

## 25.4.21 am

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] let's unite our hearts together in prayer let's pray our heavenly father we thank you for this day and for the the beauty of this day we thank you for the the sun that shines in our faces for the warmth that we feel we thank you for the majesty of your creation that we see around us a signpost that points us to the reality of the fact that there is a god who is our creator a god who made all things we thank you that as we seek you lord god you have promised that we will find you we thank you for your word where we hear your voice we thank you for the word of god where you reveal yourself to us we thank you for the work of the holy spirit to inspire that word as it was written over many thousands of years and we thank you that it has been preserved it's been carried along it's been carried to us even this morning and we thank you for the promise that you've given to us that your spirit will take the truth of scripture and apply that truth to our lives we thank you for jesus the supreme revelation of who you are he is the the image of the invisible god we thank you for the work of the holy spirit who spotlights christ who directs our our hearts and our minds and our eyes to look to and trust in and worship jesus and we pray that you would help us this morning that we would know the help of the holy spirit so that as we hear the the praises of god being sung as we read scripture and as we meditate upon it we ask lord that you would enable us to be in the spirit on the lord's day that we would be in the spirit of worship that we would not have minds and hearts that are distracted and far away but lord god that each of us would be worshipping in spirit and in truth as it says on the verse above my head we would see jesus the one who was and who is and who is to come so be lifted up lord jesus amongst us this day we pray because we know that when you are lifted up many are drawn to you so we ask lord for each one who's here and each one who may be watching and listening at a distance you are the god who knows our hearts and for those who do not yet know christ we pray that you would be opening eyes and stirring hearts that people may see and hear and be drawn to to taste and see that god is good to that people will be drawn to put their faith in christ as their savior and for lord those who are your people we ask that you would minister to us that you would sanctify us make us more like christ we pray that you would encourage us that you would direct us that you would guide us lord that you would correct us if we are off track that we may be enabled to be disciples of jesus those who are following jesus we thank you lord that you you call us to follow you we thank you that you call us to to confess that our our faith is in you and we think especially of ian davidson this week we thank you for the profession of faith that he made we thank you that he stood up and said that he is not ashamed to to say that jesus is his lord and we pray your blessing upon him

and shona that they may know your presence your peace lord god that you may bless them and use them both to bring glory to your name we thank you for the the good news as well of joseph john who was born on friday we thank you for iona being well through the delivery and today and we pray your blessing on her and andrew and joseph we thank you for them as a family we thank you lord that as we have prayed you have heard our prayers and you have answered and brought this a great blessing to them and to us as a congregation and a community and we pray that they may know powerfully your presence with them we thank you that in a world that sometimes seems scary and unpredictable we can look to the god who is sovereign over all things who is always working who brings good to his people and glory to his name so lord we thank you for the evidence of that and we pray that the whole family the wider family as well would know your hand upon them for good at this time we ask lord that you would be with the young people who are with us we thank you for them and we ask that they would grow up to know you and trust you day for the sunday school who will listen to the the lessons some at home and some here in the church building bless those who teach them as well we pray for the yf who meet on on zoom and who are ministered to through scripture union and other means and we pray lord that they would come to you and that we would encourage them to come to you we think of the disciples who at one point held the young ones back may we never do that but may they be brought close to jesus may they trust in christ all the days of their lives we pray for the old people as well in the congregation and community those who may be feeling the the aches and pains of the increasing years those who may have been isolated for a period through this last difficult year and we pray that you would bless them in their homes bless any who may be with us also lord we ask that you would minister to each one we thank you that you are the god who is with us always and promises never to leave us nor forsake us we thank you for your protection over us uh over this last year as uh we've lived through what we could never have imagined a pandemic uh we thank you for your protection lord we thank you for those that you have uh used also to protect us and to care for us doctors and nurses and paramedics and carers and those in the emergency services we thank you for those who have served us and helped us to be to be healthy and fed and cared for through this last year we pray your blessing on each one and as things begin to open up a bit now we pray for wisdom we pray for your ongoing protection uh over us at this time we think of countries as well that don't know stability and don't know uh good health across the nation at this time we think of india especially where there is such a devastation through covert at this time and we ask lord that you would show mercy to that nation and we pray for that nation that has uh through government so deliberately stepped away from jesus at this time we ask lord that in this uh difficult period uh that they would

