

Our Relationship To The Cross

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Date: 03 August 2025

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[0 : 00] Well, good morning. It's good to see you this morning. I want you to imagine your life as a corporate boardroom.

Living here in Mason County, I don't imagine too many of us have experience serving on a corporate boardroom. But let's say that we're like in downtown Detroit and I'm one of those high-rise buildings or even New York City.

High-rise building, right? And your life is like the boardroom. And so seated around the table in this corporate boardroom is basically different departments, department heads, if you will, of your life. So you've got your private life sitting in one chair. You've got your work life in another chair. You've got your married life in another chair.

Your family and children life in another chair. Maybe in one chair you might even have like a moral life, how you view morality and ethics and integrity.

[1 : 09] You might have financial you sitting in one chair around the table. Recreational you seated at the table.

And then maybe home and chores you at the table. Well, there may be others as well, but basically it's just all the different variations, all the different parts of you sitting around the table.

And imagine them having discussions over decisions that need to be made in your life. And that can happen all the time, right? You've got decisions to be made.

And I would imagine that there's some conflict there in the boardroom, some agreeing and some disagreeing. And you've got decisions to be had, to be made, like whether to buy that brand new zero-turn lawnmower that you've had your eye on.

And home and chores you was like, well, yeah. And financial you was like, uh-uh-uh. And then work you was like, well, yeah.

[2 : 17] And recreational you was like, well, absolutely. I'll have more time to have more fun. And you go through and each one has their say around the table.

And then there's a vote. And then you decide whether or not you're going to get that new lawnmower. The average person in church kind of has the perspective that when it comes time to make the decision to trust Jesus as Lord and Savior, that what I'm going to do is I'm going to add a chair to my boardroom.

Jesus is going to have a seat around the table of my boardroom. Maybe even at the head of the table, being the chairperson of the boardroom.

But basically still what amounts to when a decision has to be made, everyone's going to go around the table and have discussion. And then there's going to be a vote. And we're going to decide the course of our life and the decisions that have to be made.

And I think maybe you can figure out that that's not the biblical perspective of how this is supposed to be. That basically the biblical perspective that when you follow Jesus, when you trust him with your life and you say, Lord, I give you my life, you're surrendering all of those other parts of you to his lordship.

[3 : 50] And you're saying, okay, Lord, there is a work part of me and there is a family part of me and there's a marriage part of me and there's a home and chores part of me and a financial part of me. But, Lord, it's all surrendered to you.

It is all submissive to you. And I may chip in things that I would think about and what I'm passionate about and what I would like to see happen.

But, Lord, it is surrendered to you. When it comes decision time, all of these other chairs around the boardroom don't make any difference. Lord, it's your call.

It's up to you. Now, before we get to the place in our life where we're willing to do something like that, to actually surrender every aspect of our life over to him, we have to be able to ask a question. And we've already kind of sung about that this morning and looked at that. So we have to recognize who Jesus is. And this is the question that Jesus asks right off the bat in our passage for today.

[4 : 57] We're in Luke chapter 9, beginning in verse 18. And Luke's version of this story is pretty much a summary of it. We get a little bit more meat on the bone, if you will, if we go over to Matthew's gospel and see some of what the conversation looks like in a more full context.

But here in Luke chapter 9, verse 18, it says, Now that it happened that as Jesus was praying alone, the disciples were with him, and he asked them, Who do the crowds say that I am?

Now, Matthew's gospel, again, lets us know that they're north of Capernaum, which is kind of their home base there in Galilee, on the northern shores of the Sea of Galilee.

They've gone north now into what is much more Gentile territory. And that's the only time that Jesus does this in his ministry, his three years of public life and ministry.

He goes into an area around the city of Caesarea Philippi. And there's a big pagan temple that is there. And Jesus, in one moment with his disciples, he's praying, and then he comes and he asks them this question, Not who do you say that I am, but who do the crowds?

[6 : 19] What are you hearing out there? We just had this a little bit with John the Baptist. Who was he? And, you know, is John the Baptist something special, or is he like the second coming of Elijah or whatever?

And so he's asking them this question, Who do the crowds say that I am? And they answered. Now, this is plural, so all of them are answering, kind of chiming in answers to this question.

