

# Losing Your Soul

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[ 0 : 00 ] It seems like we sang a bunch of songs about being sinners. That's good. Our hope isn't in ourselves, but in the grace that the Lord provides.

I'm grateful that we sang Jesus, Lover of My Soul. We rarely sing that. That was sang at Delinda and my wedding by a friend of Delinda's.

A little different version, but it struck me back then. I had never heard that song before. It struck me back then. A soulish, Lover of My Soul.

We're going to talk about soul today. Take out your Bibles with me, please, and turn to Luke 9. We're looking at verses 18 to 27 today.

Jesus, remember Luke 9, Jesus, at the beginning of Luke 9, Jesus sent out His 12 apostles to preach and to heal, and they did.

[ 1 : 07 ] And then when they returned, there was a crowd that had found them and discovered them, searched them out, and came all the way around the lake to find Him.

And they were trying to be on retreat at the time. He was trying to be alone with His disciples, and the crowd shows up, and Jesus welcomed them. And then He spoke to them and healed them and ministered to them all day long.

And it grew to the end of the day, and the disciples said, Hey, nobody's eaten. We need to send these people away so they want to go eat. And Jesus, as only Jesus can say, said, You feed them.

And they said, We've got five loaves and two fish. That'll do. So we follow the feeding of the 5,000 with now what happens in verse 18 through 27.

So if you're able, please stand. As I read the Scripture that is recorded in the Gospel of Luke 9, beginning at verse 18.

[ 2 : 22 ] Now it happened that as He was praying alone, the disciples were with Him. And He asked them, Who do the crowds say that I am?

And they answered, John the Baptist, but others say Elijah, and others that one of the prophets of old has risen. Then He said to them, But who do you say that I am?

And Peter answered, Christ, the Messiah of God, the Mishach of Elohim.

And He strictly charged and commanded them to tell this to no one, saying, The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.

And He said to all, If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.

[ 3 : 42 ] For whoever would save his soul will lose it, but whoever loses his soul for My sake will save it.

For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself? For whoever is ashamed of Me and 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.

But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Kingdom of God.

So it reads, let us pray. Father, show us, help us to hear these words. Lord, these are words that surprise the disciples, no doubt.

They have never heard these kind of words before. They had never conceived this kind of idea of a Messiah suffering and dying.

[ 4 : 57 ] And of followers of Messiah as suffering and dying. So grant us ears to hear these words. They're not words that make us feel good.

But help us to hear them with ears of faith. Help us to hear them with ears that You give us. This we pray in Christ's name. Amen. Please be seated. So who is Jesus?

This question has been asked over and over and over in the Gospel of Luke. It's been asked by Pharisees. Who is this? Who forgives sins?

It's been asked of the crowds. Who is this? That raises the dead. It's been asked by His disciples. Who is this? Who commands the wind and the waves and they obey Him.

Who is this? It's been asked of Herod. And now it's asked by Jesus to His disciples. It is an important question.

[ 6 : 11 ] It is the most important question to answer for ourselves. Who is Jesus? There are lots of opinions. There were opinions in that day when Jesus said, what do the crowds say?

And the crowds say, well, there's different opinions. There's different views. Some say you're John the Baptist. Come back from the dead. Others say you're the Elijah that was to come. Others say you're one of the prophets of old that has risen.

In fact, one of the other Gospels mentioned Jeremiah. You don't want Jeremiah coming back. Luke is striving through raising these questions in the lips of others to give us certainty.

Remember, he writes this Gospel that we might have certainty of the truth and the things that we have been taught about the Gospel and about Jesus. He wants to give us certainty that this Jesus is the promised one, the expected one, the Messiah, the King, the Deliverer, the Conqueror, the Answer.

So the question becomes, and now the disciples, with this new message that they're getting in these verses, let's wonder, what has He come to deliver us from?

[ 7 : 40 ] The Jewish expectation of the day was that He was going to deliver us from our earthly problems. He was going to be another David. He was going to conquer Rome and set up His kingdom and sit on His throne and rule like the Scriptures say Messiah will do.

He will be like David. He will be like Moses. And now He says that this Messiah will die.