repent and look to christ once more so hear our prayers uh bless this time we have together be amongst us we pray take away our sin uh help us to focus on christ for we pray these things in jesus name and for his sake amen well boys and girls it's good to have a few of you here this morning now can anybody see this can you see that put your hand up if you've ever seen one of them before yeah i've got two at the back finley you've seen one of them before too al and john you've seen one yeah really you've seen one of them before not sure think so yeah what about over here andrew you've seen one of them father who's nodding as well do you know what they are tell me what they are what they what do they taste like what are they like do you know well i'll tell you okay i'll tell you the story this week remember last uh sunday uh we were talking uh in the children's talk and it came out that it was james's uh 40th birthday uh last week michael was telling us that and so uh one day just in the last week past i uh went round to uh the back door uh and called into to james's house with a wee not into the house at the back door just for the record at the back door uh with the birthday card and i was standing at the back door having a wee chat with him at a safe distance don't worry and michael was having a snack and he was a wee bit back and he went into the fridge and he pulled out this thing and he was having a snack and when he pulled it out it looked nice and brown and nice and moist and and i said to i said to michael what's that and so michael clicks a flash he came over uh closer to me and he showed me this thing he opened the packet i'm not gonna open it just now and and he um why not we will open it just now will we he opened the packet and he showed me what it was he says he says it's a it's a delicious snack this one it's a chocolate cake bar and then he he brought it over and he and he says look at that you can see the you can see the sponge there's a layer of sponge there and there's another layer of sponge there said michael and he said in the middle there's this lovely kind of chocolate sauce and he says this is what i like to do and he started peeling off the sponge and he peeled off the other one and his fingers are covered in chocolate sauce and he's licking them and he says it's delicious i said it looks delicious he says you should try one and i said i mean maybe one day i will try no no no he says you should try we should taste and see taste taste taste and see how good this is over he was like a flash to the fridge he grabbed one out and he handed it over to me and uh i opened it up and i tasted it and i saw that this actually was very good so good that i ordered two packs of them just shortly after i went home there's only a few left now so that's my story now do you remember what we just sang in the psalm a minute ago what verse do you think i'm going to tell you about any guesses not sure well let me tell you it says in verse eight of the psalm that we just sang oh taste and see that god is good taste and see that god is good that's the verse i want us to

to remember today now before last wednesday or whatever day it was i didn't even know these things existed i'd never seen one before didn't know how good they were and you know boys and girls there are some people even close to us here and they don't know about god they don't even know that he exists they don't know how much jesus loves them they don't know what jesus has done for them and going to the cross and dying to take away their sin they don't know that sunday is the lord's day where we remember that jesus not only died but he rose from the dead so that everyone who believes in him can have everlasting life they don't know about jesus they don't know how good he is and they don't know how good it is to be a christian and so if we're christians do you know what our job is well in a way our job is to be like michael was to me with a chocolate bar we're to go to people and if we're trusting jesus if we know how good he is then we're to go to the people around us and say taste and see that god he is good and it's a blessing it's a good thing it's a precious thing to know him as our savior and to have him as our god and if there's anyone here today young or old who doesn't yet know christ who's not yet trusting in jesus then i want to say to you what god says to us through the psalmist taste and see that god is good there's the devil and he says god's not good it's boring everything's boring to do with god it's a lie when you ask him to come into your life when you ask him to come and take away your sin and give you his peace and give you his joy there's no better life that we can have so boys and girls taste and see that god is good let's pray lord god we thank you for uh your word and we thank you for who you are we thank you that you are good and you are perfect we thank you that your love for us is uh so deep and so strong we thank you for the cross that jesus went to to die to pay for our sins and we thank you for the fact that he didn't stay dead but he rose from the dead and we thank you that we can sing as we sometimes do because he lives i can face tomorrow and we thank you even as we think about uh little joseph john that we're looking forward to meeting we thank you that we can say as we hold a baby in our arms it's because jesus lives that we can face tomorrow it's because jesus lives that all fear is gone we thank you that he is the one who holds the future and we thank you that he is the one who calls us to trust in him so lord jesus we pray uh that we would each know you and know your power and your joy and your peace and your everlasting life in us we thank you uh for those who are sad even even today because we're always aware that there are people whose hearts are soared as we think about uh loved ones who have gone from this world into eternity we thank you