Some would say John the Baptist. That would come up, that Jesus is just a reincarnated, if you will, John the Baptist, or John the Baptist come back from the dead.

This is what the crowds are saying. We know that that's kind of crazy. They would have said, because they had met John the Baptist. Some of them had. Others would say, well, Elijah. It was a popular mindset that when Messiah would come, Elijah would come back from the dead as a way to kind of introduce the Messiah.

So Elijah was a popular answer. And others, that one of the prophets of old had risen. And Matthew lets us know, in particular, they brought up the name of Jeremiah.

[7 : 33] Because there was a popular idea around that Jeremiah knew where the hidden Ark of the Covenant was. And that when Messiah was about to be introduced, Jeremiah would come back from the dead, bring back the Ark of the Covenant, and have it there for the Messiah so that they could take over the Roman Empire and have the once restored throne of David and all of that.

So these are some of the answers that they had given, that they gave to Jesus. And then here's the question that he asks of them, again, plural.

He said to them, but who do you, plural, say that I am? And so he asks all of his, the 12 that are with him, who do you say that I am?

And then by further application here, the question I think ought to be asked of us as well. Who do you, who do I say that Jesus is?

Who do you say that Jesus is? And the answer to that question, Peter chimes in. Peter's often the first of the bunch to ask or answer these kinds of questions.

[8 : 49] And we see the same thing happening here. Peter answered, the Christ of God. And once again, Matthew gives us a little bit more of what Peter said. Simon Peter answered this from Matthew chapter 16.

You are the Messiah or the Christ, the Son of the living God. Now, Messiah is just the Hebrew form of the word, anointed one. Christ is the same word in Greek, and it also just means anointed one. So Jesus, you're the one. You're the one that the Old Testament, that the Lord had told us to look for, that you are God himself, son of the living God.

And Peter, Peter, he got it right. It's interesting that Peter got this right. But before we step in and give Peter too much credit, Jesus lets us know.

Jesus replied, blessed are you, Simon, son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. Peter, that's correct.

[9 : 59] But understand, the only reason you got that answer correct is because the Lord revealed it to you. You didn't pick this up on your own. You didn't deduce it yourself. You got this because the Lord revealed it to you.

And then the text goes on. He strictly charged and commanded them. You would think it would say to go proclaim this to the world.

That's not what he says. And it's again because his time had not yet come. It's coming. It's soon.

But it's not yet here. It has not yet arrived.

So I don't want you. I want also people to figure this out for themselves. I want people to hear what I am saying and see the things that I am doing and come to this conclusion.

So keep this to yourself. Tell no one saying to them, the son of man. Now, here's where it takes a really dark turn. Because Jesus is now going to say things to them they don't get.

[11:04] But it doesn't fit with their understanding of what the Messiah was supposed to be about. Their understanding of the Messiah is that he was going to be a king who was coming to set the Israelites free.

Who was going to kick Rome out. Who was going to set up the throne of David once again and sit on that throne. And the Messiah would serve as the king of Israel forever and ever.

And they would forever be in charge. Amen. And that's it. That's what the Messiah is coming to do.

And then Jesus says, Well, wait a minute. The son of man.

The son of man is a phrase, an Old Testament phrase referring to the Messiah. Must suffer many things. And in their mind, Messiah suffering, those two words don't go together.

Messiah is not supposed to suffer. Messiah is supposed to take over. What is that? And be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes. Again, that doesn't compute.

[12:10] And be killed. Well, how is the Messiah going to take over if he's going to be killed? And on the third day be raised. And at this point, they've quit listening.

They don't get any of this. It doesn't compute for any of them. It just doesn't make any sense.

Jesus, what are you saying?

Now, we're sitting here 2,000 years later in hindsight. Right? We know what happened. We know that he was crucified and that he rose again on the third day.

So for us, this fits perfectly in our mind frame as far as understanding what happened to Jesus.

That's not where they're at. They don't get this.

So, back in Matthew's gospel, we get this little gem from Peter who goes from incredible insight to complete indiscretion.

[13:12] Peter took him aside, took Jesus aside, and began to rebuke him. What does that look like? He just said, you are the one.

