

Sunday November 21, 2021

Service for Swansea & Charlestown Presbyterian Church

Welcome & Prayer (Steve McA)

Good morning and welcome to the virtual service at Charlestown Presbyterian Church. My name is Steve, and I will be leading the service this morning. And as we gather together today, it is good to be reminded of how great and awesome our God is. For as it says in Psalm 145: *“Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom. One generation will commend your works to another; they will tell of your mighty acts. They will speak of the glorious splendour of your majesty.”*

For those who have been watching the services on-line, or attending in person this term, you will know that we are currently looking at the Book of Mark. And when I saw what the topic of this week’s sermon was, I was reminded of a well-known TV ad from quite a few years ago. The ad was for Tim Tams, and it is where a genie grants 3 wishes. And what do the people wish for? A packet of Tim Tams that never runs out. Now, we don’t have a genie, but we do have an almighty God who can do absolutely anything. And today, when Stephen comes to preach to us, we will see what James, John and Bartimaeus request from Jesus, who can give them anything. And if you had the opportunity to ask God or Jesus for anything, what would it be? Would it be for a packet of Tim Tams that never runs out? Or, is there something else far more valuable that you would want Jesus to do for you? But as we commence our service this morning, please join with me in prayer.

Prayer. Our Heavenly Father, You are our God, the almighty King. We marvel at your splendour, and extol your wondrous name for ever and ever. You are most worthy of all praise, and your greatness is beyond comprehension. You are the creator, and the Lord of all. By your Word you created the heavens and the earth, the land and the sea, and everything in between. And you created us, and you continue to sustain us, and everything occurs according to your will. For you are majestic and infinite, your power is limitless, and you judge the world in righteousness and demand perfection. Yet you are caring and compassionate, loving, merciful and forgiving. And as we come before you today, we do so with trepidation and humility.

For we know that we have fallen short of your expectations. We forget about you, we rely on our own strengths, and don’t acknowledge your blessings and all that you do for us. We have so much to be forgiven for. So we ask for your forgiveness. We ask that you will help us to focus on you: that we will be thankful for everything that you have given us, and continue to provide to us. And we ask that as we worship you today, that you will help us to set aside any distractions, and that we will focus on you, so that we can give you the honour and glory that you deserve. Amen.

Song – Sooner Count the Stars

1. I could sooner count the stars
Than number all Your ways
Though I only know in part
That part exceeds all praise
As sunlight fills the skies
Your goodness fills my life
For all Your precious gifts
Receive my gratefulness

2. I could sooner drink the seas
Than fathom all Your love
Like a never ceasing stream
Are mercies through Your Son
The death of Christ alone
Deserves eternal song
For such a love as His
Receive my gratefulness

CHORUS

No praise is high enough
 No thanks are deep enough
 No life is long enough
 To tell of all You've done
 No shout is loud enough
 No words are strong enough
 No song is sweet enough
 To sing Your love

3. I could sooner turn back time
 Than turn Your heart away
 Though the years go fleeting by
 Your mercies never change
 Before You made the sun
 Your love was set on us
 For all Your faithfulness
 Receive my gratefulness

Bible Reading – Mark 10:35-45 (NIV)

³² They were on their way up to Jerusalem, with Jesus leading the way, and the disciples were astonished, while those who followed were afraid. Again he took the Twelve aside and told them what was going to happen to him. ³³ “We are going up to Jerusalem,” he said, “and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the Gentiles, ³⁴ who will mock him and spit on him, flog him and kill him. Three days later he will rise.”

³⁵ Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. “Teacher,” they said, “we want you to do for us whatever we ask.” ³⁶ “What do you want me to do for you?” he asked. ³⁷ They replied, “Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory.” ³⁸ “You don’t know what you are asking,” Jesus said. “Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?” ³⁹ “We can,” they answered. Jesus said to them, “You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with, ⁴⁰ but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared.” ⁴¹ When the ten heard about this, they became indignant with James and John. ⁴² Jesus called them together and said, “You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. ⁴³ Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴ and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. ⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Announcements for 21st November

Focus for the month – Creation Care. At present we are building a community garden at the front of the Charlestown Church. The aim behind this project is to connect with locals who like gardening (or what a garden might grow) with the aim of pointing them to the God who made all things good.