uh that uh when we're trusting in jesus he gives everlasting life resurrection life and so we pray for those whose hearts are sore that you would comfort them uh that they would know the hope that jesus brings so hear our prayers and be with the boys and girls now as they go to sunday school may they know that you are close to them and we pray this in jesus name amen okay boys and girls if you head through now to the sunday school and we can turn in our bibles to uh luke chapter 9 unfortunately because of covid i'm not able to share this chocolate bar with anybody so sorry about that that luke chapter 9 and we will read from verse 10 uh to verse 26 of the chapter we saw last uh sunday how jesus sent out the 12 uh to uh to serve him to minister in his name and uh now he brings them back in uh they return to him so luke chapter 9 and at verse 10 when the apostles returned they reported to jesus what they had done then he took them with him and they withdrew by themselves to a town called bethsaida but the crowds learned about it and followed him he welcomed them and spoke to them about the kingdom of god and healed those who needed healing late in the afternoon the 12 came to him and said send the crowd away so that they can go to the surrounding villages and countryside and find food and lodging because we are in a remote place here he replied you give them something to eat they answered we have only five loaves of bread and two fish unless we go and buy food for all this crowd about five thousand men were there but he said to his disciples make them sit down in groups of about 50 each the disciples did so and everybody sat down taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven he gave thanks and broke them then he gave them to the disciples to set before the people they all ate and were satisfied and the disciples picked up 12 basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over once when jesus was praying in private and his disciples were with him he asked them who do the crowds say i am they replied some say john the baptist others say elijah and still others that one of the prophets of long ago has come back to life but what about you he asked who do you say i am peter answered the christ of god jesus strictly warned them not to tell this to anyone and he said the son of man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders chief priests and teachers of the law and must be killed and on the third day be raised to life then he said to them all if anyone would come after me he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me for whoever whoever wants to save his life will lose it but whoever wants his life whoever loses his life for me will save it what good is it for a man to gain the whole world and yet lose or forfeit his very self if anyone is ashamed of me in my words the son of man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory

[ 20:18 ] and in the glory of the father and of the holy angels i tell you the truth some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of god amen and may god bless that reading of his word to us we'll pray just for a moment as we turn back to the scriptures heavenly father we we pray once more that we would know the help of the holy spirit that we may be able to understand and lord that you may be ministering to our hearts in this time help us as we pray to see jesus and what we pray for ourselves we pray for the congregations around us in this place we pray for the congregations across the nation and across all nations those who meet in safety and freedom and those who meet under the under secret under the cloak of darkness even those who cannot meet above ground but who have to go underground to to to open your word and to profess christ we pray for them as we pray for ourselves and we ask that on this day you would minister to your people that you would build your church and we pray this in jesus name amen if you could have the passage open in front of you please that would be helpful you have to watch this clock is slightly slow i think it was on tuesday morning that i was beginning to look at this passage and on tuesday morning as the girls were heading out the door to school grace and lois had gone out first and they were in the car waiting increasingly impatiently anna was a minute or two behind and eventually when she came uh into the car uh grace kind of snapped her and said where's your jacket and lois retorted by saying she does need a jacket the sun's shining and grace said but what if it starts raining she's thinking about what's up ahead and they need to be prepared and it's a sensible enough uh way to think i suppose before we head out whether it's to school uh or on a walk uh on a hill trek of some kind it's good to be uh prepared because if we're heading out onto rough ground we need to have uh the right boots on if we're heading off into rough weather we need to have the right clothes to protect ourselves it's a good idea it's a sensible thing uh to think about what's up ahead so that we can be prepared uh for it and in the gospels and in luke's gospel in particular that we're looking at uh uh just now we we see jesus uh we see the disciples who are following jesus and we get uh an insight into what it looks like uh to be a disciple of jesus we get uh insight into what we can expect to encounter what might be up ahead if we're following jesus and that's what i want to think about uh today in the time that we have i want to think about what we can expect to encounter in our lives if we are disciples of jesus or even if we're thinking about the call that we're starting to hear to become disciples of of jesus what is it that we can expect what is it that we're called to if we respond to this call to be followers disciples of jesus well there's three things uh hopefully in the time that we have

