

Truly Following Christ

2024.05.19 Morning Sermon in Matthew 8:18–22

¹⁸ And when Jesus saw great multitudes about Him, He gave a command to depart to the other side. ¹⁹ Then a certain scribe came and said to Him, “Teacher, I will follow You wherever You go.”

²⁰ And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.”

²¹ Then another of His disciples said to Him, “Lord, let me first go and bury my father.”

²² But Jesus said to him, “Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead.”

Main idea: following Christ can only be done by His grace, because following Christ costs us everything

Introduction: a passage for those who have made some level of commitment (desiring to leave the multitude and go with Jesus); a passage for those who have yet to do so (hesitating and holding back)

1. **Total Dependence**—humbly following by grace, v18–20

1. Sometimes, the Lord, in His providence, intentionally makes it difficult, v18.

1. This should stir us up to dedication.

1. Are you willing to lose everything?

2. A recent list of membership vows from a South Asian congregation supposedly asks, in a series of questions, whether the new member is willing to leave his home, lose the blessing of his father, lose his job, forgive and evangelize those who persecute him, give what little he has, and maintain his faith even if he is beaten, imprisoned, or even killed. Are you willing to sign on that dotted line?

2. But it also ought to stir us up to dependence.

1. “Are you willing” is different than “are you able”

2. If you are willing because you think you are able, then you are still in the same place as the scribe. Let us be willing because Christ Himself is able, and because our hope is that He will be our ability!

2. Be careful of past faithfulness/success fostering present pride, v19. cf. 26:31–35, 41.

1. In successes, we are discovering His faithfulness, not ours. Dwarfed thankfulness must thwart inflated pride.
2. In challenges, we hope that He will continue to be what He will always be. And we hope not that we will be what we have been, but that He is making us what we will be.
3. The follower of Christ has no home in this world, v20.
 1. Count the cost: the glorious Son of Man was more homeless than a rodent or a bird! The disciple is not above his Master. You may lose your relationships, your wealth, your property, your job, your liberty, your life.
 2. False Christianity can be “managed” “on your own,” but true Christianity only by Christ’s grace (cf. Lk 22:31–32). This is the hope of the Christian: Christ is advocating for us against Satan; Christ is praying for us; Christ is upholding us when we stand; Christ is restoring us when we fall; Christ is using us. If you are “managing” your own Christianity, then either you are self-deceived, or it is not true Christianity at all!
2. **Total Devotion**—not half-hearted or compartmentalized, v21–22
 1. Be careful of the pull, the temptation, to hold back anything from Christ, v21.
 1. From a spiritual standpoint, he may have felt that following Jesus was one thing among many that he needed to do to please God.
 2. From a relational standpoint, he may have felt that he “owed” his dad before he owed Christ.
 3. From a financial standpoint, he may have felt that he needed his inheritance to be “financially stable” before he could devote himself to Christ.
 2. Be careful of the pull, the temptation, to let anything hold you back from Christ, or to hold back anything from Christ
 1. There must be nothing that you “first” do before following Christ.
 2. There must be nothing that is “first” above following Christ.
 3. Christ must be first
 1. Chief above all other things

2. Chief *in* all other things. Even relationship with family —who might not understand this.
3. Belonging to Christ means even our dead are not “our” dead. v22.
 1. The Lord Jesus is obviously not against honoring parents (cf. 15:3–9).
 2. But if we view anything as separate from following Him, then we are spiritually dead. If our dead are “ours” instead of His, or if we ourself are “ours” instead of His, we are spiritually dead.

Conclusion: Christ costs everything, and He is worth it! Everything is nothing without Him. And, if you have Him, then nothing is still everything! But such a cost is something for which you must depend entirely upon Him, if you are genuinely going to pay it.

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Matthew 8, beginning in verse 18 and going through verse 22, these are God's words. And when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, He gave a command to depart to the other side. Then a certain scribe came and said to him. Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go. And Jesus said to him, Foxes have holes and Birds of the air have nests.

But the son of man has nowhere to lay his head. Then another of his disciples said to him, Lord let me first go and bury my father. But Jesus said to him, Follow me. And let the dead bury their own dead. Hey man, let's ends this reading of gods inspired.