ZOOM Prayer time. Every Monday night the Church meets via ZOOM to pray. It is so important that pray, both individually and collectively for each other, our church and our nation at this time.

Gather Round – A Christmas Celebration. A great opportunity to reconnect again after the lockdown as well as celebrating the festive season! Everyone welcome! Join us on Saturday 4 December from 5.30pm with dinner around 6pm. The evening will include dinner, carols under the stars, kids’ activities and a Tearfund Christmas stall! Please RSVP to Liz Hyslop by 30 November. gehyslop@optusnet.com.au or 0481 704 006. A donation of \$5 pp or \$20 per family would be welcome. Feel free to pay direct debit to the church account BSB: 062 829 Account Number: 1019 4850 Reference : Your name. Gather Round. Or pay cash on the night. Please bring a fold up chair or picnic rug, glow sticks & a singing voice!

Kids Church Prize giving is down for Sunday 12th December

Kids Spot: We are continuing to look at Luke chapter 1 and will learn this week about someone who did not believe God’s message to him through the angel Gabriel: Zechariah! We will be challenged to believe all God’s promises made to us and that nothing is impossible for God. Question of the week: Are there any promises God makes that you think are impossible? What helps you trust what God says?

Pledges. Many thanks to all those who have pledged money for our Ministry Facilities Fund. When you come to pay your pledges, please can you mark the transfer or the envelope 'Building'

Working Bee – Saturday 27th November. We will be catching up on a number of jobs around the church that we haven't been able to do earlier on in the year. If you can help, our workday will start by 8am and should end by lunchtime. Plenty of small jobs, so just come when you can.

Confession of Faith. Tonight at our evening service Matt Wigney is going to make his confession of faith.

Song – I will sing the wondrous story

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| <p>1. I will sing the wondrous story
Of the Christ who died for me;
How He left the realms of glory
For the cross of Calvary.
Yes, I'll sing the wondrous story
Of the Christ who died for me,
Sing it with the saints in glory,
Gathered by the crystal sea.</p> | <p>3. He will keep me till the river
Rolls its waters at my feet;
Then at last He'll bring me over
Saved by grace and mystery
Yes, I'll sing the wondrous story
Of the Christ who died for me,
Sing it with the saints in glory,
Gathered by the crystal sea.</p> |
| <p>2. I was lost, but Jesus found me,
Found the sheep that went astray,
Raised me up and gently led me
Back into the narrow way.
Yes, I'll sing the wondrous story
Of the Christ who died for me,
Sing it with the saints in glory,
Gathered by the crystal sea.</p> | |

Pastoral Prayer Points

Psalm 125: "As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the LORD surrounds His people, from this time forth and forevermore" (v. 2). The previous psalm looked back to God's past protection of the church. This psalm looks forward to his future protection; 'from this forth'. We are not guaranteed an easy life. But whatever we go through, we are guaranteed that God will preserve us. Therefore we can lean wholly on Him.

A prayer of repentance: Turn us, O good Lord, and so shall we be turned. Be favourable, O Lord, be favourable to your people, who turn to you in weeping, fasting, and praying. For you are a merciful God, full of compassion, long-suffering, and of great pity. You spare us when we deserve punishment, and in your wrath think upon mercy. Spare your people good Lord, spare them, and don't let your heritage be brought to confusion. Hear us, O Lord, for your mercy is great, and after the multitude of your mercies look upon us; through the merits and mediation of your blessed Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. (BCP)

Pray for our National Cabinet: Continue to pray for humility, wisdom and unity as the leaders in the National Cabinet work together to make decisions that affect all Australians. Pray that God will work in the hearts of each State Premier and lead them to do His will.

Pray for Churches: Pray that churches would stand against the temptation to water down the Gospel in an attempt to make it more palatable for our culture. Pray that we would be stewards of the gospel and take it to a world that desperately needs Jesus the Saviour of sinners. Pray against the temptation to be legalistic too.

Pray for parents: Pray for parents to bring up their children in the way they should go (Prov. 22:6). Pray for wisdom and grace for parents. Pray we as a church would be a stepping stone and not a stumbling block to our children.