the first thing that we can expect is we can expect to be challenged we shouldn't expect a comfortable safe predictable life but we should expect to be challenged the second thing uh is we should expect uh uh we we should know that we're called uh not to be silent and not to be secret believers but we're to confess christ so firstly we're to be challenged we can expect to be challenged secondly we can expect uh to to have to confess christ not to sit quietly and not to to keep our heads down but we're called to confess christ and the final thing is we're called as disciples of jesus to be cross carriers so that's the the structure hopefully that we'll get through in the next 20 minutes or so so the first thing we can expect if we're following jesus is we can expect to be challenged marie's dad was given a jigsaw um at christmas time and it wasn't one of these uh jigsaws that comes off the shelf that's kind of you know easy to put together it was a jigsaw that was a it was a family photograph that had been turned into a thousand piece jigsaw and the problem with that was that the the family were just clustered together in this one area and the rest of the picture it was all sky and sea so 75 of the picture was the same shade and it just about drove poor lachy demented trying to put the thing together he managed eventually i think it probably got launched off the table once or twice he managed eventually but it was a challenge now if we look at verses 10 to to verse 17 here what challenge did jesus set for the disciples well he challenged them to to feed 5 000 men plus women plus children the scholars think that it was probably about 15 000 people gathered around jesus at this point so let's look at these verses verse 10 when the apostles returned they reported to jesus what they had done then he took them with him remember the definition of what a disciple is it's somebody who's with jesus he sends them out in his name and he brings them back in to be with him he took them to be then he took them with him and they withdrew by themselves to a town called blessed sadan but the crowds learned about it and followed him he welcomed them and spoke to them about the kingdom of god and healed those who who needed healing and again we see the compassion of jesus here he is constantly on the move he is constantly in demand he must have been constantly exhausted in his physical humanity and yet he never drives anyone away now he he receives them he welcomes them as they come to him he ministers to them for the whole day verse 12 late in the afternoon the 12 came to him and said send the crowd away so they can go to the surrounding villages and countryside and find food and lodging because we are in a remote place here now we might just pause and ask the question well why did the disciples speak this way why do the disciples say to jesus send the crowds away and some commentators are quite hard on the disciples at this point and they say that's just typical disciples they're always sending people away they're telling the children to to go away they're sending the crowds away they just can't be bothered with the crowds that's why they're sending them away but i mean that may be possible might have been what's going through some of the disciples minds but

i think i'd rather give them the the benefit of the doubt here this is a remote place that jesus is in there's 15 000 people around him they have no food there is no local shop there is no a cafe on the main street and the disciples can see that the crowds they're hungry they have needs and the disciples look at themselves and they realize that they can't meet the needs of the crowd and so they say to jesus send the crowds away we can't do anything for them and it's at that point that jesus sets the challenge i don't know if you've ever had people visit you you know unexpectedly and it's dinner time and you've got the dinner prepared and uh you know what you're doing for dinner but somebody's arrived about half past five and it's quarter to six and it's six o'clock and they're showing no signs of going and there's four of them or five of them and you're starting to panic and you're thinking what on earth am i going to give them it's a challenge well think about the disciples they're surrounded by 15 000 people it's dinner time and then jesus springs this challenge on the disciples and he says to them you see the crowds yes they're hungry you give them something to eat and the disciples answered verse 14 we only have five loaves of bread and two fish unless we go buy food for all this crowd about five thousand men were there that was the disciples polite way of saying jesus what you're asking is impossible this is an impossible challenge you're you're setting for us but jesus says to his disciples verse 15 have them sit down in groups of about 50 each now at this point the disciples could have said well jesus we just can't do this if we tell the crowds to sit down in groups of 50 they're going to expect to be fed and we don't have anything to give them and if we set them down in groups of 50 and they're expecting to be fed and we don't have anything for them they're going to get annoyed we're going to look like idiots we're not doing it they could have said that but they don't respond to jesus that way they they simply obey jesus i'm quite sure they couldn't figure out what on earth was going to happen next as they look at their five loaves and two fish but they simply obey jesus the disciples verse 15 did so they did what jesus asked them and everybody sat down verse 16 taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven he gave thanks and broke them then he gave them to his disciples to set before the people they all ate and were satisfied and the disciples picked up 12 basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over so what happened here well what happened here very clearly was another miracle jesus has been moon miracle after miracle and this was another miracle of of huge scale the reason that jesus wanted the crowds to sit in an orderly way was so that when he stood up and prayed