You are God. Come over here. I've got to rebuke you. Never, Lord, he said. This shall never.

It's so far out of their purview of what they think is supposed to happen with Messiah. He's going to take Jesus, who he just declared as God, and say, no, Jesus, you got it wrong.

That's not what's going to happen. And Jesus turned and said to Peter, get behind me, Satan. And if you remember the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness by Satan, it's the same kind of thing.

It's, hey, we can avoid this whole crucifixion thing. We can avoid this whole payment for sin. We can avoid this whole resurrection thing. Just become king now.

[14:18] Come on. That was Satan's temptation. And here he's saying, Peter, you're doing the same thing. You're saying the same kind of thing. Get behind me, Satan. You are a stumbling block to me.

You do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns. Peter, you're setting a trap. That's what stumbling block is referring to.

Peter, you're setting a trap for me. I can't handle that. I don't want that. I don't want a trap. I know the reason why I came. And it has nothing to do with what you're talking about, Peter.

Peter, you're talking basically just in human terms, not in divine terms here.

You don't get it. You don't get it, Peter. Peter. And so this is the message of Peter, what we learn about Peter.

[15:16] And I think it helps us to understand ourselves too. Peter demonstrates here that it's possible to know who God is. In the same way I would suggest that we can know who God is.

Because I think people in the room here today, we would be saying, hey, who is Jesus to you? Oh, we would all say, well, Jesus is the Messiah.

He is the Son of the living God. He is God in the flesh. But do we still struggle with what God does? Peter certainly did.

And I think at times we do as well. Now what's interesting here is that this whole discussion is representing for the 12 now something that they weren't expecting. We talked about that. They were expecting a crown. Jesus would wear a crown. They would get to sit on his left side or his right side. They would be big shots in the kingdom. That's what they were expecting.

[16:23] And Jesus says, no, no, no, no, no. Instead of a crown, expect a cross. Expect a cross. And so this is important for us to understand in this next verse.

I'm going to show you verse 23 in just a moment. But there's a lot of misunderstanding over how to read and understand this passage, these next few verses of Scripture.

And so I want to say ahead of time how we ought to view this next passage. So the lesson of what Jesus is about to teach them here is not about how to become a believer or even how to prove that you're a believer.

That's not what this is about. It's going to seem that way. But it's not. And it's about how to, what it is about is it's about how to live like a believer.

However. And here is verse 23. And he said to all of them, if any would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

[17:42] It's about how to live. It's about how to live the way Jesus would have us to live, how we ought to live. And he says that if you're going to follow after me, if you're going to come after me, let him deny himself.

There's three charges here. Deny himself, take up his cross daily and follow me. So there's these three imperatives, these three instructions.

But let's make sure we understand how not to understand what Jesus is saying here. Jesus is not saying here that if you are somehow ashamed of me, that I will reject you and you're not a Christian.

Jesus is not saying here that if you don't pick up your cross daily, you will somehow either not earn your salvation or you will lose your salvation.

That's not what he's saying here. Jesus is not promoting here a works oriented type of salvation, which is if you believe this is what's required in order to be a Christian.

[18:54] That's kind of the road that you're headed down. A works oriented salvation that it's based on you and it's based on your performance.

Either before you become a Christian or after you become a Christian. You're not saved by your works and you don't keep being saved by your works.

The gospel is something that we trust in. This good news of Jesus' death, burial and resurrection.

That is what we trust in. That is what our hope, our faith is in.

Not in anything that I can do or you can do to earn it or keep it. So we have to be, we have to understand it from that mindset.

He's not saying, listen, if one day you forget to pick up your cross or you choose not to pick up your cross and follow me on that day, you're out. That's not what he's saying.

[19:58] He's saying that if you're not willing to die for me, then all of a sudden you're just done. That's not what he's saying here.

But as we read these verses, as we continue on, these next few verses become kind of an explainer for verse 23. So he says in verse 24, you can see by the word for each of these next three verses begin with the word for, which is you could supply the word because or this is why.

Okay. For whoever would save his life will lose it. But whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.

The temptation that we have as believers, when we read passages like this, is we automatically want to take the word like save and equate it to salvation.