Bible Reading – Mark 10:46-52 (NIV)

⁴⁶ Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (which means “son of Timaeus”), was sitting by the roadside begging. ⁴⁷ When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” ⁴⁸ Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” ⁴⁹ Jesus stopped and said, “Call him.” So they called to the blind man, “Cheer up! On your feet! He’s calling you.” ⁵⁰ Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus. ⁵¹ “What do you want me to do for you?” Jesus asked him. The blind man said, “Rabbi, I want to see.” ⁵² “Go,” said Jesus, “your faith has healed you.” Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.

Sermon: What do you want Jesus to do for you? (Stephen T)

I was reading a while back a true story about a man who came to see his minister full of anger. “You and your Church have let me and my family down, really badly”, he seethed. “I don’t understand, tell me how”, replied the minister. “Well, my daughter has just decided to become a missionary”. “Why what’s wrong with that” replied the puzzled minister?

“Because she is leaving a good career behind. She will be leaving her family behind. She will not enjoy all the good things that I wanted for her and it’s all your fault! I didn’t bring her to Church & Sunday School for her to go and do something radical with her life, I brought her so that she might know right from wrong. So that she might learn about love. Not so that she would give everything away and go to the ends of the earth to be a missionary.”

Slide 2

Friends we need to be careful about what we want from Jesus and his Church. Sometimes we fall into the trap of wanting a good middle-class upbringing for our kids. We come to Church so that they can have the right friends & that we might surround ourselves with good, caring, loving people. We don’t want to take Jesus teaching too seriously. We don’t want anything particularly radical. We want from Jesus a good life, a satisfying life, a safe life. Not a sacrificial life.

If that is you, can I say, you have come to the wrong place? Because Jesus wants something different from me and you. And it is this tension that we get in our passage today. A tension between what we want from Jesus and what Jesus wants to give us. Twice in our passage Jesus asks the people before him, “What do you want from me?” And twice we see what Jesus wants to do for us. And they are not necessarily the same thing.

But imagine if they were? Imagine if what we wanted and what Jesus wanted was the same thing? How amazing to have our hearts desires perfectly filled with the one who made our hearts. Well maybe after looking at today’s passage we might have a better idea of how to align those two things. Let’s firstly have a look at

Slide 3

1. What Jesus will do (for you) (verses 32-34)

³² They were on their way up to Jerusalem, with Jesus leading the way, and the disciples were astonished, while those who followed were afraid.” You can tell the gospel of Mark is coming to a climax. Jesus and his disciples are going to Jerusalem and the tension is mounting. Why does Jesus want to go there? For the opposition is marshalling. The forces of evil are mobilising. The danger is growing. The disciples are astonished that Jesus is calmly heading into the storm and the crowds are afraid of what is going to happen next.

Slide 4

“Again he took the Twelve aside and told them what was going to happen to him. ³³ “We are going up to Jerusalem” he said “& the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests & the teachers of the

law. They will condemn him to death & will hand him over to the Gentiles³⁴ who will mock him and spit on him, flog him and kill him. Three days later he will rise."

Jesus can see clearly what is ahead of him. He has come to die. And that death is going to be in just a matter of days. But before then there will be a Jewish trial where the chief priests and the teachers of the law will condemn him to death.

Slide 5

Then they will hand him over to the Romans. Who will mock him, spit on him, flog him and kill him. They will do all the things that Isaiah 53 says will happen to the suffering servant. They unwittingly will help fulfill the prophecies that God had given centuries before. But that is not the end, no siree. Because three days later he will rise back to life. Jesus will be resurrected from the grave.

So what is Jesus willing to do for his disciples? He is willing to suffer for them. He is willing to die for them. He is willing to be resurrected back to life for them. This is the goal and purpose of Jesus mission. That is why he left heaven. For this is why he came to earth in the first place. Not to give people a comfortable life. Not to teach them good morals.

And we need to remember that. Because if Jesus was to ask you and I today; "What do you want me to do for you?", then our answer should be, I want you to suffer and die and rise again for me. I want you to fulfill the OT prophecies. Because that is my only chance of rising to life myself. That is the thing that will give my life meaning and purpose and hope. If that is the most central passion of my Saviour's life, it needs to be the most central passion of my life. But our passages moves on, from what Jesus will do to

Slide 6

2. What James and John want done for them (verses 35-44)

For James and John came up to Jesus and asked Him to do something for them. What were they going to ask him for? World peace? For Jesus to get rid of all suffering and death? For Jesus message to go to the ends of the earth? No, it was none of these things.