They didn't have a box for that. They didn't have a place to put that in their concepts. That is a thought that had never been entered into their minds.

for all that they had taught, what they had read, what they understood about the Messiah to come. So what did He come to deliver us from?

From our troubles? From our trials? From our problems and suffering? Yes. But not in the way you think. In fact, what Jesus' words spell out before us today is what life is all about.

[ 9 : 06 ] It is about life through death. It is a concept that no other religion holds.

It is a concept that only God and the gospel would preach. It is a foolish message. It is an unearthly, unappealing message.

Die. You will live. So, here in Luke 9, Jesus gives two revelations, one about Himself, one about His followers.

What I want you to see, too, here, is we come to a turning point. There is a shift in focus. Luke has been talking about for eight and a half chapters, he has been raising the question, who is Jesus?

He has been dealing with that identity. Different people's opinion. People think He is a prophet. People think He is Elijah, etc. So, that is where the focus has been on His identity.

[ 10 : 11 ] Now, once Peter says the words, you are the Messiah, everything changes. A major shift.

For the next ten chapters in Luke, it will be focused on Jesus going now toward the cross. He now will begin to train them of what it means to really follow Him and begin to prepare them for His suffering and dying.

Again, as that concept of which they had no idea. So, it's going to take a lot of work to get them in the mindset. And they're not going to understand it until He's risen from the grave.

They will not understand it until then. But He's going to teach them. So, here we come in chapter 9 as Peter confesses this.

See, the crowds have one idea of Jesus. Peter and the twelve who have followed Him closely and have experienced His power have a different picture of who He is. No, He's not just a prophet.

[ 11 : 14 ] He's up here. He's the, the Messiah, the King, the Promised One. So, they know who He is, but, they do not understand why He came.

They have a whole different expectation. And in fact, a little bit later in chapter 9, go down to verse 44, Jesus will remind them this same thing again.

In 9:44, He says, Let these words sink into your ears. The Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men. Again, another reminder. A second reminder or prophecy that He's going to suffer.

Verse 45, Luke tells us, But they did not understand this saying. And it was concealed from them so that they might not perceive it.

And they were afraid to ask Him about the saying. So, here you go. Here's the disciples. Jesus is revealing something to them that's a brand new idea. They don't get it.

[ 12 : 18 ] And Luke adds, Oh, by the way, it was concealed from them so that they wouldn't perceive it and they're afraid to ask about it. So, it's all kind of, it's hard to imagine what the disciples were thinking.

It wouldn't be revealed to them until after His resurrection. Remember, after He ascends, remember the upper room, He calls them together and He says, You know, you're so slow to believe all that the Scriptures said.

And then He begins to open, it says He opened their minds, because their minds were closed before, to understand. And then He walks through from Genesis 3 all the way through and tells them all the Scriptures that applied to Him and His suffering.

But they're not there yet. Okay? We need to hear the story as Luke unfolds it for us. So here's a new revelation.

It's about sacrifice of soul. I'm calling it sacrifice of soul, losing your soul. And the sacrifice of your soul is what saves your soul.

[ 13 : 27 ] So, Jesus makes two staggering revelations.

One about Himself and one about His followers. Verse 22, His revelation about Himself. He calls Himself the Son of Man.

He will suffer. He will be rejected. He will be killed. And He will arise again. A revelation about His disciples, His followers. Verse 23, If you come after Me, you will deny yourself, take up your cross daily, and follow Me.

And you will lose your soul. Verse 25. Or 24. It's just... Okay. Two revelations. It was hard for them to digest it.

In fact, they didn't fully digest it. It's going to be hard for us to digest it. Even if we've heard these words before, to really take them at face value. This is what Jesus is calling.

[ 14 : 34 ] And I found it fascinating. I hadn't planned that when I picked the songs that we were singing today for our theme. But I saw within those hymns this reference to our sinfulness.

You know, I would... In Jesus' lover of my soul, we sang, I am all unrighteousness.

False and full of sin I am. So yeah, what chance do I have, right? He's full of grace. And Christ is mine forevermore.

We sang, Mine are days that God has numbered. I was made to walk with Him. And yet, I look for worldly treasures and forsake the King of kings. Woo!

We're singing this. But we're singing it because the next phrase says, But mine is hope in my Redeemer. Though I fall, His love is sure.

