

# True Discipleship

by Richard Langworthy

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*True discipleship requires a willingness to pay the price of obedience and sacrifice, standing in the shadow of the cross and living a life of humility and surrender.*

**Duration:** 54:47

**Scripture:** Isaiah 53:5, Matthew 6:33, Luke 14:26-27, John 3:16, Romans 2:4-5

**Topics:** "Discipleship"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the character of God and how it is often misunderstood in the church. He emphasizes the importance of understanding God's holiness, righteousness, and justice. The speaker also highlights the eternal and immutable nature of God, emphasizing that He will never change. He warns against the modern tendency to recreate God to fit our own preferences and urges listeners to have a proper understanding of God's character.

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## Transcript

I want to start with John chapter 6. You can turn there, but I'm not going to be reading the whole pile. But you can actually turn there. John chapter 6 is quite an interesting little chapter, if you take the whole chapter together.

Because it starts with the feeding of the 5,000. And then afterwards, Jesus crosses the Sea of Galilee, a lake, and he walks on water. But he goes across to Capernaum with his disciples.

And the next day, the people wake up and they say, where is Jesus? We saw the disciples leave, but where is Jesus? And they say, no, he's gone to Capernaum. And so they all jump on boats, and they sail across. They find out where he is, and they cross the lake, and they cross the lake to where he is.

Okay? Verse 25. And when they found him on the other side of the sea, they came to him saying, Rabbi, when did you come here? And Jesus answered them and said, Most assuredly I say to you, you seek me not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. He is not deceived about their shallow loyalty.

They're all around there wanting to be his disciples. He says, guys, wait, wait, wait. I think the real reason that you're here is the grub.

Okay? He says, do not labor for food which perishes, but for food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set this seal on him. He then starts his little discourse on I am the bread of life. And I am the living bread, and I am come down, and I am the bread of life, and the next part of chapter 6 he speaks of it, okay? And this bread which comes down from heaven, no one, anyone eats of it will not die.

And all these guys, these are the same people who've crossed the lake, who said we are loyal, who said we are following you, the same people he has challenged, they're all there. And so he starts to speak about the bread of life. Now, at that point in time, they have no problem.

They still think, right, great, this guy's here, he's going to help us, he's talking about him being the bread of life, some new prophet in town, etc., etc. Then he applies it. And down here, in verse 53, he says, most assuredly I say unto you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.

Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up in the last day. For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. Okay? Then he finishes in verse 58, this is the bread which came down from heaven.

Not as your fathers did eat the manna and are dead, he who eats this bread will live forever. Now, he moves from just the face of believing. Do you believe that I am the bread of life? To identification, where if you do, if you believe, it's more than just giving a mental agreement and saying, uh-huh, uh-huh, you're the bread of life.

He says, if you believe, there comes a place where you need to participate with my life. Now this is a shock to them. It changed all the rules of following Jesus, right there.

And so, most of them, the Bible says that, verse 66, And from that time many of his disciples went back and walked with him no more. Meaning all the guys that came from across the sea. They suddenly got in their boats and they left.

Okay? Is this little story in John chapter 6 any different to the church today? In many ways, no. And as we go through our little illustration, you will see where I'm going. But I want you, first of all, to picture an army.

A modern army. Everybody, it's a large army, and everyone is dressed in military fatigues, camouflage kit. Ninety percent of this army is, they love their uniforms, and they are happy to receive their pay that they get at the end of every month, and they're happy to walk around town with their very smart uniforms.

There's only a problem. They are pacifists. None of the soldiers want to carry a rifle.

None of them want to fight. None of them want to go to war. They want to wear the uniform, and they want to receive the salary, and they want to look smart.

But please don't ask them to defend their country. That is the state of the church today. We have Christians, churches are full of Christians, happy to be called Christians.

Happy to receive the blessings of the Lord, but not happy to stand and be counted in the day of battle. Not happy to give their lives, and not happy to pay the price. We want the blessings, and we want the benefits, but we are unwilling to pay the price.