looking up to heaven the crowds who were looking in an orderly way would realize that as jesus prayed and looked to heaven this is where the blessings were coming from the food that they were about to enjoy they needed to be able to see and understand this was coming from heaven and as the food began to be served it wasn't kind of frugal stingy portions but it was satisfying portions they all ate and were satisfied verse 17 and there's 12 basketfuls of leftovers which just demonstrate the fact that there were limitless resources when jesus was involved so the challenge that jesus set for his disciples it looked impossible it was impossible for them but as they trusted in jesus he made what was impossible possible now what can we expect today if we are disciples of jesus well we can expect to be challenged if we don't know what it is to be challenged we probably aren't disciples of jesus disciples of jesus can expect from time to time to be looking at situations and saying to jesus this is impossible i can't do this and yet it's when we admit in the face of an impossible challenge that we can't do it but we're going to do what jesus is asking anyway that he's actually able to work through us jesus said to the disciples back on that day as they looked at this needy hungry crowd you give them something to eat and today as we think about how this translates if we have eyes that are spiritual in any way we look around us in this world in this country in this community and we see massive spiritual need and hunger and perhaps we see things like well if only the faith mission would come back and have a tent mission or if only god would raise up another dunkel campbell so there could be a another kind of revival situation then the crowds of lewis and harris would be would be reached and saved and satisfied maybe that's what would what it would take and i wonder what jesus is saying to us today and i think perhaps he is saying to those who are christians you give them something to eat i want you christians disciples to tell people about me milne the commentator says jesus is himself the bread that god supplies to feed this world spiritual hunger he gives life to the world by sacrificing his own life those who turn to him will receive his gift of new life so if we are those who are christians if we are disciples if we have been satisfied by jesus saved by jesus and if we want to to give the people around us who are lost something someone the only one who can satisfy their souls

then we need to tell them about jesus not about church but about jesus that's the challenge that jesus sets for us and you might respond by saying well i haven't been to theological college well neither had the disciples or you might say well i have so i have so little to give well think about what the disciples had five small rows and two fish you might say well if i speak about jesus people might laugh at me or they might get angry at me and the disciples could have said every one of these things but they didn't even though they couldn't see how five thousand men could be fed even though it looked absolutely impossible to them when they responded in obedience and faith to jesus challenge he used them and he used the little that they had to do more than they could ever have imagined what would god do in tarbert if every christian every believer every disciple went out this week and stopped talking about the weather and started talking about jesus what would that look like i wonder weerspe says jesus through this challenge taught the twelve an important lesson for their future work no situation is impossible if you take what you have give it to god with thanksgiving and share it with others mckinley says jesus surely could have fed the crowd by himself but in his kindness he involved the disciples in the work and as a result they got the joy of service and a lesson about jesus power if you and i want a lesson in jesus power and the joy of service then we we should start speaking to people about him he doesn't need us but he gives us the privilege of being used if we are willing so the challenge we can expect if we are disciples of jesus to be challenged the second thing we can expect the second thing we are called to is we're called to confess jesus now when something happens in a small place we know very well that news travels fast we know how the jungle drums begin to sound we know how one person says to another person there's this huge chain reaction have you heard the news now can you imagine if you think back into this culture that we're reading about in in Luke chapter 9 can you imagine the chat in that countryside imagine how the people were talking in all these villages that jesus was visiting so many people had been healed miraculously troubled souls like legion who terrorized villages were now at peace to a word of christ tens of thousands of