Jesus had just been talking to them about the Son of Man, the great figure in Daniel 7. Jesus has identified himself as this Son of Man, the one who was to come to the Ancient of Days while God was still in heaven and God would grant him authority, glory and sovereign power over all people, nations and the men of every language.

And hearing that good news got the brother's juices going. That excited them. Jesus is the promised Son of Man. He is now telling us that he is going to Jerusalem, the seat of power of the great Jewish kings. This must be when he will begin his reign here on earth. This must be the high point of Jesus ministry to his people. Wow. We want God's kingdom to rule over everyone & we want to be a part of what Jesus is going to do. We want to show him our support and that we are behind him 100%. So, Jesus when you go to Jerusalem, when you enter your glory, can we be there with you, one on the right and one on the left!

James and John want the best seats in the house. They want to jump the queue and make sure they are at the very front. They conveniently forget the fact that Jesus is going to suffer. And that he will die. They want to join the train for the last destination, where all who are with Jesus will arrive at the glory station.

Slide 7

Now just as an aside, when Jesus is at his most glorious who got to be at his right and at his left? Well God's glory is shown most beautifully on the cross. That God would find a way to justify the sinner and yet still bring justice for the sin. And at Jesus right and left at that triumphant hour is not James and John but two criminals on crosses. If you want any part in Jesus glory you will need to suffer alongside of the glorious Son of God.

Slide 8

³⁸ "You don't know what you are asking," Jesus said. "Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?" ³⁹ "We can," they answered. Jesus said to them, "You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with, ⁴⁰ but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared."

To be a part of Jesus glory will mean suffering & James will end up being the first Christian martyr. And all the other disciples will in turn die as well. And the last one will be John who will die on the island of Patmos at the hands of the Romans. James and John might want a position of power and authority from Jesus but over time they will learn the Kingdom of God is not about being first but last. Not about being served but being a servant.

Slide 9

Now, ⁴¹ "When the ten heard about this, they became indignant with James & John. ⁴² Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. ⁴³ Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴ and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all."

James and John might want the plum positions. The rest of the disciples might not want to miss out on the perks of the position. But when Jesus asks us what do you want me to do for you, how we answer that question will say a lot about what is driving us. It is power? Is it position? Is it comfort or security? Or is it Jesus?

You see the world of politics may be all about power and control. And the world of business might be built on a structure where the people at the top have all the influence and make all the money. But the Kingdom of God doesn't work on those principles. And the Church shouldn't ever, ever work on these principles.

Slide 10

The Christian author, Kevin Harney, in his book *Seismic Shifts* takes this one step further. He writes, "Picture a church in which everyone wants to be served. Each person believes the church exists to meet their needs, to make them happy, and to cater to their whims and tastes. Imagine a congregation in which everyone has a "take care of me" attitude and is quick to complain whenever things are not just the way they feel they should be. Sadly, some people don't have to use their imagination to picture such a church."

"This kind of church will never have a positive impact on the world. It will grow small, inward, and unhealthy. This kind of church does not honour Jesus and bring glory to God. This is not a church ruled by a servant spirit. "

"Now imagine a church in which every single person has a passion to serve others. Think about what God could do through a group of people who are committed to sacrificial ministry to each other. These people know that the Holy Spirit has given each of them unique abilities (spiritual gifts) that are to be used for building up people and bringing glory to God. So they are purposeful about discovering their gifts and developing and using them. What could God do through such a church?"

"We are either on the stretcher or helping carry it. There are times we need to be served. But most of the time, we are called to serve others. The bottom line is that God wants each of us to help carry people through their times of need. The church was never meant to be a bunch of people watching as a few exhausted workers strain to carry the burdens of a whole congregation... A church filled with people who serve, will change the world."

Slide 11

3. So, what has Jesus come to do? (Verse 45)

⁴⁵ "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Jesus isn't here to be the CEO, the Chief Executive Officer but the CSO, the Chief Serving Officer.