I want you to keep that in mind, because I'm going to show you just now the difference between the grace of God, and the price of discipleship. And I'm going to make it quite graphic. In order for us to, for me to put together my little picture, there are three things I want to discuss this morning.

I want to put before you the character of God. I want to put before you the grace of God, the miracle of God's grace. And I want to put before you how Jesus views true discipleship, and why he does so.

In the first part I'm going to read a few scriptures, and I'll ask you to join me only at particular places. The character of God. This is something that I feel is largely misunderstood in the church.

Not for any fault, except that we don't look at it very often. But we have very little idea of the character of God. John Wesley, I believe, stood up in a meeting, and he spent one hour preaching to the church on the character of God, and the holiness of God, and the righteousness of God.

And I went home and I thought, okay. I got up in my bedroom, in my little office, and I said, let me think of how much I could think off my head of the character of God. It's about three minutes.

I was shocked. How many scriptures do I know that I could stand in front of the church and actually start to expound? And I realized that we very seldom look at this subject. The character of God.

God, first of all, is eternal. Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts. I am the first, I am the last, and besides me, there is no God.

God is eternal, from beginning to end. He will never change. He was there before, and he will be there when we have died.

God will never change. Secondly, God is immutable, meaning that God never changes. This is very important in our theology.

Because in the modern church, we have actually changed God. We have changed, we have lost the fear of God. We have changed the holiness of God.

We have recreated a God to suit our modernistic ways. We are wrong. Alright? For I am the Lord, says God, and I do not change.

He was the same yesterday, today, and forever. Important. Because what God said in the Old Testament, his attitudes haven't changed.

We do not have two Gods in the Bible. We don't have Jehovah of the Old Testament and Jesus of the New. Alright? We don't have a holy God in the Old Testament and a teddy bear in the New.

It's not like that. But we pretend it is. God is omniscient.

That's a big word. It means that he is all-knowing. Let's go to Jeremiah chapter 23.

And I'm going to read from verse 23. And while we're doing that, I want us to look at the next thing. God is omnipresent, meaning God is everywhere.

He's here. And when you go home and fight with your wife, He's there. Amen? And when you switch on the TV and watch those things you shouldn't be watching, He's there.

Jeremiah 23. Am I a God? Near at hand, says the Lord. And not a God or far off.

Jeremiah 23 verse 23. Can anyone hide himself in secret places? Can you hide from God? Can you hide things in your heart from God? No. Okay? Shall I not see him, says the Lord? And do I not fill heaven and earth, says the Lord.

So the God that we serve is all-knowing. He is in every place. And He never changes.

Now, we look at the nature of God. In 1 John it says, and this is the message which we have heard from Him and declared to you, that God is light. And in Him there is no darkness at all.

So there's no compromise in the character of God. There's compromise in our character. Correct? We will compromise.

God cannot. He cannot deny Himself. And God is light, and there's no darkness in Him whatsoever.

God is spirit. He doesn't have a physical form that you can see. And God is love.

Perfect love. We have known and believe. Okay? The love that God has for us.

For God is love, and He abides in love, abides in God, and God abides in Him. Now we stop there. We say, Oh, we get that warm feeling.

God is love. I love to serve Him. God is love.

Beware! God is perfect holiness. Who is like you, O Lord among the gods? Who is like you? Glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, and doing wonders. So God is holiness.

He is light. His character is love. He is also perfect holiness.

But the Lord of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, says the Bible. And God who is holy shall be hallowed or exalted in righteousness. So God's name is exalted in righteousness.

And it is hallowed in judgment. Now, not only is God perfect in holiness, He is perfect in righteousness. Which means, exactly the same as justice.

This is where we start mixing things up. We mix up the love of God and the justice of God. God is perfect in justice.

Okay? I want you to come and perfect in righteousness. Romans chapter 2. I'm going to show you something in a moment, but I just need to lay a little foundation on the character of God here. I'm going to read in Romans chapter 2 from verse 4. Paul writes to the Jewish Christians here and he says, Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? Please mark that.