And that's not what Jesus is saying here. Save does not automatically, is not talking about eternal salvation when we trust Christ as Savior. It's talking about saving your life here in this life.

Can a Christian give away his life? Can a Christian be selfish with the way that he lives? Absolutely.

[21:17] We're going to see that in just a moment. So what does it mean that that person would lose his life, would lose his salvation? Is that what it's saying? No, that's not what it's saying.

It means that you're going to lose out all that God has for you as you live this Christian life. This is what he's talking about. For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?

Again, this can be misunderstood as losing their salvation or forfeiting salvation. Our person can't be saved because he's so into the world.

But he's talking to the 12. These are, except for Judas, these are believers here. And they're like, what does this mean for me today as a believer?

Verse 26, for whoever is ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes into his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.

[22 : 23] And we just all of a sudden think, well, if as a believer, I'm going to become ashamed of him in some circumstance, that means that when I die, the Lord's just going to deny me and say, you're done.

You're toast. You're toast. And that's not what the text says. And so we have to be careful. So what is this text saying?

Well, there's several things about this. One, again, keep in mind the context here is their understanding of what they thought Messiah was, that he was going to be crowned king and kick out Israel or kick out the Romans from Israel and David's throne on earth forever and ever.

That's what they thought. And he's just kind of blown them away with this message of the cross. And they would have understood what a cross was about.

Jesus certainly understood what a cross, when he was saying this, he understood this. Jesus grew up in Nazareth. And when Jesus was about 11 years old, there is an incident, more than an incident, that happened four miles away from Nazareth.

[23 : 46] In a town, and I wrote this town down, Sepphoris. Judas the Galilean led a revolt against the Romans. And Sepphoris was a storage facility for the Roman army.

And he led a revolt to attack that facility and those soldiers. And Rome came in down hard against this place called Sepphoris.

And the Romans completely destroyed the city, the town that was built around that and the service industry that was built around this Roman storage facility.

All of the residents of that area, they put into slavery. The 2,000 rebels that were part of Judas and Judas the Galilean.

I've got to see if I'm saying that right. Yeah, Judas the Galilean. And 2,000 of his rebels, they took and crucified all 2,000 of them and lined the area outside of Sepphoris with these crosses.

[24 : 56] Jesus was very familiar with what it meant to carry a cross. They all would have been very familiar as Romans crucified anyone who led any kind of rebellion against their armies, against their rule in that town.

So what is it that Jesus is saying? Well, he's not saying that you get saved by doing these things. That's not what he's saying to them.

But he is telling them something to do. And as he gives us these instructions, there are some things that we need to understand that Jesus knew about us.

He knew about the 12. He knew about us as well, about you and I. These are things that Jesus knows of us. First of all, that everyone wants a Savior, but very few can handle the Lord.

That's the invitation, right? That he is not just Savior, but he is also Lord.

[26 : 08] And he understands that about us. The idea of a Savior, we come to church on Sunday, we sing about a Savior, we want a Savior, we say we want Lord, but then we forget what that means, and we go out here Monday through Saturday and live however we want to live.

Maybe we give him a seat at the boardroom, but is he really the Lord of all? All of my life. He also knew that we would focus more on this world than on eternity.

Isn't that true? Isn't that what we do? We've got so many cares of this world that we don't take into consideration eternal values, things that matter for eternity, relationships.

That we'd focus more on ourselves than we would on others. He knew that about us. That's what comes naturally to us.

To focus on ourselves rather than others. And he knew that we would prefer to be blessed more so than to be used.

[27 : 37] Why are we like this? It's our sinful nature. And the only way to overcome that is a full surrender to him. Now, what I want to do is I want to drill down, first of all, on verse 23, the question, what does it mean to take up our cross?

What is that all about? Jesus said, if anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

What does that mean then to take up our cross? And there's three things about taking up our cross that he uses in this verse to explain what it means.

The first he says, let him deny himself. The person who's going to take up a cross is going to deny himself. So, again, on your notes here, it's simply a picture.

This is simply a picture then of self-denial. Denying yourself. Now, let's not confuse self-denial with depriving yourself of something.