[ 15 : 39 ] That's what we're singing. For Christ has paid for every failing. I am His forevermore. And that's what this revelation is going to be getting at.

So, first revelation, Jesus is the suffering Messiah who comes to lay down His life. That's basically what He's saying. Verse 22, He is the suffering Messiah who comes to lay down His life.

So, notice first, verse 20, what's Peter's confession? And Jesus is asked, Who do you say? Gives the context where the crowds say, But who do you say that I am? What have you come to know?

What have you come to recognize about me? The crowds have their opinions because they see me from afar. They're not following me closely. They see the miracles. They hear some of the words.

They're fascinated with all this. So they're saying, Oh, prophet, but you've seen me. You've been with me. You've prayed with me. Who do you say?

[ 16 : 42 ] Peter. Messiah. Messiah. What's Messiah mean? It means anointed one.

One who has been anointed by God for a special purpose. Anointed. To be set apart. So, in the Old Testament, all the furniture in the tabernacle was anointed.

Holy. The priests were anointed because they had a holy task to go before God. They're anointed. They're purified. They're a picture of being set apart, being holy.

So the Messiah is the anointed one. The holy one. Remember, the demons called him the holy one of God. We know who you are.

You're the holy one. So, if Jesus is the anointed one, when was he anointed? David got anointed. The priests were anointed.

[ 17 : 46 ] David was anointed by prophet Samuel. Remember, he came in, you know, went through the all eight brothers, right? None of these guys. What you got left? Oh, he's out in the field. He's just a little guy. A little ruddy guy.

He's just, you know, bring him in. There he is. That's the man. The little guy. And he poured the oil on him and he anointed him as the Messiah.

The king of Israel. He was anointed before he went to his throne, by the way. Right? Long before. So, when was Jesus anointed?

What prophet came and anointed him? Holy Spirit anointed him. Yeah? When? When is baptism? He got baptized by John.

Remember, he came out of the water. He's praying. And then, the Holy Spirit comes down as a dove. Lands upon him. And remember, his first sermon when he preached at Nazareth.

[ 18 : 47 ] In Luke 4.18, he takes out, remember the scroll of Isaiah? He finds Isaiah, what we call Isaiah 61. He found the place where it said, the Spirit of the Lord is upon me.

For he has anointed me. He has anointed me to proclaim the gospel to the poor, to set the captives free, etc.

And then, Jesus read that and he set the scroll down, remember, and then he said, today it's fulfilled. I'm the anointed one.

Which is why they tried to throw him off the cliff. Remember? You ain't the anointed one. We know you. This hometown. We remember you growing up. You ain't the anointed one. Okay, so he is the anointed one.

He's anointed at the baptism. So, now Peter recognizes it. So, so Peter says, you're the Christ of God. What does Jesus say? Verse 22.

[ 19 : 58 ] So, 21, he charges them and commands them not to tell anyone. That sounds weird. But if we think about it, why would he not want them to tell anybody? Well, one, they don't understand it.

And two, they have a different expectation of what that Messiah is going to be. So, Jesus doesn't want it out. He doesn't want it out until he's raised from the dead. After he's raised, then he says, now go proclaim it.

Because now you get it. What kind of Messiah I am, not the kind you expected. So, Jesus identifies himself, verse 22, he says, the son of man.

Well, who's the son of man? He's used this phrase over and over. The son of man. Remember when he, when the paralyzed man, remember the paralyzed man that the four men brought, they brought him through the roof.

Remember that? And Jesus saw their faith and he said to the paralyzed man, what? Remember this? Your sins are forgiven. And that raised an uproar.

[ 21 : 00 ] Who has, who has authority to forgive sins? And Jesus said, to prove to you that the son of man has authority to forgive sins on earth.

He healed the paralyzed man. The son of man. He calls himself the son of man. When he did the Sabbath dealings, he said the son of man is Lord of the Sabbath.

Son of man. So now again, he uses this phrase, son of man. Why didn't he just say Messiah? Why does he say son of man? Oh, because that's one of the descriptions of the Messiah.

It comes from Daniel chapter 7. In Daniel chapter 7, Daniel is describing the last days. He's describing his vision. He sees the ancient of days. We sing a song called the ancient of days.