We'll come back to that later. But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart, you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God. So everything we have ever done that is not placed under the blood of Jesus, we'll be held accountable for.

Do you agree with me? Alright. Who will render to each one according to his deeds eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, but to those who are

self-seeking and do not obey the truth but obey unrighteousness, indignation, and wrath, tribulation, and anguish on every soul of man who does evil of the Jew first and also the Greek, but glory and honor and peace to everyone who works what is good to the Jew first and also to the Greek, for there's no partiality with God.

Now come with me to 2 Thessalonians and chapter 1 verse 6 2 Thessalonians here we are Since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you he's right into the church here and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God Hebrews in chapter 12 says our God is a consuming fire interesting isn't it now we're going to demonstrate that can I have I've got these boys here with a little toy and I want to put something up for you you'll find it quite interesting I hope it works because if it doesn't we're going to go woof okay what happened to my string there it is I want you to light that terrible looking thing um yeah now I've done this deliberately and we're going to relight this thing in a moment just that it consumes quite a lot of energy because it burns away there Joel you have lack faith light that machine here is a little picture of a human being let's hope he floats around in the right way there we go now our God says the Bible is a flaming fire that's our and we've lit this thing up and I chose this we worked with Mr.

Bourne yesterday to get this effect when you die that's what you're going to see that is the holiness of God and the righteousness of God and the justice of God and that is everything that God is the Bible says how can we explain God compared to humanity how can we declare God we have got to demonstrate God in a way that he says he is and one of the things that God describes himself of in the Bible is as fire but a fire speaks of his holiness and his purity okay just come across here a little bit right and this is the future of somebody who doesn't believe that no flesh can stand in his presence no one can ever stand and say that I am more righteous than God whoops I'm not supposed to burn my carpet there you put it out now we're coming back don't run away too far is that a vivid picture

for you it's clear isn't it I can say God is a flaming fire and you go yeah yeah yeah I put it up there and you see it and you go oh my goodness because if God would reveal himself to us that's what we would see how does God declare his righteousness how does God show his justice how does God show his holiness in human terms when he came down to Mount Sinai and the presence of God came upon the mountain and the mountain shook and the presence of God was there he said to them put a fence around this jolly mountain and don't let anyone touch it if they touch it they will and yet he'd just taken them out of Egypt he had loved them and redeemed them and saved them and brought them to Mount Sinai to sign a covenant with them but that does not change the character of God our redemption doesn't

change his character his favor to us doesn't change the character are you there alright now I want us to look at the miracle of God's grace very quickly come with me to Hebrews chapter 1 I can leave you an impression in your mind today of the seriousness of God and the privilege of the call of God upon our lives we would have got somewhere Hebrews chapter 1 from verse 8 but to the Son he says your throne of God is forever and ever a scepter of righteousness is a scepter of your kingdom you have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness therefore God your God has anointed you with the oil of gladness more than your companions the foundation of the throne of God is righteousness and the scepter is what a king carries in his hand it's a symbol of his authority it symbolizes what he

represents and the authority that he has and the scepter of God's throne is righteousness he hates lawlessness and he loves righteousness we must understand something that God will defend his name above your flesh if it comes to the push where God has to defend his righteousness and his glory and his holiness or deal with our compromising lives we lose and in dealing with mankind and all that goes on God rules from the platform of justice he rules from the platform of righteousness he hates lawlessness he never lets one act of lawlessness never passes that God does not know and take account of and hold men accountable for God cannot be bought God cannot be persuaded God cannot be changed he is who he is and his basis of everything he does is in righteousness and pure holiness and pure

godliness are we clear on that and so with that in mind how does he show us his love John 3.16 is an interesting scripture now I'm going to do something I want you boys to come here and relight that thing we're going to put the cross here we had to adjust the cross from what we did at camp because this is a little more serious than what we had at camp so I've got a little a little stick here so the disciple doesn't get consumed right now we're going to put the cross there you can take it Bradley hold it there come round that what that that is John 3.16 for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son who stands between us and the fire of God who stands us between us and the presence of God for it says he was wounded for our transgressions he was bruised for our iniquities and