And they're interrupt. Rejoice to know that he Glorifies himself by sustaining and blessing the preaching. And the hearing of it preached, please be seated.

Some of you have discovered. When you invited someone to Hopewell, You told them what might happen. Ah that we might not always but we might have an hour and 15 minute sermon and If we especially, Uh, have a baptism or new members, we might not always, but we might have Two and a half hour worship service.

And that they're actually welcome to be here from about Uh, 9 30 in the morning to Around 6. In the evening, if Stay for all of it. They might think, wow. That's a lot of level of commitment that either, you know, depending on their condition. Sounds fanatical or That they wish they could have but they just aren't

So it's good for you, good for me. That this passage addresses some spiritual dangers. The face, those who have more than the ordinary commitment. Among the multitudes that gather in

excitement about the Lord Jesus. Because there is a danger. As much. As we know, and I trust and hope for each of you for every part that you Attend.

For all that you do in that attendance that it is out of dependence upon the Lord Delight in him Devotion to him. Desire for him more. That there is there are these dangers. This spiritual Pride on the especially on the part of the Scribe and even some measure of Half-Heartedness.

Uh, in the By this other disciple. This is a passage. In the first place. For those who have made some level of commitment, Described who desires to leave the multitude and go with Jesus. And There's also a passage in verses 21 and 22. For those who have yet to, Make so much of a commitment those who are hesitating and holding back.

Uh, which doesn't mean hesitating and holding back from a whole day of Hopewell. Although, that may be symptomatic. But hesitating and holding back of the whole of All of our relationships, all of our Delights, all of our Treasures. All of our Endeavors. Belonging to and under. And for the sake of The Lord Jesus.

And so, very simply put this is a passage in the first place about total dependence. In verses 18 through 20. And total devotion. In verses 21 and 22. In the first place. Then this is a passage. About total dependence. Jesus sees the multitudes about him. And he gives a command to depart to the other side.

Uh, Jesus has made it very clear thus far that Uh, he's not just here to drum up, worldly excitement about himself. Seeking particular people and he's seeking to change their minds to give them repentance to change their entire nature. And, As he does. So we did see him doing things like when the multitudes are gathered at the bottom of the mountain, going up, the mountain.

And sitting down to preach. And thereby drawing to himself those. Uh, in whom by his Spirit he is giving a desire to hear him. And by his Spirit, he also gives by the hearing of his word life and faith and repentance trust in God, commitment to Holiness. A single-mindedness towards Jesus.

That is willing to be with the few. If they could only have him. And a wonderful sermon. Uh, we've seen Jesus when he comes down and great multitudes. Follow him again. Um, singling out some priests. He heals this leper. Whom he has brought to worship him and, and sends him not to You know, the First century, equivalent of the popular reality TV show to give his testimony on stage.

But Jesus has some priests in mind to whom he wishes to give testimony. That the one who is the point of their entire priesthood has come. That God himself now. Uh has come to atone and bring us near in himself in the person of his son and now again, in verse 18, Jesus sees great multitudes about him.

Uh, and His response is not like, Uh, Peter oh, very good. Let's uh, let's build Tabernacles for For everyone. Let's build tents for everyone as response. Was not like those who believe. Not in church, multiplication but Church growth. Uh, you know. Let's set up a great big stage, and Have seating for the thousands.

No, his response. In this case is actually to add a degree of difficulty to narrow down who can be with him since he's going to get on a boat to do it. And, To make it difficult to follow him, since you're going to have to go. Sometimes the Lord and in his Providence, Intentionally.

Ordains for obstacles to be in our way. To throw us in, dependence upon him to test our devotion to him. We see. Those two things here.

It's wonderful that it's a scribe. Who seeing the difficulty seeing that Jesus has given command and he's Get into. A boat. Uh, not in this week's passage but in two weeks time, Uh, chapter nine. So he got into a boat. Sorry. Next week, in verse 23, he gets into a boat and he goes to the Gentile side of the lake and then in chapter nine, he's going to get into the boat and come to the other but it's marvelous that there's this scribe and he's heard where they're going.