I think that's where it comes from. The ancient of days. And he talks about this, this vision of heaven with the ancient of days on his throne. And then there comes one who is a son of man who comes up to the ancient of days.

[ 22 : 02 ] And the ancient of days gives to him a kingdom so that all people will serve him. And it's a kingdom that is everlasting. Gee, I wonder who that son of man could be.

Who came up and was given a kingdom. He's describing the ascension of Jesus. When he went up and he took his throne, right?

He sat, as the New Testament says, he sat at the right hand of the Father. Psalm 2, Psalm 110. He's the... So that's the phrase Jesus uses, but it's only there in Daniel.

So it's a little bit veiled. So most folks wouldn't get it. So then the revelation, the staggering revelation in verse 22.

What about the son of man? Well, he's going to clarify what kind of Messiah he is. He's a Messiah that must do something.

[ 23 : 01 ] See that word must in verse 22? He must. It is absolutely necessary. It's a divine must. It must happen. This is what the Messiah must do.

Four things. He must suffer many things. He must be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes. that's the Sanhedrin. And be killed.

And then, fourthly, on the third day, be raised. All these things must happen. He must suffer. Instead of conquering Rome, he must suffer.

He must be rejected. Instead of be victorious, he must be rejected. Daniel 9 talks about the anointed one will be cut off. He must be killed.

Which is how he delivers sinners. We'll find out later. But here he just mentions this Messiah will be killed. And of course, Isaiah 53 pictures that he dies in the place of sinners.

[ 24 : 08 ] He's pierced for our transgressions. But Jesus doesn't explain that at this point. He just says, this is what the Messiah must do.

Must suffer. Must be rejected. Must die. Or not just die. Be killed. Be murdered. And three days later, be risen.

Genesis 3. He will crush the head of the serpent. And that's the first prophecy going way back. So, Jesus mentions these things.

And as I said, this had to be hard for the disciples to hear. It had to be staggering. It had to just leave them confused and dazed. They didn't get it.

It's hidden from them. He's telling them these things. It's recorded now for us later. We come in because we got all this other knowledge. We read this and think, oh yeah, yeah, yeah.

[ 25 : 12 ] I've heard that a hundred times. But remember, the disciples are hearing it for the first time. What in the world does this mean? Right? So by Acts, after the resurrection, by Acts, the disciples are proclaiming this.

They get it at that point. So let me give you one example in Acts chapter 3 when Peter is preaching. Peter said, Peter said, but what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets that his Christ would suffer, he thus fulfills.

So see, Peter's already got it. And he already knows that all the prophets have foretold that the Messiah would suffer. So he says, this has been fulfilled.

Therefore, repent and turn back that your sins may be blotted out. So in other words, the suffering of the Messiah relates to your sins.

Peter is connecting. Repent, therefore, turn back that your sins may be blotted out that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus, whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago.

[ 26 : 34 ] Example one, Moses said, this comes from Deuteronomy 18. Peter's quoting Moses. Moses said, the Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers.

You shall listen to him in whatever he tells you. And it shall be that for every soul that does not listen to that prophet shall be destroyed from the people.

End quote. End quote. Peter's saying, the prophet that Moses foretold of was Jesus. And you might dismiss Moses, but you better not dismiss this prophet.

Because if you dismiss this prophet, it will destroy you. He goes on. All the prophets have spoken from Samuel and those who came after him also proclaim these days.

So Peter's convinced all the prophets have foretold about him as suffering Messiah. You are sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham.

[ 27 : 41 ] Now, here's another example. He's going to quote from Genesis 12. Going way back. Here's the original promise to Abraham. Remember what God said to Abraham? And in your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

Remember what God said to Abraham? I'll make you a great nation. I'll make you a great name. I'm going to give you the land. And in your offspring, one offspring and one seed from you, I will bless all the families of the earth.

That sounds good. How's he going to do that? Watch how Peter explains it. He says, In your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed. God, having raised up his servants, speaking of Jesus, sent him to you first to bless you.

How? By turning every one of you from your wicked ways. That's how you get blessed. By repentance. By turning to God.

That he might heal you. That he might blot out your sins. That he might forgive you. That he might really deliver you from your real problem. We've got problems, don't we?