the chastisement of our peace was laid on him can you understand what happened at the cross Jesus stood there with the wrath of God upon his back he stood there with the justice of God behind him and the mercy of God in front of him on this side of the cross is mercy on this side of the cross is grace on this side of the cross is long suffering on this side of the cross in the shadow of the cross is the heart of God for every repentant sinner can you see that the cross is a bridge it's the only bridge between heaven and earth there is no other bridge it's the only bridge because you must understand something the holiness of God, the consuming fire of God never changes just because the cross is there it doesn't mean that God changed it doesn't mean the fire went away it doesn't mean the

presence of God went away the fire of God has never changed our God is a consuming fire the only thing that stands there right now to protect us is the cross can you understand that amen I think we could run out of gas now I want to show you something don't go away it said, speaking of Jesus Christ for he made him who knew no sin to be sin for us that we might become the righteousness of God in him now I've got my little figure here I want you to see the shadow of the cross I want you to see that mankind today lives in the shadow of the cross even the sinner lives in the shadow of the cross until he dies the moment he dies he steps into the presence of God and he finds the real God there but even the sinner lives in the shadow of the cross that's why when men do what they do they are not

burnt instantly God's grace comes to us because of the cross God's mercy is extended to all men because of the cross we can preach the gospel and give men a chance to repent because of the cross however, I don't want to stop with just the idea that a sinner is in his life lives in the shadow of the cross and the moment he dies the cross is taken away and he's left alone facing the wrath of God as long as a man is alive he has chance to repent his life is in the shadow of that cross the moment he dies he's without the cross he stands naked before a living and a holy and a righteous God and our God, the Baba says is consuming fire but let's leave the sinner out of it it's not the sinner I want to talk about I want to speak today about you and I and our lives in the shadow of the cross now,

you can put that down and you can hold this little guy here for me there, you can come on the front this thing shakes a bit too much hold him there now listen to me carefully the purpose of our salvation is that

Christ may receive the reward of his suffering through our lives did you get that? the reason you got saved is that Jesus Christ may receive the reward of his sufferings through our lives I want you to see him standing there with the fire of God on his back and all that he did so that we could stand in the shadow and understand the mercy and the grace of God that's why it says in Colossians and he is the head of the body of the church who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead that in all things he might have preeminence now, I want us to look at something the benefits of

standing in the shadow of the cross the benefits of the cross for you and I we enjoy God's grace we enjoy God's goodness we enjoy God's love, joy God's mercy, God's long suffering God's forgiveness and this is what's preached in pulpits all over the Christian world, Sunday after Sunday after Sunday in the shadow of this cross, as you can imagine the shadow coming down here I live the sufferings of Christ have provided me a column of grace a place of forgiveness a place of mercy a place of long suffering how often do we are we encouraged as Christians and it's absolutely true, if you fall you find grace, if you struggle you find mercy, if you backslide you can come back in repentance all the times, like if I had that fire burning, you'd see it all the time the fire is burning, but the

cross stands there in the suffering of Jesus Christ and in the shadow of the cross I can find all those things that I need for my life day by day by day, isn't it wonderful it is and it's never going to change except for one thing in the shadow of the cross I'm never challenged to surrender my life, so I can backslide and come back to Jesus and He'll forgive me I can come to church and I can be a mess all week and I find the grace of God you see, as long as I simply stay in the shadow of the cross, I'm actually living for myself, God becomes a means rather than the end, did you get that I serve God because of the benefit I have and in Christendom today that is what we are encouraged to do we are told that God is a God of love and mercy and all those things are true all those things are