[28 : 53] It's about depriving yourself of something good. Down through history, there have been people who have said, well, if I'm going to take up my cross daily and follow him, that means that I'm going to get out of the world and I'm going to deny, I'm going to deprive myself of creaturely comforts and I'm going to become some sort of ascetic and be this person who just lives by myself and in silence, right?

Sometimes you see monks or orders of priesthoods that are given over to this kind of thing. And, again, we must be careful here because that's not what Jesus is asking us or telling us to do. He's not saying to divorce yourself from the public, from the world. That's not the invitation. It is not depriving yourself of something good.

One of the things that we have happen, it happens every winter, this religious idea of something called Lent. I don't know if you're familiar with that term.

It's a term that if you've been around here very long, you probably are like, well, they don't really talk about Lent, do they? And we don't because Lent is not in here.

[30 : 24] That's kind of an important deal for us. And it's this idea that, well, for Lent, I'm going to give up something. I'm going to give up ice cream.

Or chocolate. Or, I don't know, red meat. Or, I'm going to give up, I don't know, fill in the blank. I mean, this is something that I grew up with.

So I'm very familiar with this idea of giving up something for a certain period of time. And as a result of doing that, if I was successful at giving up something for that period of time, I felt good about myself.

I felt religious. Some of you maybe can relate to this idea. Right? Let me say that's not at all what Jesus has in mind here.

Nor is that idea of giving up of something going to put me in any better stead in my relationship with God than not doing that.

[31 : 33] That's not the thing. Well, what is self-denial then? Self-denial is just quit thinking of myself, period.

It's me saying, okay, it's not about me. And it's about other people. It's about putting other people ahead of myself.

You put yourself last, other people first. You set aside your own self-centered desires, your own self-centered way or view of life.

You set that aside for the sake of others. It's not taking yourself out of this world.

Jesus never told us to do that. He wants us to enter into the world with humility and service and love.

[32 : 38] That's going to have an impact on the world. Not divorcing myself from it and depriving myself of human interaction. So it's not about those things.

Secondly, he says, take up his cross daily. And daily is the modifier word here that gives us a clue as to how this works. So on your notes, it's a daily priority, not a one-time decision.

You may have memories in your life of going to a camp or going to some special service and making a decision that, yes, I'm willing to take up my cross and follow him.

Got to do that the next day too. And the next day and the next day and the next day. That's taking up a cross and what that means.

Now, understand when it comes to taking up a cross, that means different things for different people. We all have a different cross to bear. We all have different things that we will face in this life.

[33 : 49] We all have a different calling to follow. And so what might be for me a cross to bear may not be for you a similar cross to bear.

And that has to do with all kinds of things in terms of relationships or people in your life who get sick or pass away or the kind of job or the kind of financial difficulty you have or all these different things that can impact what God is calling us to live through and to shine a light and to be salt through

whatever it is that God is calling us to live through and to be like in those circumstances. So we can't compare. We can't compare crosses. We can't. We can't do that. But what it does mean is dying daily to your own plans dying daily to your own dreams to your own agenda. It's again in that boardroom it's setting all of that stuff aside and saying Jesus you're in charge. And the question that sometimes we have is well if I just surrender all of myself to Jesus he's just going to give me the worst of everything. Do we really think that? We might not voice that out you know with words but that's kind of the fear is well if I Jesus if I surrender all of my life to Jesus he's going to call me to be a missionary in Africa somewhere and I'll have to eat bugs and creepy animals and all of this kind of stuff and it's that's such a lie.

[35 : 39] Now yes you may be called to be a missionary to Africa and you may eat bugs and creepy things but he will give you the desire to do those things.