He's going to. The land of the gergacenes, Uh, he's going to the place where they do things like pig, farming. That's dangerous place for scribe to be. Full of Uh, actual animal pigs and People who are ceremonially just like being around a pig. Almost certainly unclean and polluting him and he's a scribe.

And he hears this and he sees the challenge and perhaps he is one of those who has been up on the mountain and has heard, uh, all of this about our righteousness, exceeding, that of the scribes and the Pharisees and he has not been turned off. By that. Because he's still trying to stay with Jesus.

He says teacher, I will follow you wherever you go. Sometimes the Lord in his Providence intentionally makes things difficult, he certainly had done. So for this scribe, And so, this should Stir us up to dedication. The Scribe is not yet. Uh, counting the cost, as we can see in, in Jesus's response in verse 20.

And he speaks to him in such a way as to imply. These are things that you haven't considered yet. About what following me might cost you. But knowing of the Lord that it is, his will, his wisdom for his people that in this world, we would have trouble. That the narrow gate leads to the confined way the difficult way.

The the way that Christ is worth and only Christ can sustain Us. But a way in which you lose everything up front, Because it is, you are no longer your own. And what you have? Is from Christ and for Christ and you never again think of it as yours.

They're going to hear about when he gets to this other disciple. In verse 21. And so, I wonder. Have you lost everything for Christ? And if you're not, are you willing to lose? Everything for Christ. In God's mercy, to us, we're we've come into a season in the life of this nation in which If you are going to If you are going to believe and hold, Jesus's exclusive claims about himself.

If you are going to actually love your neighbor and even your enemy the way that the Lord Jesus teaches you to Which means you don't keep those claims to yourself you. Whether the state gives you freedom of of religion and freedom of worship or not. You are not content, merely to worship.

You must live. You must live your entire life, the way the Lord Jesus does. And you may lose everything. Already. You may lose a job. You may lose friendships. You made for all practical purposes lose family. You may lose. Well, you may lose property. In some cases. Maybe not as much yet in our country, but we're right on the doorstep.

It came to Canada, didn't it? You may lose your Liberty. And do not think that it stops there. For much of the history of the church in almost all of the places where the church has been. You may lose your life.

In South Asia. Some of you. If you did the devotional in preparation for the sermon, now have read this, a recent list of membership. Vows From a South Asian congregation reportedly asks

in a series of questions, I mean, we ask To acknowledge yourself to be a sinner. Do you receive Christ as your savior?

Do. Confess that the Bible is God's written word. Um, are you do you commit to live as as appropriate to or becoming for a follower of Jesus Christ as a role? Fine, and good. In their context, the questions are pretty urgent. Are you willing to leave your home? Are you willing to lose the blessing of your father?

In an honor-based culture. Are you willing to lose your job? Are you willing to be persecuted? And are you willing then to forgive and evangelize those who persecute you? Knowing that they will persecute you for that.

Since you are likely now to have very little, are you willing to give From what little you have.

Will you maintain your faith even if you are beaten? Even if you are imprisoned, Even if you are killed.

You see Jesus, when he's saving people. He often. Makes things more difficult. To draw them into dependence upon himself and draw out. Devotion to himself. Are you willing to sign? On the dotted line. If that's the contract.

So it stirs us up or should stir us up to dedication but then all the more it should stir us up to dependence. Because are you willing is a very different question than are you able? And if you think you're able, you're in the same place as the Scribe, aren't you?

And so we must be willing not because we think we will be able but because Christ himself is able And in the places that we, Foolishly think we would be able to be the life that we foolishly think that we would be able to live. You really think that?

You're able to live rightly and dwell. A life in which you're not in prison, but free in which you're not afraid. Of persecution. In which you have the good job and the esteem of your neighbors. And everyone speaks well of you, which the Bible tells you Beware, if woe to you when everyone speaks well of you.

You really think that you're able to live that life. Isn't it a mercy of God? That he often calls us to things. That even in our, our state. Cloudy foolish. Uh, spiritual pride and complacency we, he gives us things to go through that. We think, oh, well, I'm definitely not able to do that.

Well, praise God. You've learned the truth about yourself.

So, let us be willing. Because Christ himself is able. And, because Our Is that we will have him. And he will be our ability. Because it doesn't matter what else we have or however else easy. It seems If we don't have him, we have nothing. And we certainly have no ability.