true, and so we have a church where I serve the Lord because I want Him to bless my family I serve God because I'd like to have a good business I serve God because I want to have peace in my heart, I serve God because I want a good marriage, I serve God because if I fall, He is there and I know He is so good and I know He is so kind but it produces in us a mentality of soldiers who wear uniforms who are not prepared to identify with the battle all the time we are weak in our mentality we are selfish in our approach it's all about what God can do for me, and does He do it yes is He willing to do it yes, as long as we are alive and the cross is there, if you fall a hundred times, He will forgive us a hundred times never mistake that it's not the goodness of God and the mercy of God that I'm

talking about it's our attitude towards it, so if that is so true and God is so much like that then why did Jesus say the things that He said because Jesus said this, and I want you to turn to some scriptures and I want you to show you in a moment John chapter 12 from verse 23 and Jesus answered them saying, the hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified most assuredly I say to you unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains alone if it dies it produces much grain speaking of His own life, but in ours as well he who loves his life will lose it he who hates his life in this world, will keep it for eternal life anyone serves me let him follow me, and where I am, my servant will be if anyone serves me, him my father will honor now we're changing gear He's not

coming and saying I'm going to die, and I'm going to offer you a Christianity whereby you can actually live the life that you want on your terms, and I'm just there to forgive you, and show you grace, and mercy and change your nappies and wrap you in cotton wool and make a fuss of my little baby Christians Jesus does not talk like that but I tell you what He does say, He never says that what He's about to show and give

won't happen, He offers us all the love and the grace and the mercy, that never changes when He speaks about the cross, and our identification with it He always presents it as an option not as a command He never says you will pick up your cross, He says if anyone desires to be my disciple if anyone desires to follow me if anyone desires to walk with me then He will let him

lose his life and come my way unless the corn of wheat falls to the ground and dies, He now starts to speak about our response to that grace our response to that mercy, our response to all that comes off the cross, it's not that God has changed in His heart for us, it's how we are going to respond to it and this is the struggle, we understand grace, but we so focus on the grace of God for me, we lose sight of our responsibility we have to respond to that grace and I want to show you now, ok, Luke chapter 9 is my little picture clear? ok from verse 23 then He said to them if anyone desires to come after me let him deny himself how amazingly what can I say, selfish of him how can he ask me to deny myself when he has just promised me all the grace I need so that I can go and drink socially

the grace of God is with me I can go and live a carnal life the grace of God is with me I can fall into sin the grace of God is with me no, we cannot twist it do you understand He said now if you want to come after me let him deny himself take up his cross daily and follow me we are changing the rules now He says no longer are you going to stand in the shadow of the cross I want you to identify your life with the cross most Christians I know live in the shadow of the cross we haven't yet come to a point we are willing to surrender our lives that He may have the preeminence and identify our lives in such a manner that He is the reason that I live and the purpose that I live and my life is surrendered entirely to His purposes which is the purpose of the cross my cross yes, Luke 14 now great

multitudes went with him from verse 25 and he turned to them and said if anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and his mother and his wife and his children and his brothers and sisters yes, in his own life also he cannot be my disciple he doesn't mean that we have divided families he means that he has the preeminence above our natural relationships are we clear? ok and whoever does not bear his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple so he's quite happy we can be living down here I'm a happy little church goer I see no need to come to church on time because I love my life I come late for one reason I'm too lazy to come early yes, there's no passion there's no seriousness I don't see the need to pray, to read my bible to do all the things that I should do as a Christian,

why should I? because if I stumble I just say Lord Jesus I'm sorry and He forgives me and He washes me and if I have a bad day I know He always graces with me and it's true, but it's for babies not disciples it's for Christians who have made the mistake of keeping their lives, living as soldiers with uniforms not prepared to engage their lives, living in the shadow of the cross but Jesus said don't stay there He said if you want something else if you want to know true discipleship if you want to know my presence and know my life, don't stay there come here and by the way, grace is still there you understand that? mercy is still there His heart is still there that never changed, what changed was the attitude of my heart to Him, are we getting it? it's tough isn't it? it's a bit tough this