He will give you the passion to say those people Lord has called me to these people so yes I will go yes I will do what it is that he wants me to do but he operates within who we are and he knows you better than you know yourself so he knows what you need and then thirdly the idea of following me the following Jesus sometimes we forget or we don't understand what this means but again on your notes it involves a surrender of your identity right in our world today our identity is such a crucial subject it's such a crucial matter what is my identity and a lot of times in our world it gets tied up with another word that gets stuck in front of identity or what is my sexual identity and we base it on if I'm gay or straight or trans or what what a sad place to be because that's not my identity my identity is Christ that's the place to be and because my identity is in Christ guess what I want to how I want to live my life

I want to live my life in the way that honors him in a way that he prescribes in a way that he commands I don't find that command troublesome or burdensome I want to live my life in a particular way in a holy way a set apart way a way that distinguishes me from the rest of the world that's how I want to live my life because I find my identity in Christ that changes everything it changes how I view the world how I view relationships how I view my workplace how I view everything even that zero-turn lawnmower right it impacts my view of everything everything and so basically it's accepting easy for me to say it's accepting our assignment in his kingdom what is it that he's called you to do what is it that he's called me to do to be now again these next three verses are the modifier for verse 23 and they all begin with the word for or because or why and so what we want to do is answer this question why would we choose to live this way why why would we do that and so verse 24 starts to answer some of these questions for us for whoever save his life will lose it but whoever loses his life for my sake will will save it and so what living this way does the idea of carrying my cross daily and following him in myself carrying the cross that he's given me daily number one it keeps me from becoming absorbed in my own life it'll keep me from becoming absorbed in my own life

I don't care about me rich right that's all that matters so in conversation with people I may ask you questions and you know but am I really listening do I really care about your life or am I still thinking about what's on my agenda for the day what's in my plans for the day right am I really paying attention to what's going on in your world am I am I willing to contribute to what's happening in your world in your concerns or am I still just it's all about me we have to do this we have to deal with this is it possible again for Christians to be self-absorbed to be selfish yes it absolutely is otherwise we wouldn't have warnings like this James 3 16 for jealousy and selfish ambition exists there will be disorder in every evil practice in other words you want to mess up your life focus on yourself that's what

James is saying you want to royally mess up your life yeah just stay focused on yourself see how that goes can Christians do that well yeah I mean Paul says in Philippians 2 and he's writing to believers again do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit so if he's warning us not to do things from selfish ambition or conceit is it a possibility for us as Christians to live selfishly and be conceited yeah focus on self absolutely unfortunately it'd be nice if he just kind of cleaned all that up when we got saved but we're dealing with this old self still that he wants to reign over again second part of this for what does it profit a man why would you want to live like this well for what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself well what can end up happening if I don't live in the way that he prescribes is I can get swallowed up by the stuff of this world right so it keeps me from getting swallowed up by the stuff of this world

[42 : 17] I mean let's face it the stuff of this world can right I mean am I the only one who is attracted to the stuff of this world I mean you could even put that zero turn mower into the category of stuff of this world or you might say it's something that I could use and there's no right or wrong answer there except for for you for you buying that zero turn lawnmower could be a godly thing to do a good thing to do a wise decision to make but for others it might be a selfish thing to do an unwise thing to do and so you have to determine in your relationship with the Lord and the rest of the people in your circle of influence is this good or is this not but I don't want my life to be consumed by the stuff of this world so living that way allows me to not have this happen by taking up my cross daily and following him last one here for whoever is ashamed of me and my words and of my words of him will the son of man be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory of the father and of the holy angels boy this is a tough verse isn't it do I want

Jesus to be ashamed of me when I go before the Lord that's a tough one now is he going to reject me if I am ashamed of him is that what that's saying or is he going to be just ashamed of me what what is what does that mean what is he talking about here let's talk about this a little further is it is it possible there's some we kind of get the idea and sometimes preachers are guilty of doing this that if you're ashamed of Jesus that means you're not a Christian and when you stand before the Lord he's going to reject you that's that's kind of the the message and my question to that kind of teaching is well isn't that promoting works oriented salvation is that what that's conveying is it possible for someone to be a Christian and still struggle with in circumstances being ashamed of Jesus and the answer to that question I think is found here in 2nd Timothy chapter 1 Paul is talking to young Timothy now and not Timothy is a pastor at this point he's a pastor of the church in Ephesus and he is like a young protege of Paul he's a student of Paul's Paul is the one who perhaps led him to the Lord and and has trained him for ministry he's traveled with Paul in ministry and he says to Timothy here therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord what's interesting is the tense of this Greek phrase here is kind of like when Jesus meets Mary outside of the tomb Mary Magdalene outside of the tomb and