So, we must be careful. Then even a past faithfulness and success. Fostering present Pride. Jesus lays down this challenge as it were. Uh, in verse 18 and then a certain scribe who verse 21 implies. He's a disciple, right? Because the other man comes And the scripture says, then another of his disciples So then a certain scribe came and said to him teacher.

I will follow you wherever you go. And at first, it sounds It sounds like the sort of devotion that we're actually going to hear about in verse 21 to 22. We ought to have the sort of devotion we want to have it. Sounds like he's answering yes to all of those membership questions from that South Asian church.

But Jesus is the one who is there and Jesus. Is full of wisdom and insight and he even knows in his Spirit, the spiritual condition. Of others and we see how he responds. Jesus said to him, foxes have holes. And birds of the air have nests, but the son of man has nowhere to lay his head.

So Jesus sees something in this man. That. The how far he has come. In his Gathering, to the Lord Jesus seeing him. First and foremost, as As teacher, he is recognizing that that Jesus's great gift. To him is especially his word. The Scribe would have been an expert in the Bible and so there's some humility before Christ.

He's recognizing, isn't he? That even though he is a scribe when Jesus says, You have heard it said, but I say to you and when they Marvel at the end of the sermon that his teaching is not like the scribes and the Pharisees, this teacher is agreeing. He's saying not like my teaching better than my teaching, I need him to be my teacher, I need him to be my my Rabbi.

This man has made some progress in Grace. We must not come to this passage and and see the word scribe and wrinkle our nose and look down at it. Look down at him. What we ought to do is say, Here is one in whom, the Lord has done some gracious work that is very similar to much of the gracious work that he's done in me.

And yet. He responds like Peter. It is not just Peter. Very easily overlooked when you get to chapter 26.

Chapter 26. Long chapter 26 and verse 31. Jesus said to them, all of you will be made to stumble because of me this night for it is written, I will strike the shepherd and the Sheep of the flock will be scattered. But after I've been raised, I will go before you to Galilee Peter answered and said to him, even if all are made to stumble because of you, I will never be made to stumble.

Jesus said to him assuredly, I say to you that this night before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times Peter said to him. And this sounds, doesn't it very similar to? I will follow you wherever you go. Peter said to him, even if I have to die with you, I will deny deny.

I will not deny you. And so said, The disciples. And so say we in our hearts and so ought, we Yes, I am willing to die for the Lord Jesus Christ, if that is what it comes to But we mustn't say it in the spirit of Independence. As if our willingness is, what is going to make us able in successes We have not been discovering our faithfulness.

We've been discovering his We've not been discovering our goodness and our power. We have been discovering his Almighty power that is at work in us. And we ought to be amazed at it and we ought to love it and we ought to be grateful. We mustn't be those who pretend like there's nothing good happening in the Christian That he's just got kind of a doctrinal certificate that'll get him to Glory even though he's pretty much the same as everyone else.

But we must not. Allow past faithfulness to Foster a present Bride. Because it's especially his faithfulness. That we are discovering. As we grow. Praise God. The more we see that it's his faithfulness. The more that we are dwarfed in our thankfulness. He has made bigger and we are made smaller.

Even as we are made better. The more we live this life of thankfulness. This humiliated amazed thankfulness The more we will be protected against the inflated Pride. That comes to him. In a self-dependence and self-assurance and says teacher, I will follow you wherever you go or even if I have to go and to prison and die for you, I will not deny you To write dedication.

It's the right desire, but it must be married. To a right dependence. Upon the Lord Jesus Christ. In challenges, we hope that we will continue to be sorry. And challenges our hope is that he will continue to be what he will always be. But do not come to a new challenge and look at what he has done in us thus far and say I can be what I have been Our hope is that Jesus will be what he has been.

In fact, we are not yet. What we should be Which is one of the purposes of everything he does in our life. And if he is bringing us to a place of of Holiness, if he is working in us, to make us what we should be. We should not therefore assume that by what he has already done in us.

We will be able to navigate. What lies before us? And so our hope is that he will continue to be what he will always be but also that he is in the midst of making us what we shall be. Philippians 2 puts it this way. Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling why Because it can't be you.