[ 40 : 27 ] people were gathering for whole days to listen to sermons and now five thousand men and their wives and their families had been fed and satisfied with two loaves of five loaves of bread and two small fish that's what was going on and so it's no wonder that everyone was talking about jesus about who he was and what he was doing so let's let's look again at the verses here verse 18 once when jesus was praying in private and his disciples were with him he asked them who did the crowd say i am they replied some say john the baptist others say elijah still others that one of the prophets of long ago has come back to life that's what the crowds were saying so let's think for a moment about what the crowds were saying about jesus well some were saying that he was john the baptist and we should know as we think about that that that was designed to be a huge compliment the crowds were not speaking against jesus they weren't being critical of him they were trying to say good things about him john the baptist was held in high esteem by the jewish crowds john was a fellow jew who preached with great courage he was a man who was brave enough to stand up against the the deceitful herod he was a man of integrity a man who was willing to live for and die for his convictions so when the crowd said that jesus maybe he's john the baptist they were trying to compliment jesus but they just weren't going far enough they didn't have it quite right others were saying that jesus was elijah and again this was designed to be a compliment towards jesus the jewish people were looking for elijah to come to prepare the way for the lord for the messiah and so as they watched jesus and as they listened to jesus they were so impressed by what he said and what he did and they thought this might be the one who comes just before the messiah this might be elijah so again they were speaking highly of christ but they just weren't going high enough and still others said that one of the prophets a long ago has come back to life and again this was meant to to show respect to jesus and compliment jesus they were thinking about moises they were thinking about isaiah they were thinking about jeremiah these great prophets of old and they were saying jesus fits in this category he must be one of them so the crowds when they chatted about jesus they they were saying positive things but they just weren't saying enough they hadn't quite got it and so jesus turns to the disciples verse 20 and he says but what about you plural you what about and harris would probably say what about yous who do you say that i am and peter answered the christ of god what did peter mean by saying that well he meant that jesus was the messiah peter was going further than all the crowds peter was saying you're not john the baptist you're not elijah you're not one who's preparing the way for the messiah

you're not a prophet at one who's pointing towards the messiah you are the messiah jesus you are the savior peter confesses his faith in christ and that's what peter makes peter stand out from the crowd that's what indicates that he is a disciple of jesus now today all these years later people are still talking constantly about jesus and they're actually saying the same kinds of things you wouldn't have to listen for long to hear somebody say that jesus was a was a man of integrity that he was a man who was not afraid to speak the truth to powerful people people will say that jesus was an excellent moral prophet people will say that jesus was a kind and loving man and all that's true it's just not enough jesus was and he is more than all these things he was and he is the christ of god he is the savior he is the messiah he is the son of god and unless we believe that we can't be saved you know we can do masses of good works and help everybody in a community but unless we see and believe that jesus is the messiah he is the christ we can't be saved we can attend dozens of religious services and have a form of godliness about us and yet if we don't believe that jesus is the christ of god we can't be saved and until we confess that he is the christ of god then we cannot be seen and heard to be his disciples so the question jesus asked of his disciples back then he asks of us today he says who do you see that i am and the answer to that question will determine the course of our lives in this world and what we consider to be priorities what we consider to be the important things it will determine how we live it did for peter and the answer to that question will determine where we spend eternity whether we are with jesus in heaven or apart from jesus in hell william bartley said it's never enough to know what other people have said about jesus jesus must always be our own personal discovery and i said earlier one of the huge encouragements of last week i was to hear ian responding to the question that i put to him do you confess christ as your savior and your lord i cannot tell you how much encouragement there is to hear that that strong

response i do it's a huge encouragement to so many but it might be a challenge to some as you consider your response to jesus question what about you who do you say says jesus that i am as disciples of christ we're called to be challenged we live a life where we are challenged we're called to confess christ and finally and very very briefly we're called to be cross carriers verse 21 jesus strictly warned them to tell us to not to tell us to anyone and he said the son of man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders the chief priests and the teachers of the law and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life milne the commentator says more briefly than i can say probably the reason for this strange demand not to tell is immediately clear jesus is not going to fulfill popular expectations of the messiah by pleasing the people and placating their leaders instead he will take the lonely path of suffering rejection and death and that's what jesus shares the second that peter says you are the messiah you are the christ jesus says that's right peter now let me tell you what that means doesn't mean that i'm a celebrity doesn't mean that i'm going to be taken into a political high office it's not what i came to do jesus shares with his disciples the second they get his identity as messiah he shares with them that his mission would be to suffer and to be rejected by all the greatest theologians of that day his mission would be death and then resurrection and then he shares the mission of the disciples with them he said to them all verse 23 if anyone would come after me he must deny himself take up his cross daily and follow me you want to know what it looks like to be following the messiah says jesus this is what it looks like you have to be a cross carrier now what does that mean what does it mean for the disciples to have to take up their cross well clearly it means something different than what it meant for jesus clearly our taking up the cross is different to jesus taking up his cross jesus took up his cross he was crucified to save us he bore our sins in his own body on the tree that's what peter says he took the the curse of sin from us and for us so that we could be saved and only he could do that as we sing in the hymn there was no other good enough to pay the price of sin jesus had to go to the cross so that we could be saved we don't go to the cross to kill sin but we are called to take up the cross