one but you know what I started to go through scriptures and I haven't written them all out because there's too many there's more scriptures where Jesus speaks about the cost of our discipleship than anything else and He's absolutely tough verse 28 for which of you intending to build a tower does not sit down first and count the cost whether he has enough to finish it He's saying guys, before you say I want to pick up my cross and follow you count the cost because to follow me you lose the right to your life if you want to surrender your life to Christ not as a Christian not to become a believer and say well I die, I'm going to go

to heaven that'll happen for those guys down there no problem I'll come back in there and touch about that He said if you want to be my disciple if you want to

give your life if you want to know what it means to walk with me you've got to come and you've got to stand with this cross and lay your life on this cross and lose the right to your life so that you are clay in my hands and I can do with your life whatever I desire outside of that you are not a disciple you are simply a believer living in the shadow of the cross and living on the benefits of the death of Jesus Christ but still holding your life lest he says after he has laid down the foundation and not able to finish it others see it and begin to mock him ok verse 31 what king going to make war against another king does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him that comes against him with twenty thousand or else he goes and makes peace so likewise

whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be my disciple you see folks God knows no other way to get glory from a human being except through our death it is my flesh my pride that stands between me and God getting true glory from my life and that is the basis of the gospel of discipleship and true Christianity works do not please God I can do Christian works all day long and still keep my life the only way that God receives true glory and that is when I come to understand one thing that the purpose of my salvation is that he may receive glory through my life God is not there for me I am there for him it is the what can I say the thing that Christians struggle with all the time because on the one hand we see God as a God of love and gentleness and kindness and mercy and it's

true that's his attitude towards us as children individually but don't mix that with my response to it don't mix that with when Jesus looks down and he sees us on the planet earth he says if you want to follow me there's only one thing I know there's an altar there, it's an altar of surrender it's an altar of sacrifice it's an altar of a surrendered life it's an altar whereby all your dreams, all your pursuits, all your values are laid aside and you live for one thing only that your life may produce glory for my name that's the disciple and death is hard because the natural man does not want to let go amen, but on the other side of that is life, he said ever loses his life find it what we don't understand is the moment I'm willing to lay my life down I exchange this natural life for the

life of the spirit the life of Christ the power of Christ, the fellowship of Christ, the revelation of Christ the energy of Christ the moment that this man is laid down is exchanged for something far more than I can ever dream or imagine, the reason that we hesitate to put our lives on the cross is because we do not trust God with our lives you are afraid to say God here is my unconditional surrender because God may make a choice over your life that you don't like and therefore you want to keep the power of veto just in case God is not wise yes, amen, say amen, that's me that's me, I don't trust God I want to be able to say I want to stay Lord, let's negotiate and let's have a look and you know God I know that you are from beginning to end and you know everything but I'm smarter than you

God in this case I don't think you are wise the issue I want you to see clearly this morning is that when I stay in the shadow of the cross it's because I choose to hold my life God is not asking you to surrender it, by the way He said if anyone desires but I do have one little thought one wicked little thought that I want to show you which you are not going to like me for I want you to keep that man attached there and I have another one here this is the believer who actually goes to church, loves his life, drifts through his Christian life, takes life cool semi surrendered, does a few things for the church his priorities are somewhere else comes back on a Sunday with tears in his eyes come to the altar, Lord forgive me Monday he's back to his nonsense next Sunday, Lord forgive me next

week back to his nonsense I'm just weak, I need the grace of God, you know all that language here he is, here he is now keeping him there, stand up please Dave I want you to lift this cross up and out of the way that's called the rapture, hello those who are identified with Christ will rise those who live for themselves he will leave us behind for our own good to face the Antichrist so that we will learn to lose our lives, so we might have an inheritance in heaven, because we don't have one now, and here's the tragedy, the man who lives in the shadow of the cross, may get to heaven with no reward because he has never done anything for Christ God has never received glory from our lives we have been to church for our own good, for our own benefit for what we can get out of God he has never

received glory from our lives, so what have we posted ahead, what's God in front of us what treasures have we laid up in heaven none I may die and I may stand before the Lord as a born again believer in poverty and I'll regret all the false altar calls and the weeping and the wailing and the false promises, and I'll regret the day that I kept my life, and I'll regret the day that I took the grace of God for granted because my God is a consuming fire, but if I'm willing to lay my life down and he gets glory from my life not only am I a witness for him on this earth, I lay up an inheritance in heaven.