[ 28 : 51 ] We've got trials. We've got difficulties. We've got sufferings. We've got all kinds of things we've got to deal with. We've got pains. But they all go back to one root cause.

All go back to one real problem, and that problem is our sin. sorry for other to offend you. Gary told me he had to leave.

Just teasing. What is our problem?

I said at the beginning, does he deliver us from our troubles and our trials and our problems and our sufferings? And I said yes. But not in the way you think.

Not just our external stuff, but our real problem. That's our sin. Our real problem that gets us into all the other problems. Our real proneness to wander from God.

[ 29 : 49 ] Our real proneness to love our soul. To save our soul in this world. To make up, to pamper our soul so that I don't have to go through hard stuff.

That's what we do naturally. And so now we're going to come to what Jesus says next. So he reveals this staggering truth about the Messiah that's going to suffer and die and lay down his life.

And now he's going to turn to all of his disciples in verse 23 and have a new revelation for them too. He's been preaching about the gospel.

He's been preaching about repent and believe. The kingdom of God is here. He's telling parables. He's blessing them, right? He's teaching them things. He has had some hard words.

Remember, love your enemy. That wasn't real fun to listen to. Love your enemy. But still, mostly it's been positive. And now he's going to say this, you got to die thing.

[ 30 : 50 ] Right? Come on. We want the good gospel. We just want the good news. Well, believe it or not, this is good news.

For us to die, it's good news. It's what we really need for healing. God's love. He's good news. He's good news. So, his second revelation, let me summarize it this way.

Following Jesus means laying down our life and losing our soul. Because laying down our life and losing our soul, dying is the way we save our soul.

It's the way to life. Remember what you said? We'll enter by the narrow gate, which in Greek means the groaning gate.

It's the one you have to get really low and crawl. It's like going under the house. In California, anyway. We didn't have basements in California. You had to crawl. You had to go through this little tiny... Anyway, I call that the groaning gate, not the narrow gate.

[ 31 : 54 ] And then he says, the broad road, that's what many walk on the broad road and that leads to destruction. Same thing, word here. Same, losing. But the narrow road, few are those who find it.

The narrow road is the one that leads to life. The hard road, the one less chosen, is the one that leads to life. So it is about life and how we get there.

So he talks about three things in verse 23. If you would follow after me, that means denying yourself. It means taking up your cross and following. So how do I follow him?

Well, he starts with denial of self. If you would follow Christ, literally, if you would desire, if you want to follow Jesus, if you have an inclination, if you intend to identify with Jesus, if you say, Jesus is my God, and he is the one I want to follow, and I want to identify, we talk about identifying today, right?

I want to identify as slim. But that's, you know, I want to identify with Jesus. What does that mean if I want that?

[ 33 : 15 ] Well, it means deny yourself. That doesn't sound good. What does deny yourself mean? It means disregard yourself. It means to distrust yourself. A lot of people today tell us in our culture, you've got to follow your heart.

You've got to trust your God. You've got to trust him. No. You need to distrust yourself. Because yourself will get yourself in trouble. Yourself might save yourself from trouble.

Yeah. That's our natural go-to. That's our default. But deny yourself. Ah. That is not natural.

That is not natural. That is not just come with the territory. Come with the territory. God. So Paul says, Paul used the words in Philippians 3.

He says, whatever was gained to me. Right? Whatever I profited. Whatever I got. All the accomplishments. Remember in Philippians 3, he named off, I was a Pharisee, a Pharisee. I was blameless about the law.

[ 34 : 19 ] I had this kind of status. I had all these achievements. And he said, I lost all of them when I turned to Christ. I lost my position. I lost my achievements. I lost my prestige.

I lost my status. But he said, whatever was gained to me, I consider loss. I'm good with that.

For the sake of knowing Jesus Christ, my Lord. And knowing the power of his resurrection. And knowing the power of his suffering. That one day I will know his resurrection.

That's denial of self. you know, letting go of the gains. Then he says, what does it look like? Then he says, take up his cross. It means dying daily.

Take up his cross. Now, he says cross. This is the first time the word is mentioned in the gospel. Now, we hear the word cross and we're used to that.

[ 35 : 22 ] We've heard cross since we were little if we grew up in church. Cross, that's not new. This is the first time the disciples are hearing the word in reference to themselves. Cross. You've got to understand this is going to be like what?