to kill self that deep ugly self that lives within us to take up our cross means to deny to starve self which is totally counter to our culture we're told be yourself please yourself indulge yourself jesus says no no deny yourself don't feed yourself starve him and to follow jesus we need to deny self we can't follow self and follow christ and so jesus teaches the disciples to follow me you actually need to be willing to suffer self needs to be willing to suffer for my sake just as i am willing to suffer for yours barclay says to take up our cross means to be ready to endure the worst that man can do to us for the sake of being true to jesus now we don't know a whole lot about that what that actually means for those who were at the prayer meeting two wednesdays ago we heard a story about a lady called curty she lost her husband she lost her home she was driven out of her village she was despised by her own people because she followed jesus the cross that she was called to carry was a heavy one but she carried it we are saying salvation is god's gift to us because he died on the cross discipleship is our gift to him as we take up our cross die to self and follow the lord in everything everything i know the ongoing nature of this it's not that we come to a sort of moment in time we decide in a split moment to deny self follow jesus and that's it we're now on this higher level this higher plane of spirituality no that's that's not what's being taught here to deny self is not some kind of elite level christianity for the super holy this is normal this is what genuine true christianity looks like this is real life discipleship you cannot be a christian and avoid this you and i are to take up the cross daily we're to deny self daily we're to follow jesus daily this is the the daily discipline of the disciple of jesus verse 24 and 25 for whoever wants to save his life will lose it but whoever loses his life for me will save it what good is it for a man to gain the whole world and yet lose or forfeit his very self and these last two verses are just another way of jesus saying what he's already said

he takes the truth of the last section and he puts it in accounting terms he puts it in profit and lost language but the message is the same jesus says to them he says to us make your choice make your choice deny self be willing to suffer for a while for my sake and then live forever or deny jesus please yourself pander yourself indulge yourself for a while for the short mist vapor that life is and then die forever that's the choice start can't deny deny for a while and live forever with jesus or deny jesus please yourself for a while and die forever apart from christ if anyone verse 26 is ashamed of me says Jesus and my words the son of man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the father and of the holy angels see how we respond on this day will determine what happens on that day when Jesus comes and he is coming so we need to be ready so let me encourage all of us to respond with Isaac Watts by saying I'm not ashamed to own my Lord or to defend his cause maintain the honor of his word the glory of his cross

[ 58 : 50 ] Jesus my God I know his name his name is all my trust nor will he put my soul to shame nor let my hope be lost that's the song that's the prayer of a disciple of Jesus so can we sing it or can we put our amen to it as we hear it sung in just a moment we'll pray heavenly father we do pray that as we sing or as we hear this last hymn being sung that you would be moving in our hearts in the power of your spirit we pray that none of us as we reflect on the challenge that Jesus sets we pray that none of us would be ashamed of Jesus that none of us would be resistant to Jesus but we ask that each of us would be trusting in him and saying with the hymn writer

I am not ashamed to own my Lord and we pray these things in Jesus name Amen we'll hear that hymn sung to finish this mission praise 323 I'm not ashamed to own my Lord or to defend his cause I'm not ashamed to own my Lord are to defend his cause maintain the honor of his word the glory of his cross

Jesus my God I know his name his name is all my trust nor will he put my soul to shame nor let my hope be lost firm as his throne his promise stands and he can well see you what I've committed to his hands till the decisive love then will he yon my worthless name before his father's face and in the new Jerusalem the name of the Lord appoint my soul a place and now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God the Father and the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit be with us all both now and forevermore

Amen ■■ you and you and