Who works in yourself. To well and to work. Because the completion of that work, that he has begun in you from just, a chapter earlier, in, Philippians must be done by his working in you to will even and his working in you to work according to his good pleasure.

And so confidence in Christ is actually married to fear and trembling with respect to ourselves. Rather than inflated Pride.

You see? Jesus says answer. It says teacher, I will follow you wherever you go and the answer is, um, A little bit like his answer to the To the woman who doesn't want to talk about how many husbands she's had. And whether the one that she's with now is Is actually her husband and, and Brings up a theological conversation.

She's a Samaritan, they think you should Worship on the mountain. She says, well we say we should worship on the mountain, the Jews say you should Worship in the temple, you know, which, which one is right. And she thinks she's she's not asking a question where she thinks she's wrong.

It's like obviously the mountain Sinai where God was that must be the right answer, He sort of answers. Well, actually, you're wrong. Salvation is of the Jews. The temple was right, but it's too late.

His answer. You can't go. Where you need to go to worship. God is a spirit. You can't get to God on a mountain. And you can't get to God in the house. You can only get to God in spirit and Truth you can only get to God in the son, the father seeks worshipers, that's why the sun is here.

To bring worshipers all the way to God himself. And so, in the same kind of Almost non-sequitential, answer. The scribe says, I will follow you wherever you go and Jesus says, answered something along the lines of and where exactly is that If I were a fox. You could follow me to my hole.

If I were a bird, You could follow me to your net to my nest. Jesus identifies himself instead as the son of man. This heavenly being that Daniel saw. And that that of, when Daniel prophesied whom Nebuchadnezzar, saw an appearance in the furnace with the with the three friends.

Jesus is the God man, and where he is going, is to God himself. And so Christian is, is called To be homeless in this world. When we can be home anywhere, because Christ is our home. But as far as the world thinks of things, we're homeless, A Christian can be a citizen a good citizen of any country.

Because all authority is from God and he might be the only one in the country. The whole government might not know what Authority is and how it ought to be exercised and what it's for but the Christian does. And some of the, the first Christian apologists, what they were doing is explaining to the government, why you shouldn't kill us.

We're the best citizens. You have. Here's the gospel. Here's what made us the best citizens. You have stopped killing us. You're just hurting yourself. The Christian can be a citizen of any country, but he's really not. At home. In his country. Because his citizenship lies. Elsewhere with the son of man.

And so, Jesus is Challenging him because he hasn't counted the cost and affirming to him. That the wherever you go is something that you will not be able to do in yourself. Because it requires Ascension. And eventually it requires Resurrection. And so that, That robs us of. All hope and our own strength.

The follower of Christ has no home in this world and therefore, we must count the cost. In this world, the Glorious son of man. Who goes now and is now preparing a place for us to whom all, Heaven and Earth belongs, so that the meek who dwell with him on high, like we heard in Isaiah 57.

Are also those who inherit the earth, like we heard in Matthew chapter 5. But in his Earthly life, the Glorious son of man was more homeless than a rodent. Or a bird. And the disciple is not above his master, you may lose. You may have already lost some of your relationships.

Your wealth, your property, your job, your Liberty. Your life. You see false Christianity can be managed on your own. But true, Christianity can't be managed at all. And certainly not on your own. It's only by Christ's grace. Luke fills us in a little bit more on the conversation between Jesus and his disciples and In Luke chapter 22.

He actually prompts and provokes Peter, it's Peter whom he Very specifically addresses. Lord says, Simon Simon. Indeed, Satan has asked for you that he may sift, you as wheat. But I have prayed for you. Satan has asked for them. Jesus has prayed specifically for Simon that your faith should not fail.

And when you have returned to me, Okay, so you're going to stumble but you're not going to stumble as so to fall to quote another scripture or paraphrase. Another scripture, when you have returned to me, strengthen your brethren,

You see our hope is not what we are ready to do. Because the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. It's he, he tells them, it's six verses from From and they all said the same in Matthew 26, 35 to Jesus finding them asleep. Not able to stay awake and pray.