What's the picture of a cross for a first century Jew? Where would they see crosses? Well, they'd see them outside the city all over the place. Hundreds of them. Hundreds of them. The Romans specialized in execution by crucifixion.

And when a criminal was condemned and sentenced to die, he was paraded through the streets because the Romans loved to shame a criminal. And lorded over them.

And so they would carry their cross. They'd put that on there and they'd walk up to wherever they were executed. Remember, Jesus started to bear His own cross. Remember, He was so physically exhausted and broken down because of all the whipping and beatings that He'd taken that they employed somebody else to carry the cross for.

Remember that? But that's the picture they would get. I want you to take up your cross, Peter, and I want you to carry it. I want you to walk through life like you're a criminal condemned to die.

[ 36 : 41 ] I've got no category for that, Jesus. I've got these boxes in my head, you know, where I put things and I understand things and I've got no category. I've got no box for that.

I understand about law keeping. I've got a box for that, right? I understand about home life. I've got a box for my work. I don't got a box for being a criminal. I don't got that box.

And yet, Jesus says, I want you to take up your cross. By the way, it's your cross. Everyone has their own cross. Everyone's cross will be different.

God will call different, call each of us to suffer for Him in a different way. Some will suffer physically, some will suffer socially, some will suffer, I don't know.

Some will be martyrs, some will, Peter's going to be a martyr and John's going to live a whole long life. But their crosses are, they're still crosses.

[ 37 : 47 ] Take up the cross. Which means, take it up, means to pick it up and bear it. And he says, daily. So in other words, this is something I have to renew every day.

It is something I have to be intentional about. It is something I have to think about every day. Because I don't want to think about this. Okay? This is not something I will naturally, I get out, I wake up in the morning, my first thought, oh, I want to take up my cross.

That's not my first thought. And I can tell you what my first thought is. We all have different thoughts. we get out. It's just not natural to think, pick up my cross.

Whatever that is on that day. It's a mindset of yielding. And I might not even know what the cross is going to be that day. I might, but it will be an attitude of yielding and saying, okay, Lord, whatever, whatever, whatever.

I'm willing. So how do I get into that perspective when we say, I don't want to do that. Right? How do we do that?

[ 38 : 59 ] I take up a cross. That means I'm killing something. Something about me is dying. So, so Paul says that in Romans 8, he says, if you live according to the flesh, you will die.

But, if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the flesh, you will live. That's like what Jesus is saying. Same thing. If you, if you try to save your soul, you're going to lose your soul.

But if you lose your soul, you'll save your soul. And here's what Paul's saying. If you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. You will lose your soul by putting to death the deeds of the body.

And how do I do that? I can't do that by myself. I do that by the Spirit. The only way I have power and enablement and willingness to put to death the natural inclinations and passions and wanderings of my heart are to go to God and ask the Spirit to empower me and enable me to do that.

I like to pray Psalm 119 which says, Psalm 119, I think it's about verse 25, I don't know. Make me walk in the path of thy commandments.

[ 40 : 19 ] Make my heart inclined to you. The Hebrew is make that happen. Cause that to happen to me. you take over.

Paul says the same thing in Philippians 2.13. He talks about how we want to continue to submit to the Lord and he says, you know, do the willing and the working within me for your good pleasure.

That's part of my prayer as well. You make me do it. You make me willing. You know, what did David pray, renew a right spirit within me?

Sustain me with a willing spirit. Why? Cause mine's not willing. Mine's not right. And so I go, by the spirit, how do I put to death the deed?

I don't want to put, cause I like the deeds of the, right? So I want to yell at that person. I want to get angry like that. I want to, whatever, whatever. Cause that would make my soul feel good.

[ 41 : 32 ] Okay. And then Jesus gives some warnings. So he says all this in verse 23. If you're going to follow me, deny yourself, take up your cross daily and keep following me.

Verse 24. Why? He's going to get three explanations or three motivations. Notice verse 24 starts with the word for. Verse 25 starts with the word for.

Verse 26 starts with the word for. Both of the, all three of those words, for is an explanation for this reason or for this motivation.