Mary Magdalene is wanting to hug on him right which is understandable right Jesus comes back from the dead her savior her Lord is alive and Jesus says to her don't hold me or don't hug me but again the tense is she's already doing it so it's perhaps even better understood is stop holding on to me stop hugging me same construction here so it's not just don't do it in the future but stop doing it now in other words Timothy stop being ashamed Timothy struggled with this Timothy was perhaps considered shy or bashful or perhaps timid afraid of how people might have viewed him how people looked at him and so

Paul is saying listen all this conversation about Jesus that he was just a carpenter just a carpenter son he was a good teacher but go against Rome it's what happens right he was a rabbi!

[47 : 26] but was he more than that? ah Timothy don't pay any attention to that stop being ashamed of this testimony that you know is true about Jesus that he is the Messiah that he did go to the cross to pay the debt for our sin that he did rise again from the dead and be bold in proclaiming that truth Timothy don't be ashamed anymore stop it stop being ashamed is it possible for us to struggle at times with being ashamed of our relationship with the Lord we get in a certain context maybe in the workplace or maybe with family there's all kinds of different circumstances where we can find ourselves timid or backward or afraid or ashamed just don't do that anymore there's no need to you know what is the truth so start living that way so what is this about well it's about this it's about not forgetting what what's coming next what is coming next when this life is through what's next forever right

I mean it's eternity it's each one of us standing before the Lord as a believer we're not standing before the Lord to figure out whether we're saved or lost that the Bible doesn't have that picture for us it's standing before the Lord to be judged for good works for the things that we've done did we serve him well did we serve him serve him with proper motive did we take advantage of opportunities that were placed in front of us if not the reward that we would have won will be burned up but when we've done it well and we've served him well and we had right motives in doing it then that reward will last through the fire and will be rewarded in eternity for what we have done for him we need to keep in mind what is coming next eternity heaven is coming next what's there to be ashamed about this life how many

I've done this how long does this life last right it ain't that long you know if you're doing really really well you might get 100 or 120 years if you make it to 120 I'll shake your hand in heaven because I

won't be here it doesn't last that long and then how long does eternity last yeah it is it is forever and then there's one more verse that I have to admit it it almost seems out of place what's it doing here and so I'm going to tag it on to the end of what we're doing here as a way to introduce what we're talking about next week because that's kind of what it does so in the context of this conversation that he's having with them about taking up your cross daily and following him deny yourself right all of all of these things in that same conversation he says toward the end of that conversation there but

I tell you truly there are some standing here so he's he's talking to the twelve there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God what what does that mean and sometimes it's fun looking at commentaries because sometimes you can see a commentary where they just don't get it or they have a different view of end times so it it kind of skews their understanding of of a passage like this but if you remember one of the prime rules of bible study and interpretation is to always make sure you're reading the verse in what's the word context next okay so in in trying to figure out what's going on with this verse you got to read the next the next few because it will clear this right up so today we're leaving it with you muddy not even going to try to tell you what this verse means but we will next week tell you what this verse!

and bonus points for you if you read ahead in the next week and are able to put two and two together and see how the next story about the transfiguration!

[53 : 27] There's a clue transfiguration of Christ answers this question so interesting stuff let's pray Lord thank you so much thank you for your word we are so dependent upon it we need it we need you Lord I pray that you would give us eyes and ears to understand to know how to apply to put it into practice these words of life and truth Lord you have given us all that we need and we thank you for that I pray that we would be a people who would be willing to do what you have commanded here to take up our cross daily to deny ourselves take up our cross daily and follow you and

Lord how much our lives will benefit how close in our relationship will we become to you as we surrender ourselves to you with our very lives to put you not just at the head of the table but in charge of the whole thing you are our Lord our Savior yes but also our Lord help us to recognize that help us not to resist Lord we have the benefit of hindsight the disciples that you spoke to that day were so clueless

I pray that Lord that we would not be we don't have to be clueless we can understand what you're saying what you're telling us we need to do so I pray that we would apply it and use it for your glory for our benefit and Lord we ask these things in Jesus name Amen Amen Amen