And Jesus saying, watch and pray. Unless you enter temptation that you not enter into temptation for the spirit, indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. False Christianity can be managed on your own but true Christianity only by God's grace. If what you are doing in your marriage, if what you're doing with your children, if what you're doing at your job, what you're doing in your community of what you're doing in your, in your relationships with extended family and friends and Associates.

If it's something that you feel like you can manage on your own You don't know really what it is that you are doing and you don't know yourself. Our Hope is the same as Peter's, hope. Jesus has prayed for us. Jesus returns us. Jesus strengthens us, and Jesus is the one.

Who uses us and makes us useful in his work, in others. None of that was due to Peter's resolve. Peter's resolve was going to was going to fall down like a house of cards. Before a little girl.

But his being restored and his being strengthened and his being used. His Apostolic Ministry, his sermon at Pentecost. His submission and humility to go to Cornelius is standing up to the judaizers in Cornelius's. His becoming the Apostle who whose life was such that the spirit used him especially to write about how to suffer as a persecuted Christian.

That was all because Jesus prayed for him and Jesus restored, him and Jesus strengthened him. Which means that when you identify with Peter and we often identify with Peter, We too blurt things out because we didn't know what to say. And come back later and think, You know, not knowing what to say, is a good reason to say nothing.

We too are sure of ourselves and then fall on our faces. We too get enamored. With the men that God has used like Elijah and Moses. To the point that we Almost put them on the same place as Jesus. And have to have God remind us again. This is my beloved Son.

Hear him. But in all of your identification with Peter, I hope you identify yourself with Peter's Christ. And his need for Christ. That Jesus prays for you, he always lives to intercede for you. That's why he's able to save you to the uttermost by the power of his indestructible life, because he's not just working By that Resurrection power in you, that Resurrection, by which we walk in newness of He's also pleading his own merits.

I still have to this day, I've probably mentioned this before extended. Um, Egyptian Christians. Often tend to the superstitious side. Uh, even among the Evangelical and Uh, not all of my extended family are Evangelical. Uh, but every once in a while, I'll get a note from Dad. So and so that you hadn't heard from in 15 or 20 years, Is going through this.

They would really like for you to pray for them. There's some hope and confidence, I think on their part that he's he's a pastor and he's a religious fanatic and seems to really know God and It'll be really amazing if he prays for us. And it is really amazing to have the Saints pray for you.

It's a wonderful thing. To have the list to know that. At least a few of you. Pray your way through that list. To come. Pray with one another and for one another and then together for others, in the midweek meeting. But what is all of that next to Jesus prays for you?

And so whether it's this scribe here teacher, I will follow you wherever you go or Peter, I am ready to go to prison or die for you. We must. Count the cost. But then we must count our resources to pay the cost. And our resources. Is Christ. Bad grammar.

Good theology. This is your hope. Dear Christian Christ, advocating for us against Satan. Satan has asked or desired To sift you like wheat? He's tried to get some permission. Praise God. He's on a leash. It could only go as far as as God permits him to go for for his glory and our good, the whole book of Job attests to that.

But he has someone praying against him. And the blood of our mediator speaks better than the blood of Abel. For the desires of the devil. Christ is advocating for us against Satan. Satan's been cast down. So, who's going to accuse us now, Jesus? He's the one who justifies. He's the one who's risen and ascended and is seated on the throne and interceding.

There's no one to charge us, let alone condemn us. In glory. Uh, Satan's Furious on the earth. He's not omnipresent. He's Furious on the earth. But praise God, the fact that he is furious on

the Is precisely because he Not permitted. To come among the sons of God. Our Advocate has displaced him.

Christ is praying for us. Christ is upholding Whenever we stand It Is by Christ, making us to stand whenever we fall. It is Christ. Who will restore? As Christ who will use. If we are managing our own Christianity, then we are either self-deceived. About what we are doing, we're not the ones managing it.

Or we are self-deceived about being a Christian.

To see here, versacing through 20 is our the total dependence that belongs to True discipleship. The second thing is total devotion.

Said to him, Lord, let me first. Go and bury my father. But Jesus said to him, follow me and let the dead bury their own dead. Now, how sad? Is our ongoing fleshly condition? That we would. Read verse 22. Miss much that is in verse 21. And think is Jesus saying that we shouldn't honor our parents?

