



Sermon, Sunday July 31, 2022 “What Is the Christian Life?”

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 8:18-22 ¹⁸ Now when Jesus saw great crowds around him, he gave orders to go over to the other side. ¹⁹ A scribe then approached and said, “Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go.” ²⁰ And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.” ²¹ Another of his disciples said to him, “Lord, first let me go and bury my father.” ²² But Jesus said to him, “Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead.”

Introduction: Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ!

Our religious life has a purpose, and there is a method and process for achieving that purpose. The reasons why we come to church and the purpose of our Christian life may be different from each other. But through the teachings of the Lord, we can learn the essential purpose of our life of faith and what we must strive to achieve.

According to the Bible, the purpose of our faith in Jesus is to become more like Jesus. It is also to believe in Jesus and to emulate the person and life of Jesus through His grace. The reason why becoming like Jesus is the purpose of our Christian life is because we believe and are convinced of the words of the Bible, “**Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life.**”

However, if we look at our hearts, there are cases where the purpose of our faith in Jesus is different. In today's text, there are people whose purpose of following Jesus is different from that of Jesus. ~~In today's text,~~ Jesus tells such people what it means to follow Him. Through today's text, I hope that we will think about the purpose of following Jesus and obey the will of the Lord.

In the Old Testament, God asked the Israelites to live as strangers. And if we look at today's text, Jesus is also living the life of a stranger. Jesus tells the scribes and disciples what they must prepare to follow Him. Through the words of today's text, we must examine whether we are walking the Lord's way with the right purpose and method. May we all become true disciples of the Lord, mature Christians. Then, what kind of discipleship do we need to follow the Lord's way?

Body: Discipleship for Christians

First, the way to follow the Lord is the way of suffering.

First, we need to know that the way to follow the Lord is the ‘way of suffering’. **Today's text Matthew 8:20 says, Jesus said to a scribe, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."**

The Lord used to refer to Himself as a 'Son of Man' to people. The 'Son of Man' here refers to the ‘servant of suffering’. **But in today's text, a scribe says, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." (v.19)** The scribe thought the Lord's way was easy, but the Lord spoke in parables that it was by no means easy.



What we must not forget in our life of faith is that following the Lord's way is not the way to gain wealth and glory in the world. The path Jesus took was a path where He had to sacrifice himself for the kingdom of God. Since that path is not an easy path for anyone to follow, it requires a religious decision to follow Jesus. The meaning of verse 20 that Jesus spoke to the scribe today is as follows; **‘There is nothing you gain by being my disciple. My path is far from fame, wealth, and power. Still, do you want to be my disciple?’**

In the same way, the Lord is asking us as well. **‘Believing in Jesus and becoming a disciple of Jesus does not bring more glory. Maybe you must go the harder way. To be my disciple is not to have more, but to empty more and give more. But do you really want to live as my disciple?’**

How would you answer this Lord's question?

We can answer 'yes' or 'no' to these the Lord's questions. What is clear is that it is not an easy path to follow the path of the Lord's suffering. This is because this path is not the path that our will and effort will help us achieve, but the path that we can only follow with the help of the Lord. I hope that with the help of the Lord we can all walk this path step by step. So, what other discipleship do we need to follow the Lord's way?

Second, the Lord's way is the path that can be taken by those who have the will of the Lord.

Let's look at today's text **Matthew 8:22. “Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead.”**

To follow the Lord, no matter how difficult it may be, we must agree with the Lord's will. Here, the Greek word **‘akoloutheo’** (to follow) is a combination of **‘together’** and **‘way’**, which means **‘to be on the same road together’**.

In today's text, the scribe saw many people following the Lord and thought that following Jesus would bring greater personal glory. In this regard, the disciples were the same.

The Lord knows all too well the weakness of our nature. He also knows that by nature we find it difficult to love our neighbor more than ourselves. We say that we follow the will of the Lord, but we do not always want to lose, so we put our own will over the will of the Lord. Today the Lord is pointing out our attitude.

In Jesus' life, God's will always precedes His will. For us, too, the will of Jesus must come before our own will. If we don't, we can't go the way the Lord went. If we have different thoughts with the Lord, we must be able to align our thoughts with His will. I hope that such determination can be found by everyone in their daily lives. Then, what is the third discipleship we need to follow the way of the Lord?

Third, we need the assurance that the Lord's way leads us to life.

In verse 22 of today's text, Jesus says, "Let the dead bury their own dead." The meaning of these words is that the Lord's way is the way of suffering, but it is the way that leads the dead to life. What the Lord showed us through the resurrection is the image of the Savior who has overcome the powers of death and sin. For this work, the Lord Himself bore the sufferings of the cross. For the Lord, there is nothing more precious and important than the saving of dying souls and the liberation of all creatures from the power of death.

Therefore, those who want to follow the Lord's way must have the conviction that the path we must walk is the path of suffering, and sometimes we must submit our will to the Lord's will, but following the Lord is the way to save lives.

John 14:6 says: “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the father except through me.” Like these words, Jesus Christ is the way that leads us to salvation. The road we must go is a narrow road of suffering. But the way of the Lord leads us to life. So, no matter how hard or difficult life is, do not give up. Follow the Lord to the end, and we will truly live a life pleasing to the Lord.



Conclusion: There is true life in Jesus Christ.

Now let's summarize today's sermon. Today's text shows the discipleship of the Lord. A Christian must be a follower of the Lord. As in today's text, many seek the Lord, but few truly follow Him. As Christians, we must be able to truly follow the Lord.

In addition, the life of faith is completed not only in words but in deeds. **So, Romans 10:10 says: "For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved."** Christians must live their life with deeds.

Finally, if we are true Christians, we should hope that the Lord's will, not our own, will be done in the world. We must not forget the confession of the **Lord's Prayer, "Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."** (Matthew 6:10) Our faith must move toward maturity. There is true life in Christ Jesus. I hope that all of you will enjoy the precious blessings the Lord has given you.