Okay. So he's giving three reasons. Why do I deny myself and take up my cross to follow Jesus? Every day. Why do I do that? For verse 24 for whoever would save his life will lose it.

And whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. And the word isn't life. The word is soul. Whoever would save his soul. I'm not going to go off the translators like I like to do.

[ 42 : 35 ] Just get it right. Who would save his soul will lose it. Whoever loses his soul for my sake will save it.

So he's talking about soul again. If I want to save my soul, my soul is what? My soul is my deepest affection. Remember, Jesus said how do we love the Lord our God, right?

We love the Lord God with all our heart, with all our soul, and all our strength. Yeah, Mark adds mind.

The New Testament adds mind. The original Hebrew was heart, soul, strength. Heart was the mind. Soul is the feelings. It's the affections. It's the deep, deep affections.

What moves me. What I feel deeply. I can feel deeply depressed. I can feel deeply elated. My soul can go all over the place.

[ 43 : 32 ] Remember, David talks about his soul. Why are you in so much despair? Oh, my soul. We sang to our soul today, too. I noticed that one of our songs, Lover of my soul.

We have to talk to our soul. So, soul. He's talking about soul. If I want to save my soul, what does that mean?

If I try to save my soul, that means I'm going to go easy on my soul. My soul wants things the easy way. My soul wants things that are easy and quick and now. My soul wants to feel good.

My soul doesn't want pain, doesn't want suffering. That's just my soul. That's just the way we're built. If we follow our soul, we're in trouble.

That's why Paul talks about renewing your mind first. Renew your mind to govern your heart and your soul. soul. So, soul, if I listen to my affection, if I follow my soul, if I try to save my soul, make my soul comfortable and safe, I will ruin it.

[ 44 : 47 ] But if I lose my soul, if I don't give my soul, if I don't pamper my soul, if I learn to crucify the flesh, then I will save my soul.

I have to do good for my soul. And to do that, I can't follow it. I have to train it. And then verse 25, and other reasons why I live sacrificially.

for another reason, for what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose or forfeit himself? If you live for now, if you profit and gain the whole world, that's just for now.

That you're going to lose it all. If you live for now, done. And remember what Paul said, he said, if Jesus didn't raise from the dead, then that's how we should live.

If there's no afterlife, if there's no future, if Jesus didn't raise from the dead, and we have no eternal life, then yes, live for now. Gain the whole world. Eat, drink, and be married for tomorrow, you die.

[ 45 : 51 ] That's the philosophy you should have. If you don't believe in God, if you don't believe in Christ, then that's the way to live. That's all you got. That's all you got. Get it.

But if that's not all you got, if there's something much bigger, something much grander, something much longer, longer, eternally longer, couldn't come up with the right word.

Everlasting. Live for that. A galaxy of joy versus a drop in a bucket. What are you going to choose?

Right? So what is it? What do you gain? So in other words, Jesus is saying, don't live. Your soul wants to live for now. It wants everything now. Your mind must say, no, I must focus for the future.

I must teach my soul. No. That's all. And sometimes we join our soul. When our soul wants to be elated in God, then give vent to your soul.

[ 46 : 59 ] And by the way, how do I deal with my soul? I go in prayer. I let my soul out in prayer. I pour out my soul. I can't deal with it myself.

I must take it before God and just lay it out there. Lord, this is what I want to do. Okay. And then verse 20, he gives one more reason. Verse 28, whoever is ashamed of me and my words of him, the son of man will be ashamed when he comes in his glory.

So in other words, another future thing, if we're ashamed of Jesus now, if we're silent about Jesus now, if we're afraid what others will think and say, and so we don't speak of Jesus or we don't stand up for Jesus, if we're silent about Jesus now, guess what he'll be when we come into glory?

He'll be silent about us. He'll dismiss us. He won't regard us. If we don't regard him now, he won't regard us later.

That's, I think, the idea of being ashamed. So another reason, it's a future aspect here. So let me give you an example of how Jesus dealt with his soul.

[ 48 : 14 ] Okay? In John 12, Jesus, John 12 is right before John 13. Right? And remember, John 13 is the upper room, right?

That's when he's preparing the disciples, he's going to die. Right? Okay, so John 12 is at the end. Okay? Jesus is approaching the crucifixion. Okay? It's real close. So John 12, that's on his mind.