Is Jesus saying that? Burial or caring about what happens to the body is only for unbelievers. When nothing could be further from the truth. It's the Lord Jesus. In just a couple of chapters time in chapter 15, When the, the Pharisees are all upset that the disciples don't wash their hands before they eat.

And it's not because you, you might get Uh, bacteria in your mouth and and have digestive issues. It's because a molecule of ceremonial uncleanness. Might still be on you. And they, they baptize everything those Pharisees. But Jesus says on the Pharisees, why don't you keep the tradition of the elders?

Don't, you know, the wisdom of those whom God has sent before you so that you might be wholehearted. Believers of whatever God says, and obeyers of whatever He commands. She says, that's not who you are at all. For the sake of your tradition. Disobey what God wrote with his finger on the stone tablets at Sinai?

God says honor your father and mother but you say Well, if I say it's an offering a brat near thing a Corban From the Hebrew, karav? If I say, it's an offering then, Let's just say, sorry, Mom and Dad. I know that you're starving and I know that you're destitute, but I pledge the money to the building program.

And it's this really awesome flexible pledge policy that they have where you pledge a total amount and you can use for yourself. Uh, whatever is necessary. And then on the the day for turning in the pledge, you hand over, what's left? Which was how that operated. And Jesus told them that, that was evidence.

That they were drawing near to God only with their lips, but their hearts were far from God. That for all of their ceremonial and cleanness with their washed hands.

That God said they worship Him emptyly. Not only do. Violate God's Commandments in order to follow their Traditions, but they even Teach as doctrines the Commandments of men. And so, their worship is empty. And vain. Basically says, You all are nadab and abaihu but God is letting you do it over and over and over again.

The fire of the wrath of God is against you way more than it was against them in Leviticus 10. So that's what Jesus thinks. Of those who don't honor their father, or their mother. And I hope

that, Children here. Who have not been Desiring to honor your father or your mother that you are.

Hearing that Jesus. Is very serious about honoring your father, and your mother?

But Jesus. Is recognizing something in him, he's not saying here. To not take care of your parents. He's certainly not saying Uh, not to conduct burials. We, we treat the body is still belonging to Christ. We're instructed by Abraham. Wanting to own a piece of the land for the first time in in his long life, in the land, that was promised to him so that he could bury Sarah there and so that he could be buried next to her.

What Jesus? What? Jesus is noting. And what Jesus is responding to is that this disciple in verse 21 has Honoring. Father and mother over against following the Lord Jesus. Like, they're two different things. Like you you follow the Lord Jesus in this part. Of your religion of your interaction with God and you honor your father and your mother in this part and you conduct yourself a brightly in your business in this part and you conduct yourself with With Purity in regards to marriage and the marriage bed in this part and you conduct yourself uprightly in the truthfulness of how you speak in this part.

And just following Jesus is is one among many parts. But, From a spiritual standpoint. He's mistaken. From a relational standpoint. He may have felt that he owed his dad before he owed Christ. His dad had a prior claim upon him. But Jesus is the Lord. Jesus has the prior claim upon you.

Children. You are to honor your father and your mother as part of belonging to Jesus Christ as part of following him.

It's uh, it's similar to the question when they When they ask Jesus, if it's lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, And he says, whose image and inscription, is this about the coin? That's language that they would all know. Because man is made in the image of God and scripture.

Is the inscription of God. And so when he said give to Caesar what is Caesar's and give to God, what is Gods, he's he's not saying that taxes and Civic. Life are somehow separated from religious life and worship life. He's saying that God is the one who gave Caesar that Authority.

God, is the one, who set Caesar over you God, is the one who gave Caesar the ability to operate all these things and uh, to raise funds for them by by taxes. So you honor God under Caesar Because whether Caesar acknowledges it or not, and he did not Caesar is made in the image of God.

And Caesar is subject to the inscription of God. The scripture of God And so, are you? And so it's not an either or it's one as a part of and underneath the other. And that's what he's saying here, about honoring our parents

From a financial standpoint, even Perhaps describe not the Scribe, sorry. This other disciple. Was suggesting that he needed to be financially stable first. Remember, this is a very strongly inheritance based culture.