Folks we are very close to that cross being lifted out of the way, we are very close to the day of that rapture we are very close to the day of that resurrection and we are very close to the day when a majority of Christians, majority carnal, weak, social Christians our Christian life is based around having, you know, fellowship around a brine, fishing and all the carnal things that we do it's not Christianity it's no surrendered lives you stay behind, you're not raptured because you're born again God takes those who surrender their lives, those who keep their lives, he actually will lose them and let God judge on that, not me, you understand that? and you can challenge my theology and you're welcome to and if you don't agree with me, that's fine my thinking is this, I would rather put my money on the winning horse just in case if I put my money on the other horse, it doesn't win do you understand what I'm saying?

I would rather prepare my heart for the fact that when Jesus comes, I want to go with him I want to walk a road, folks, where I am willing to put my life on this cross I want to walk a road where he will receive glory from my life, I want to walk a road that he may receive the reward of his sufferings through the way that I live, I want us as a church to change gear for we are far, thanks guys you can put it down in the spirit we are far too complacent we treat God as a friend as an accessory we are not moved by our times in which we live two weeks ago I spoke to you on the urgency of prayer remember that? it doesn't move our hearts it doesn't stir our hearts we are not moved to put the things of God urgently in front of us our own lives move us, our circumstances but at the end of the

day it's because our priorities are reversed I've been seeing this for a little while and I suddenly thought I need to put a visual aid in front of the church not because I want to put any law or condemnation on one person but I do think we need to see very clearly how Jesus sees the church what is true discipleship? because so often we live in the world of the shadow of the cross, we live in the world of God's grace and his mercy and it's true we benefit from it but we hide in it but when the real deal comes if we're honest, we have never actually surrendered our lives it's just a question for everybody here today where are you? where am I? have I gone to the altar? is he Lord? unconditionally or I'm happy to pitch my tent in the shadow because it's comfortable there and there's no real

requirement there and it's a sense of deception it's a sense of it's fine for now I haven't looked ahead and realised that that shadow will be gone one day somewhere I hope today with my little stories and pictures that the Holy Spirit has made something very clear for us very clear it's as though I'm preaching for your

lives it's as though I'm standing here begging you and saying, please don't hold your lives any longer there's an urgency in the spirit that I feel that it grows day by day, it burdens my heart the kind of Christianity we know is plastic it's carnal God is wanting a people whose lives are unconditionally his, an army wants to rage up, who will carry the weapons as it were, like we're saying just now, stand up for standing up for Jesus from victory unto victory he shall

lead us we are willing to identify with that cross without hesitation it's an individual decision it is not a church doctrine we're going to pray we're going to close and I'll ask the brothers to prepare communion we're going to serve communion and somewhere you take that cup if your life is not right with God today you put it right you have a chance to say Lord I can see that cross, I can see the fire I know that your grace is there no matter where you are, how far you may have drifted, today you can put your life right with God but maybe your life is right with God but you've never picked up the cross you've never crossed that line of faith you've never crossed that line of true surrender you've never come to the place of unconditional laying it down you pick up that cup today because

he said whoever partakes of this does what? remembers me with my flesh you can say today Lord help me to start a journey but I want to be a true disciple of Christ in the spirit I can't impose that, you understand that has got to be an action of faith from a human heart to a holy God but it has to be something a cry of our heart and I believe God by his grace will pick us up and he'll give us everything we need to make that decision and take us through that place of surrender into a place of life and freedom in the spirit, Amen

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