He says this. He says, Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone. But if it dies, it bears much fruit.

Just talk about agriculture. That's how, you know, put these dead seeds in the ground, they become light, right? Okay? Okay? Then he's going to explain that. Then he's going to say, whoever loves his soul loses it, and whoever hates his soul in this world will keep it for eternal life.

That's the same thing you just said in Luke 9. Just different words. Talk about the soul again. Instead of saying saving his soul and losing his soul, he says, loves his soul.

[ 49 : 22 ] Whoever loves his soul. Whoever loves his soul. loses it. But whoever hates his soul in this world will keep it for eternal life.

If anyone serves me, he must follow me. And where I am, there will my servant be also. By the way, he's walking to the cross here. Right? Serve me, you'll be like me, you'll follow me in my steps.

If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him. Now watch what he says. Next verse, next thought. Jesus is talking about this whole soul thing.

And then he says, now is my soul troubled. Now is my soul agitated. So Jesus is talking about losing his soul, teaching others about losing his soul.

And it comes right upon his mind that I got to do it. I got to do it. I don't want to do it. So watch what he says. He confesses to his disciples.

[ 50 : 27 ] He confesses out loud, now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? What do I do? And then he prays.

Father, save me from this hour. Why does he want to be saved? Because he came in the flesh and he's a man.

He's a real man. And he didn't want to go through the pain and sacrifice of the crucifixion and all that that entailed. He was a real man.

He wanted to, remember he said it again in Gethsemane. Let this cup pass, but not my will to thine be done. Remember that? And he had to do it three times, remember?

So this is a pre-Gethsemane. Jesus is already suffering. He's already dealing with this. He's dealing with his soul. So he says, Father, save me from this hour. But for this purpose, I've come to this hour.

[ 51 : 35 ] My soul wants out. My mind says, nope, wait a minute. this is why I came. He renews his mind. But for this purpose, I came to this hour.

Father, glorify your name. He surrenders. Just like in Gethsemane. Let this cup pass for me, but not my will, not my human will, but your will be done.

Not what I want, but what you want. I surrender to that because that means it. Right. And when he said, Father, glorify your name, then a voice came from heaven.

Only three times in his life that the voice came from heaven. Baptism, Transfiguration, and now. A voice came from heaven. I have glorified it. And I will glorify it again.

What does the soul want? Love my soul. What does the soul want? The soul wants the easy way. It wants a safe way. It wants no pain. My soul wants to be safe from suffering and there's nothing wrong with that.

[ 52 : 43 ] That's just absolutely normal. That's normal. That's not sinful to want to be safe from suffering. Jesus prayed to be safe from suffering. There's nothing wrong with that.

In fact, I think praying to be safe from suffering is part of the process of dealing with your soul. Here's the psalm show over and over again. Here's Jesus doing it. So what do I do?

Right? So I pray that. I bring that before God. I crucify the flesh. How do I do that? Well, Jesus prays, renews his purpose, surrenders to God's plan, and he calls us to do the same.

We do it through prayer, by the Spirit. We crucify the flesh. That's kind of strong language too, isn't it? Crucify the flesh. Just push down those desires.

No, crucify. Another level. Okay. Following Jesus is laying down our life.

[ 53 : 44 ] It's losing our souls. That doesn't sound good by itself, but we recognize that's how we save our souls. That's where we get blind.

It doesn't make sense in our human thinking. Remember, trusting in the Lord, also means leaning not on my understanding of how I think things go.

God doesn't work the way we work. God works in a whole different way that's miraculous. I can't think of the word, so I'll leave it.

And something else. Amazing. So following Jesus is laying down our life and losing our soul in order to gain our life and save our soul.

Are you a follower of Jesus? Or are you just an observer of Jesus? Let's pray.

[ 54 : 46 ] Father, we thank you for your word. We thank you for Jesus' words. They're not words that are popular.

They're not words, you know, we want to hear the Joel Osteen kind of stuff. We want to hear the everything's good and make it right and make bad things go away.

That's not how Jesus teaches. That's not what Jesus says. Jesus says hard stuff now. Suffering now. Glory later. Help our hearts and our souls to hear your word and surrender to it.

We pray in Christ's name. Amen. Amen. .