And it was so in in part, Because of the word of God. The inheritance tax is satanic. That attacks something that Is an essential component to how God designed humanity and fatherhood and sonship and laboring self-sacrificially thinking multi-generationally. It is an assault on all of those things. But those things must not be our trust.

And it's possible, probably implied here. That the man was saying I will be able to drop everything and follow you. Once I feel financially stable enough to do it, And we must not allow ourselves to feel that way. I will be able to follow Jesus. Once I have the job in which I think I can follow Jesus.

I will be able to follow Jesus once the Investments. Are at whatever level they need to be. I'll be able to follow Jesus. Once I have the relational stability that I want to have. I will devote myself more to Christ. Once I have established myself in whatever this group of people is that I feel either socially or for my my work or my finances, I need to be established with them.

And we just put off, put off, put off. The whole devotion of the life to the Lord Jesus Christ. And so we must be careful of the the pull or the Temptation to hold back. Anything from Christ. You must be careful of the pull of the temptation to let anything hold us back from Christ.

There must be nothing that we do first before following him, And there must not be anything that is first above following him, and there must not be anything that is apart from Apart from rather following him, everything must be a part. It's an unfortunate. Um, pause. Nothing must be done apart from Christ.

When he is Chief. That doesn't just mean that he is above all other things. It means that serving him glorifying him enjoying him. Is. The nature of all other things even relationship with family. Even family who don't understand this So that the same Lord who denounces the Pharisees for what they did to honoring father and mother would say things like, If you don't hate your father and mother and even your own life, You're not able or worthy of following me.

By which he's not saying that you shall hate your father and mother. So you're saying you shall be willing to lose, father, as father and mother as mother To be despised by them disowned by them. For his sake. You see belonging to Christ means that even Our dead are not our dead.

There's an extra word. A redundancy in verse 22. He says they're dead of themselves or their own dead, follow me and let the dead and that by that is is a play on words here. It's those who are spiritually dead. Let the dead bury their own dead. You see if we view anything as separate from following him, if we Our relationships and our bereavements.

The loss of Our Father or mother and what we do in honor of and with with respect to their body, which is still theirs because Man is eternal. If we view that not as somehow not a part of our following Christ, there's a great Temptation here. A relational tensions are often.

In the literal wake. Of the loss of a loved one. But we must do everything in all of our relationships with them when they're alive in all of our relationships with them. And with others rather in, in the wake of their death, we must do it all as one who belongs to Christ.

They're not our dead. They're Christ's dead. And we, we are not our own. We are Christ's And the person who doesn't yet, view himself and all that, he has, and all of his interactions and all of his relationships. As belonging to Christ as his own is still spiritually dead.

So, if you're going to consider, Burying your father as distinct from separate from following me, Then you are asking to act as one who is spiritually dead. And so he says Follow me and let the dead bury their own dead. You see, Christ costs everything. But he's worth it.

Everything is nothing without him. So, you actually must lose it in order genuinely to have it. And if you have him, Then, even if you have nothing, you still have everything. Such a cost is something. That we are not able to pay but praise God. Our Hope for paying it.

Is not in ourselves. What is in him? So what is true Christianity? What does truly following Jesus look like in this, this little Uh, five verse intermission in the middle of Matthew verse 8, Matthew chapter 8, Truly following. Jesus looks like total dependence. For total devotion. And, God Christ is not only.

Worthy of that dependence, he is worth that devotion. Let's pray. We thank you. Our gracious. God and our heavenly father for giving us your son. To be our lord, Jesus Christ. And we thank you for the mercy and Grace in which you have worked in. So many of our lives savingly and sanctifyingly.

And we pray that you would help us to see. What you have done and to note, it is the fruit of your work so that we will see that you are faithful. We pray that you will help us as we Face the things that still lay before us. And Grant to That having seen you to be faithful.

We would be willing to put our hand to the plow and not look back because we know that you will continue to be Faithful. Make us willing to pay the cost. Not because We are able but because you are all our ability, even as you are all of our treasure.

And grant that by your spirit. We would know you as worth everything. And that we have everything in you. Before we ask all these things in your name, Lord Jesus.