For when you think about it, the great leaders of the Bible, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, David and Timothy all learnt how to obey orders before they were given even a sniff of authority. Friends, before we exercise authority, we must be under authority.

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And that is what Jesus does as well. Philippians 2 says about Jesus, *“Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; ⁷ rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death— even death on a cross!”*

Slide 13

Jesus doesn't make a grab for power but grabs instead the basin and the towel. He is willing to suffer and die because in this way he can give his life as a ransom for many. Now every so often we hear that a person has been kidnapped by some criminal gang & they are offering to return this person back to his family on payment of a ransom, a sum of money given to secure their release. Pay the ransom, freedom is given. Don't pay and death is the result.

Well, the Bible says that our sins mean that we are no longer free as we once were. We have now been taken captive by Satan, the one who wants sin to win. We are now not God's, we are not even free to do our own things, we are captive to the evil one. And yet the God/man Jesus, the only perfect one organizes a wonderful exchange on our behalf. The greatest swap in the history of the world. Jesus will pay the ransom, in order to free you and me. Jesus will pay the price, death, in order to enable us to live.

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That is what Jesus has come to do. To buy us back for God. To free us from our sin. To give us a new start & a new life. And so, if we are asked by Jesus what do you want me to do for you, then we shouldn't be saying to him, give me the best seats in the house. It would be crazy for the first things to come out of our lips to be, please give me a pay rise at work or help my kids be a success in life or even heal me from all my illnesses.

Because Jesus is offering us more, much more than that. And yes, these things might be important, very important to us but they can't be the most important things to us. So, we need to be saying to Jesus, please die for my sins. Please free me from the grip of Satan. Please serve me so that I can be a servant of others. Which leads us fourthly to

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4. What Bartimaeus wants done (verses 46-52)

⁴⁶ *“Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (which means “son of Timaeus”), was sitting by the roadside begging. ⁴⁷ When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” ⁴⁸ Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”*

Jesus is on the way to the cross. Jesus might just have a week or so to live so will he be so fixed on himself that he will fail to help a person in need? Will he care enough to serve someone who really doesn't have a great deal he can offer him in return? Let's have a look.

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⁴⁹ *“Jesus stopped and said, “Call him.” (Yes, Jesus has time for a blind beggar. The Son stood still!) So they called to the blind man, “Cheer up! On your feet! He's calling you.” ⁵⁰ Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus. ⁵¹ “What do you want me to do for you?” Jesus asked him.*

Here is this question again? “What do you want me to do for you?” Last chapter, the Rich Young Ruler asked Jesus “What must I do to receive eternal life?” Here Jesus is asking this blind beggar what do you want me to do for you? James and John, Jesus closest disciples when asked the same question wanted to

sit on thrones at Jesus right and left. What will Bartimaeus want? A few shekels to tide him over until the weekend? Something that is here today and gone tomorrow? No.

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“The blind man said, “Rabbi, I want to see.” I want to see. And boom. He gets to see. Immediately. From dark to light. From blind to being able to see. Without an operation. Without a touch or a word of command. ⁵² “Go,” said Jesus, “your faith has healed you.” Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.”

Now the funny thing about this request is that the blind man can already see Jesus better than anyone else! He sees Jesus the way WE need to see Jesus! He sees Him as the compassionate Son of David. As the anointed king of Israel! As a Messiah who responds to the needs of His people. As a man who can heal and as a man who has mercy. The rich young ruler couldn't see that. The disciples, especially James and John hadn't seen that. Even the crowds who told him to be quiet hadn't seen that. But Bartimaeus sees that. And so, he asks Jesus to give him both natural sight and spiritual sight. So, when Jesus does give him what he wants, his first reaction is to get up and follow him down the road.

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It was Helen Keller who said, “Better to be blind and to see with your heart, than to have two good eyes and see nothing.” Now Bartimaeus can see with both his heart and his eyes. Here then is an acted parable. If you want to see, really see, you need to ask Jesus for mercy. Yes, natural blindness is bad, it would be terrible to be trapped in a life of darkness. But to be spiritually blind is so much worse. To walk through this life blind to the things of God, not understanding of things that carry eternal importance, living only for today, with no thought of eternity, is a far worse blindness. We all need Jesus help to be able to see.

