Christ? Remember the apostle Paul in Galatians in chapter 2. Says the most amazing things. Let me just find it for you.

Galatians in 2 verse 20. I've been crucified he says with Christ. I no longer live. But Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body. I live by faith in the son of God.

Who loved me and gave himself for me. The life I live in the body. The life I live now. I live for Christ. That's what he's saying. If you commit yourself to Christ.

[33 : 20] Then you're saying Lord Jesus Christ. You are number one. And I must and I will love. Serve. Follow you. Before everything else.

Then there's a third person isn't there. Another person who seems keen to follow Jesus. I will follow you Lord. Even calls him Lord. Uses that name of honor and respect.

I will follow you Lord. Lord. But Jesus tells him. That to follow the Lord Jesus Christ.

Is not just a matter of urgency. But it is a call to an undivided life. An undivided life. Why? Because the man says. First let me go back and say farewell to my family.

Let me go say goodbye to my family. And Jesus replies. No one who puts a hand to the plow. Looks back. Is fit. For service in the kingdom of God. Again.

[34 : 20] There's nothing to say that this man is not severe. This woman is not sincere rather. That they generally mean it. I've been caught up by your teaching Jesus. I've had a sense that this is really.

Something that I must do. But first I've got to go back to my family. And say goodbye. It seems perhaps even that.

He was aware that there was a commitment. A lifelong commitment to follow Jesus. And if I can just say goodbye. Then I can commit myself fully and wholly to you. But Jesus makes a very striking response.

And he declares to him. Look you can't be divided between two loves. If I can put it that way. You can't be divided between your family and Christ. It must be one or the other. Because anybody who's divided in their mind.

Anybody who's double minded in that sense. They just can't. They just can't do it. It just does. It'll pull you apart. And so he uses a farming illustration.

[35 : 22] Doesn't he? Of a person pulling a plow. In those days of course it would have been an ox and a plow. If it had been Joel it would be a tractor and a plow. And his father's farm.

But you can't keep looking back. You can ask Joel about plowing. I know nothing about plowing whatsoever. But I imagine that if you're plowing. A straight furrow. You've got to have a straight furrow. And you've got to look to the end.

And keep going straight. If you keep going that. Looking that way. And try. You're going to be. It's going to be sort of a. A spider web type of a furrow. Isn't it? All over the shop. In one sense what Jesus is saying is.

If you've decided and committed yourself to Jesus. To follow him. Then you've got to see it through to the end. You've got to keep on going straight. You've got to keep on following in the path.

You've got to keep on going in the way that Jesus has given before you. You see the Lord Jesus Christ left his family. We could say. Couldn't we?

[36 : 22] Put rightly. He gave up. He gave up his home in heaven for us. He gave up the pleasures and the comfort. And the love of the Father and the Spirit and of the angels.

Here's how Paul describes it in Philippians chapter 2. Jesus Christ who being in very nature God. Truly God. Did not consider equality with God.

Something to be used to his own advantage. Rather he made himself nothing. By taking the very nature of a servant. Being made in human likeness. Being found in appearance as a man.

He humbled himself. By becoming obedient to death. Even death on a cross. Do you see there's that journey isn't there? From the Father's side. Where he'd been in eternity. In that delightful place of fellowship with God.

The Father and the Spirit. And all the hosts of heaven were there. And though that was his rightful place. Though that's where he loved to be. That's where he should be. Yet he gave it up.

[37 : 22] He didn't hold on to it. He came down to us. Not only to come and become a human being. Amongst us. To take on himself our humanity. But becoming a servant. Taking the lowest place possible.

He humbled himself even. To obedience to death on a cross. Dear friends. If you want to be a Christian. If you want to be a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Then there is a cost. And it is this. You have to be undivided. In your affections for Jesus. And your determination. To live for him.

You can't just say. Well I'm going to follow Jesus a little bit. But I'm going to keep hold. Of these things behind. I want to keep hold of some of these things. That are really. I know they're not right. And I know they're not what Jesus wants.

But I like them. How old were you when you got rid of your teddy bear? I wonder.

[38 : 20] Maybe some of you still have your teddy bear. In your attic. I think I did. For many many years. Even after I was married. There was my teddy bear. My big teddy was. My favorite teddy bear. He was still there in the attic.

And in the end. After all the times we moved house. He got thrown out. Poor Ted. You can't keep holding on.

Can you? You can't keep holding on to the past. You can't keep holding on to what was before. You can't keep saying. Well. I'm still a child. There comes a point in your life. Doesn't there?