But I find it interesting in that the word heal is also the word for save. It seems Bartimaeus is now both healed and saved. He has been healed from his blindness and saved from his sin. So, let's wrap this up with one last question

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5. What does Jesus want us to do?

I believe he wants us to Be like Bart. For here follow Jesus on the way to Jerusalem is a model disciple. Look back at Bartimaeus with me. This blind beggar

- Calls out for mercy. “Son of David, have mercy on me!” When Jesus walks by, that is his first instinct. I need the mercy of God. I need something from God that I don't deserve. I have nothing to give him but I need what he can give me. That is the first desire of a follower of Jesus. To reach out for mercy. To depend upon the mercy that Jesus offers us.
- And He believes in the Messiah. Before him is not just a man walking on the road to Jerusalem. It is the Son of David. God's promised Messiah. The King of the world. My king. And if we are a Christian, we need to acknowledge Jesus as our king. And we need to listen to our king when he tells us what to do and when to do it.
- And thirdly Bartimaeus comes to Jesus in faith. He believes in Jesus. He trusts in Jesus. And it is this faith that heals him and saves him. We also are to be men and women of faith. Who no matter what situation we find ourselves need to look to Jesus and rely upon him. Not ourselves. Not on our health. Not on money or belongings or knowledge. Faith in him. Faith in Jesus. Enough faith to trust him no matter what.
- He then throws his cloak aside and comes to Jesus. This disciple is willing to leave anything behind. Actually, for Bartimaeus he is willing to leave maybe his most important source of security behind. Because his security is now found in Jesus. So, like Peter leaving his boats behind, like Levi leaving his work as a tax collector behind and unlike the rich young ruler who wasn't willing to leave his wealth behind, the Christian needs to be willing to leave anything behind in order to
- Follow Jesus. Follow Jesus who is heading to the cross. So, the Christian also must be willing to deny themselves, take up their cross and follow Jesus.

What does Jesus want us to do today? Not just rely upon our own resources. Not just look for a comfortable, safe existence. Not just desiring a spiritual high at church or to catch up with good friends afterwards. He wants us to ask him for mercy. To believe that he really is the king who has died for us and paid for us a ransom we never could pay. He wants us to have faith and show that faith in being willing to leave anything behind. So that when we follow him, there is nothing, nothing holding us back.

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There's a story that Abraham Lincoln went to a slave market one time, and was moved with compassion to place a bid on a young black girl. He won the bid and walked away with his "property." There was a sullen, angry expression on the girl's face, because she knew that here was another white man who had bought her and would probably abuse her. As they walked away from the slave block, however, Lincoln told the girl, "You are free." "What does that mean?" she demanded. "It means, you are free."

"Does that mean that I can be what I want to be?" "Yes--you can be whatever you want to be." "Does that mean that I can say what I want to say?" "Yes--you can say whatever you want to say." "Does that mean that I can go where I want to go?" "Yes--you can go wherever you want to go." "Then ..." said the girl, "... I'll go with you." Slide 21 We are to be like that girl and say to Jesus, I'll go with the one who has saved me, healed me, ransomed me, forgiven me. I'll follow Jesus.

Song – The glory of the cross

1. What wisdom once devised the plan
Where all our sin and pride
Was placed upon the perfect Lamb
Who suffered, bled, and died?
The wisdom of a Sovereign God
Whose greatness will be shown
When those who crucified Your Son
Rejoice around Your throne

2. What righteousness was there revealed
That sets the guilty free
That justifies ungodly men
And calls the filthy clean?
A righteousness that proved to all
Your justice has been met
And holy wrath is satisfied
Through one atoning death

CHORUS

And, oh, the glory of the cross
That You would send Your Son for us
I gladly count my life as loss
That I might come to know
The glory of, the glory of the cross

3. What mercy now has been proclaimed
For those who would believe?
A love incomprehensible
Our minds could not conceive
A mercy that forgives my sin
Then makes me like Your Son
And now I'm loved forevermore
Because of what You've done

Benediction (Steve McA)

"Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Mark 10:44-45) So as we go out today, remember what Jesus has done for us – he has given us more than what we need, because we are now loved forevermore by our Lord, because he laid down his life for us. Amen

Morning Tea

Why not give someone (who might have had to miss Church) a call and have a cuppa together?