Where you can't just take excuses. Oh well. I've got this attitude. Because I'm a teenager. You can't say that when you're 36. Sorry. That you have a strop. Or a tantrum.

Or I haven't got my own way. Or you still suck your thumb. You've got to leave it behind. You've got to move forward. And if you're a Christian. You've got to go forward. Every single day. And you've got to move forward.

[39 : 17] In the way of Jesus. Of following him. Of obedience to him. You can't just say. Oh I'm a young Christian. So it's okay. If I've still got these bad. Sinful habits in my life. No. You've been a Christian.

Supposedly for 15 years. How come you're still hanging on. To the past. How come you're still saying. Can I just first go back? Jesus had already said.

What he'd said. Earlier on in Luke. In chapter 9. These conversations. That he has with these people. Really are. Actually. A confirmation.

Of what he said. There in Luke. Chapter 9. Verse 23. Whoever wants to be my disciple. Must deny themselves. Take up their cross. And follow me.

Whoever wants to save their life. Will lose it. And whoever wants to. Ever. Sorry. But whoever loses their life for me. Will save it. What good is it for someone. To gain the whole world.

[40 : 19] And yet lose. Or forfeit their very self. So that's why Jesus said. What he said to these people.

He wasn't unfeeling. He wasn't callous hearted. Wasn't because he was trying. To be difficult with them. Or because he was trying. To make them feel bad about themselves. It's because he wanted them. To count the cost.

The cost is the cross. The way of Jesus is the cross. The way of the Christian. Is the cross. The way of the Christian. Is to set one's face. And to.

By God's grace. And strength alone. And it is his grace. And strength alone. Carry on to the very end. The cost is high.

But so are the rewards. To follow the Lord Jesus Christ. Is the most difficult thing.

[41 : 13] That anyone can ever do. But it is the most rewarding. And blessing. That anyone can ever do. Not only in this life. And there are blessings.

Beyond measure. In this life. For a life lived for Christ. But there are blessings in eternity. We'll come to them. Next week.

Well. We thank you Lord Jesus.

That you are. Blatantly. And even painfully. Honest. With us. That there is a cost. To following you. The cost that you paid.

Is much much greater. Of course. You paid. The cost. The price. Of our redemption. Our salvation. With your own life. Your own suffering. Your own blood. Lord. You paid.

[42 : 09] Lord. That price. For our sin. That we might have. Pardon. And forgiveness. We thank you Lord. That. Your way. Is our way. And you don't call us.

To do something. That you wouldn't do. You don't say. Well do what I say. But don't do what I do.

Thank you. That you are not. That sort of teacher. Or master. But you're the one. Who says.

Follow me. Follow me. In those footsteps. Footsteps. Footsteps. Footsteps. Which will mean. That times. You will be unwelcome. Footsteps.

That mean. There is an urgency. A prioritizing. In what you do. And those footsteps. Which carry on. Straightforward. And undivided. That carry on.

To the end. In spite of the. Pull of the past. In spite of the pull. Of other people. In spite of the. Pain. We ask again.

[43 : 05] Our Lord. For ourselves. That those of us. Who are Christians. That Lord. We would. Not only. Count the cost. But be willing. To bear the cost. And take up the cross.

Daily. And follow you. We pray for those. Here this morning. Who have never. Committed themselves. To Christ. And. They. Maybe think. That perhaps.

They can do it. When things are. A bit more. Easy. Things are a bit more. Closer to death. Or. They can put it off. Lord. We pray for those people. Please have mercy. Upon them. Not only to see.

The great cost. But the urgency. Of them putting their faith. In Christ. Today. And that. Though there would be. A cost. My goodness. May their cost.

Is far. Far greater. Not to follow Christ. What a terrifying. Terrifying. Cost. To stand before God. On the day of judgment. And to be able to say to God.

[43 : 59] Yes. I heard Jesus call me. To follow him. But. I went. And I did this first. And I put it off. And now it's too late.

And now I know. That only hell. Awaits me. Oh Lord. Thank you that you came to save us from that. And rescue us from that. If we will but follow you.

Thank you that you said. Come to me. All you are burdened and heavy laden. And I will give you rest. Take your yoke. Take my yoke upon you. It is easy and light.

Oh Lord. Help. Each of us. To be. True disciples of Jesus. Amen. Amen. Amen. Now to him who is able to keep you from falling.

And to present you before his presence in glory. Without fault. And with great joy. To the only God our Savior. Be glory and majesty.

[45 : 02] Power and authority. Through Jesus Christ. Our Lord. Before all ages. Now. Tomorrow. And forevermore.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen.