



Follow Me!

Matthew 8:18-22



- Matthew 8:18-22 (ESV) 18 Now when Jesus saw a crowd around him, he gave orders to go over to the other side. 19 And a scribe came up and said to him, “Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go.”
- What a wonderful commitment!
 - Boldly stated. Sincere (as far as we know).
 - Scribe ... therefore educated



- Why?
 - In this context:
 - Sermon on the mount (amazed at his teaching)
 - Healing: Leper, paralyzed man, Peter's MIL, demons, sick
- Sometimes this may be said in haste, or strong emotional reaction, very deliberately
 - Maybe he was hopeful of some glory too?
 - Crowds are following Jesus
 - Get in early with the king?
- How would Jesus feel about this?
 - Isn't this why he came? Isn't this what he wants for all of us?



- Matthew 4:18-22 (ESV) 18 While walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. 19 And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." 20 Immediately they left their nets and followed him. 21 And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. 22 Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.



-]Matthew 9:9 (ESV) 9 As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, “Follow me.” And he rose and followed him.



- Great crowds



- Matthew 4:24-25 (ESV) 24 So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, those having seizures, and paralytics, and he healed them. 25 And great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis, and from Jerusalem and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.



- Matthew 8:1 (ESV) 1 When he came down from the mountain, great crowds followed him.



- Matthew 12:15-16 (ESV) 15 Jesus, aware of this, withdrew from there. And many followed him, and he healed them all 16 and ordered them not to make him known.



- Matthew 14:13-14 (ESV) 13 Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a desolate place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. 14 When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them and healed their sick.



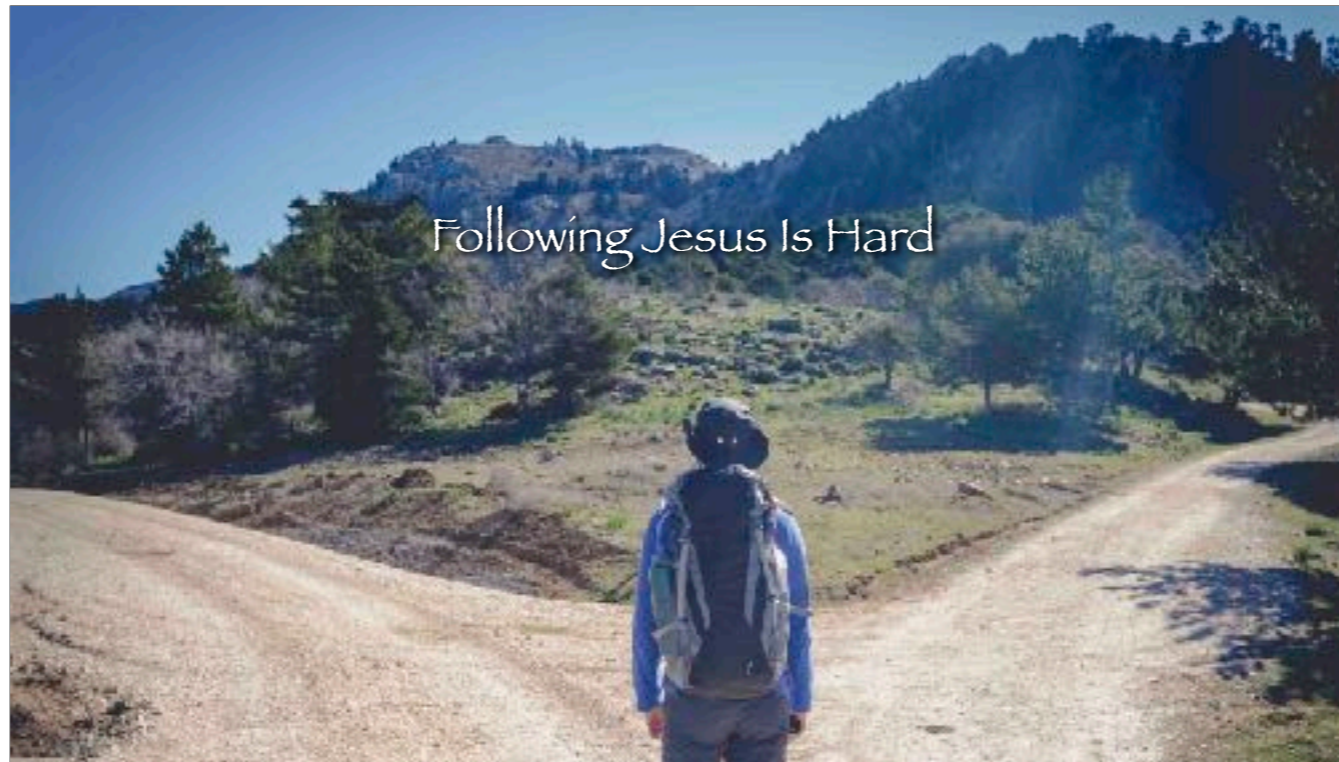
- Matthew 19:1-2 (ESV) 1 Now when Jesus had finished these sayings, he went away from Galilee and entered the region of Judea beyond the Jordan. 2 And large crowds followed him, and he healed them there.



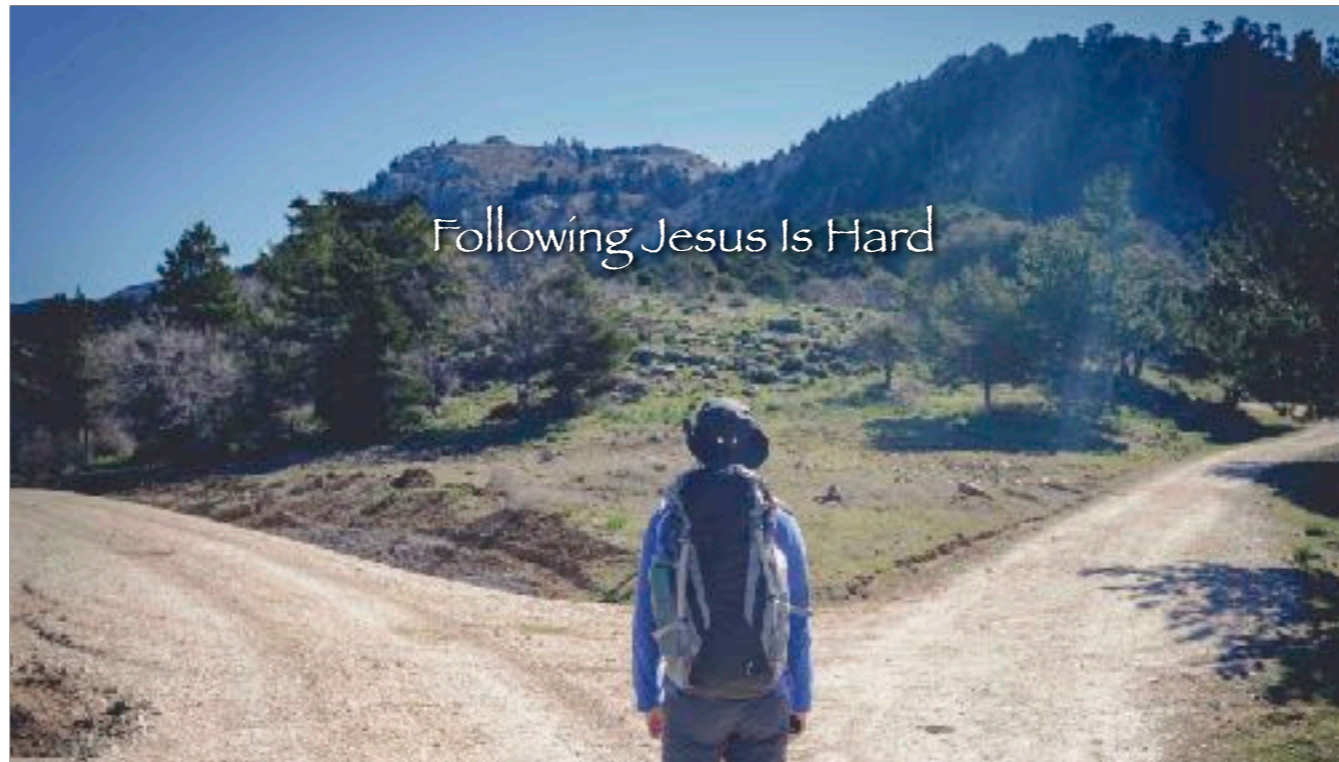
- Matthew 20:29 (ESV) 29 And as they went out of Jericho, a great crowd followed him.



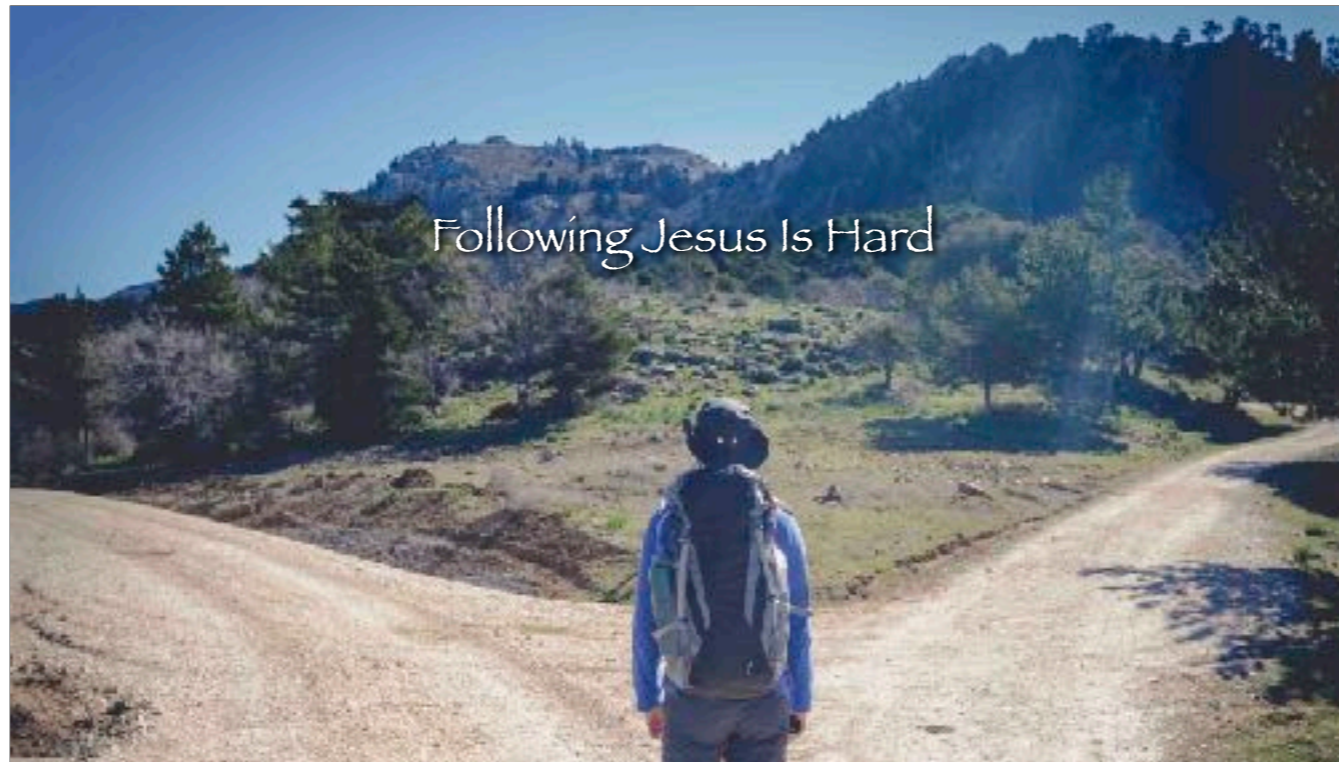
- Matthew 21:9-11 (ESV) 9 And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!” 10 And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up, saying, “Who is this?” 11 And the crowds said, “This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee.”



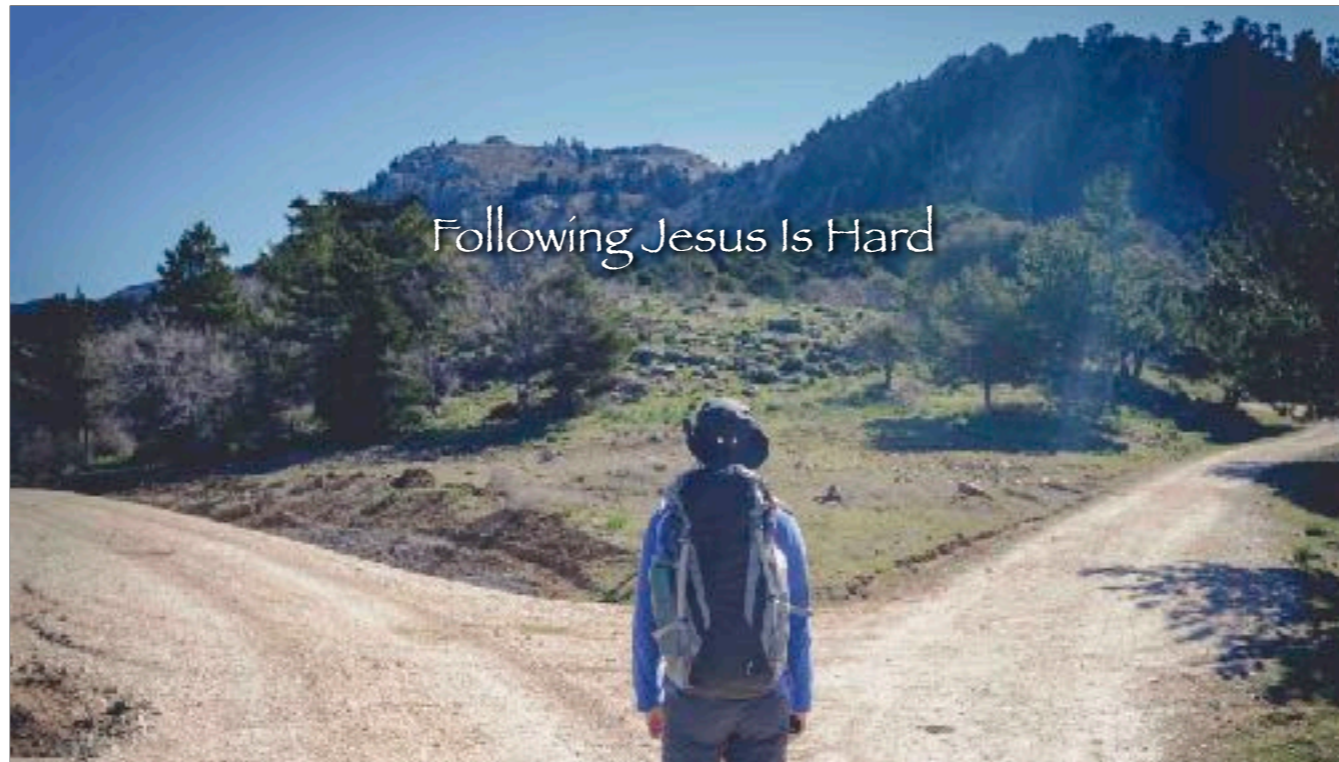
- Why it's hard to follow Jesus
 - Many times when we are persuading others to follow Jesus, we paint a very rosy picture.
 - Believe, trust, obey
 - Heaven, eternal life, brotherhood
 - Joy, peace, hope



- Sometimes we'll mention being persecuted for keeping the faith.
 - That we have to stay faithful
 - Revelation 2:10 Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.



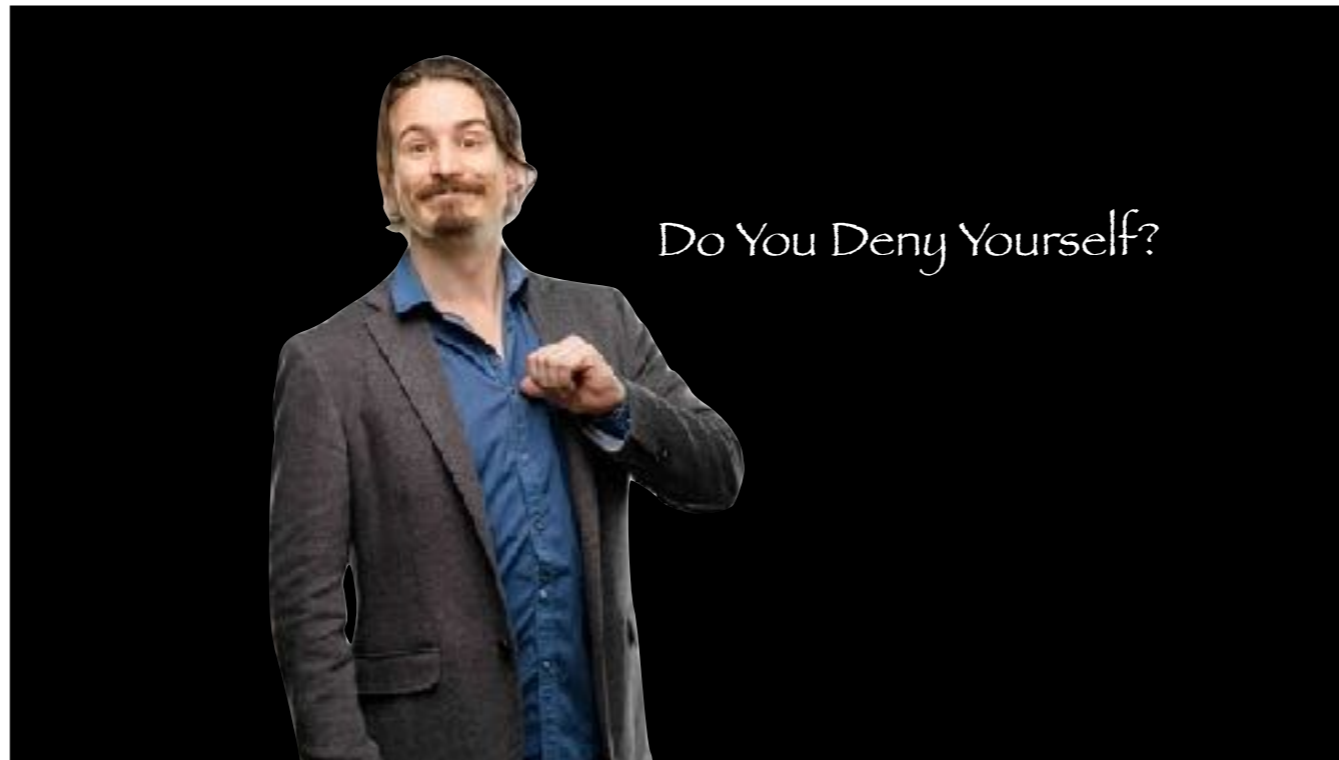
- But there are other factors we struggle with ...
 - disappointment
 - unanswered prayers (perspective!)
 - hardships
 - brethren



- Matthew 7:13-14 (ESV) 13 “Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. 14 For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.



- Matthew 10:34-39 (ESV) 34 “Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. 35 For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. 36 And a person's enemies will be those of his own household. 37 **Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me**, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. 38 And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. 39 Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.
- Who do you love?
- Who did Jesus love more?



- Matthew 16:24-28 (ESV) 24 Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. 25 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. 26 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? 27 For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done. 28 Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”



- Matthew 19:16-30 (ESV) 16 And behold, a man came up to him, saying, “Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?” 17 And he said to him, “Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only one who is good. If you would enter life, keep the commandments.” 18 He said to him, “Which ones?” And Jesus said, “You shall not murder, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, 19 Honor your father and mother, and, You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” 20 The young man said to him, “All these I have kept. What do I still lack?” 21 Jesus said to him, “If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.” 22 When the young man heard this he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.



- 23 And Jesus said to his disciples, “Truly, I say to you, only with difficulty will a rich person enter the kingdom of heaven. 24 Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.” 25 When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished, saying, “Who then can be saved?” 26 But Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.” 27 Then Peter said in reply, “See, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have?” 28 Jesus said to them, “Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 29 And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life. 30 But many who are first will be last, and the last first.



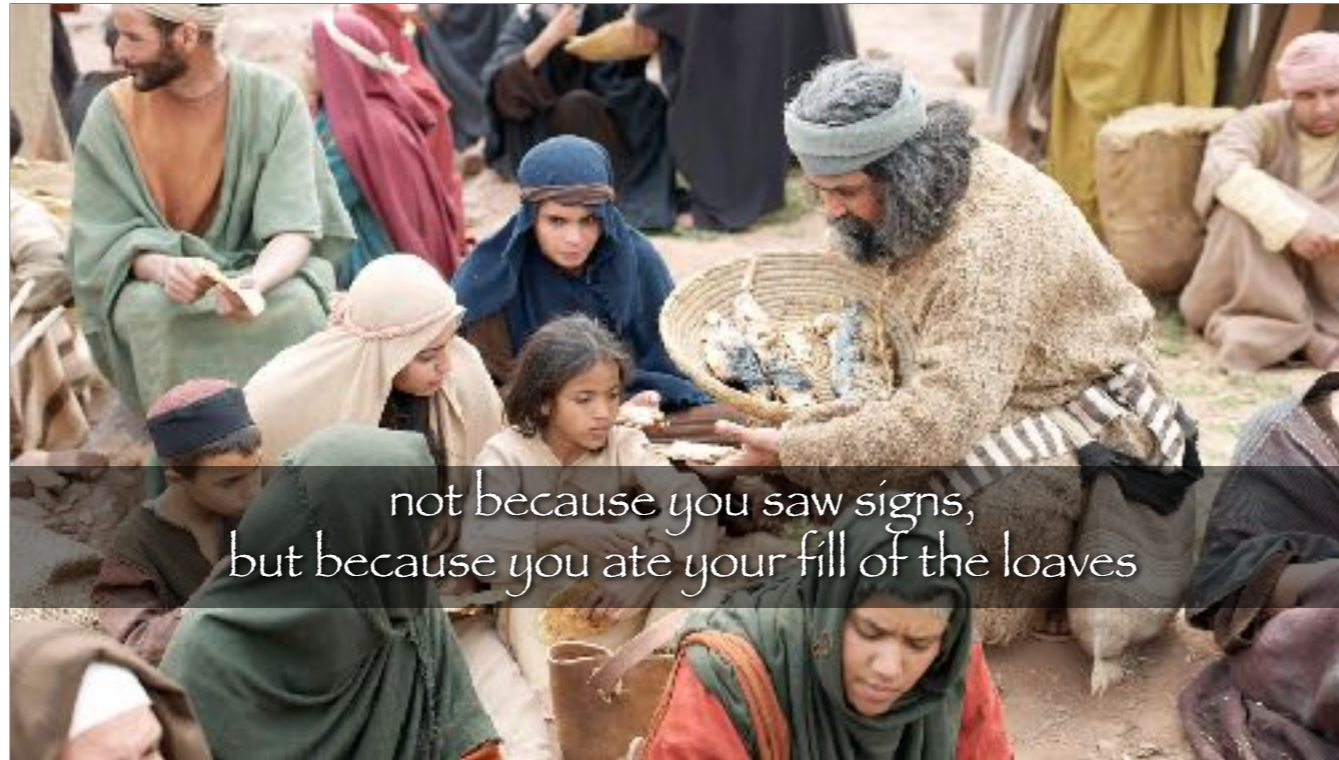
- Peter (et. al.) followed Jesus at a distance after he was arrested
 - Denied Jesus three times.
- Matthew 26:57-75 (ESV) 57 Then those who had seized Jesus led him to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders had gathered. 58 And Peter was following him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest, and going inside he sat with the guards to see the end. 59 Now the chief priests and the whole council were seeking false testimony against Jesus that they might put him to death, 60 but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward 61 and said, "This man said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to rebuild it in three days.'" 62 And the high priest stood up and said, "Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?" 63 But Jesus remained silent. And the high priest said to him, "I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God." 64 Jesus said to him, "You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven." 65 Then the high priest tore his robes and said, "He has uttered blasphemy. What further witnesses do we need? You have now heard his blasphemy. 66 What is your judgment?" They answered, "He deserves death." 67 Then they spit in his face and struck him. And some slapped him, 68 saying, "Prophecy to us, you Christ! Who is it that struck you?" 69 Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. And a servant girl came up to him and said, "You also were with Jesus the Galilean." 70 But he denied it before them all, saying, "I do not know what you mean." 71 And when he went out to the entrance, another servant girl saw him, and she said to the bystanders, "This man was with Jesus of Nazareth." 72 And again he denied it with an oath: "I do not know the man." 73 After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, "Certainly you too are one of them, for your accent betrays you." 74 Then he began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear, "I do not know the man." And immediately the rooster crowed. 75 And Peter remembered the saying of Jesus, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.



- John 6:1-2 (ESV) 1 After this Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias. 2 And a large crowd was following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing on the sick.



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- This is not incorrect.
- The purpose of the signs were to indicate to the people that Jesus was the Christ
 - And they should listen to him.
-



*not because you saw signs,
but because you ate your fill of the loaves*

- John 6:25-27 (ESV) 25 When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, “Rabbi, when did you come here?” 26 Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. 27 Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal.”
- The focus has changed from seeking the Messiah to benefit for themselves.
- Did Jesus come to provide food ...
 - Eternal life!



- John 6:28-40

- 28 Then they said to him, "What must we do, to be doing the works of God?"
- 29 Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent."



- 30 So they said to him,
 - “Then what sign do you do, that we may see and believe you?”
 - What work do you perform?
- 31 Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’
 - REALLY? Why are they ignoring the miracle that just happened the day before?
 - This is skepticism ... no proof will ever be enough (see verse 36!)



- 32 Jesus then said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. 33 For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”
- 34 They said to him, “Sir, give us this bread always.”
- 35 Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.
 - 36 **But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe.**



- 37 All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.
- 38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me.
- 39 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day.
- 40 For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.”



- John 6:41-43 (ESV) 41 So the Jews grumbled about him, because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." 42 They said, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, 'I have come down from heaven'?" 43 Jesus answered them, "Do not grumble among yourselves.
- Continued skepticism despite Jesus' signs and teachings
- Why?
 - They knew his family ... therefore he couldn't be anyone special.



- John 6:60-71

- 60 When many of his disciples heard it, they said, **“This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?”**
- 61 But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples were grumbling about this, said to them,
 - **“Do you take offense at this?”**
 - 62 Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before?
 - 63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all.
 - The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.
 - 64 But there are some of you who do not believe.”
 - (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.)
 - 65 And he said, “This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father.”



- 66 After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him.
- Why?
 - Following Jesus was too hard ... hard teaching and expectations
 - Not just miracles, glory, king



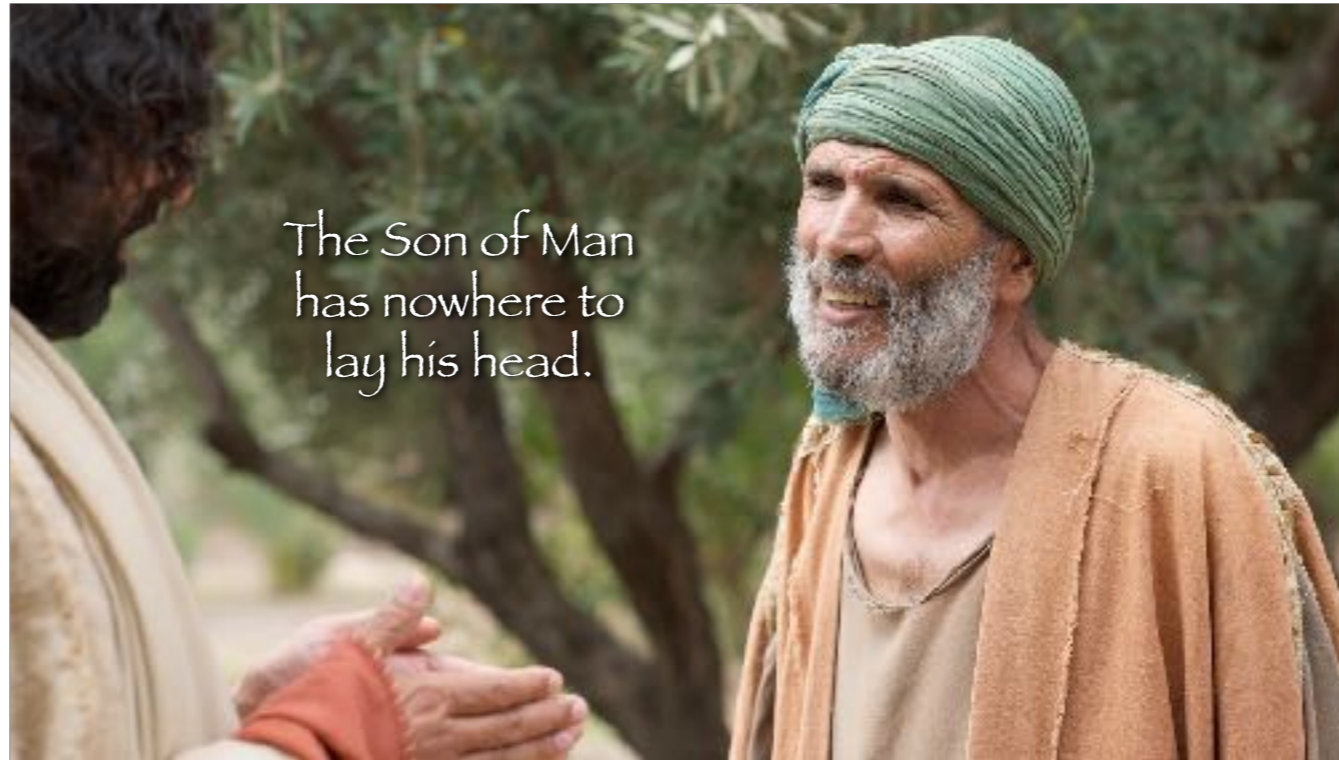
- 67 So Jesus said to the twelve, “Do you want to go away as well?”
- 68 Simon Peter answered him,
 - “Lord, to whom shall we go?
 - You have the words of eternal life,
 - 69 and we have believed, and
 - have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.”
- 70 Jesus answered them, “Did I not choose you, the twelve? And yet one of you is a devil.”
 - 71 He spoke of Judas the son of Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the twelve, was going to betray him.



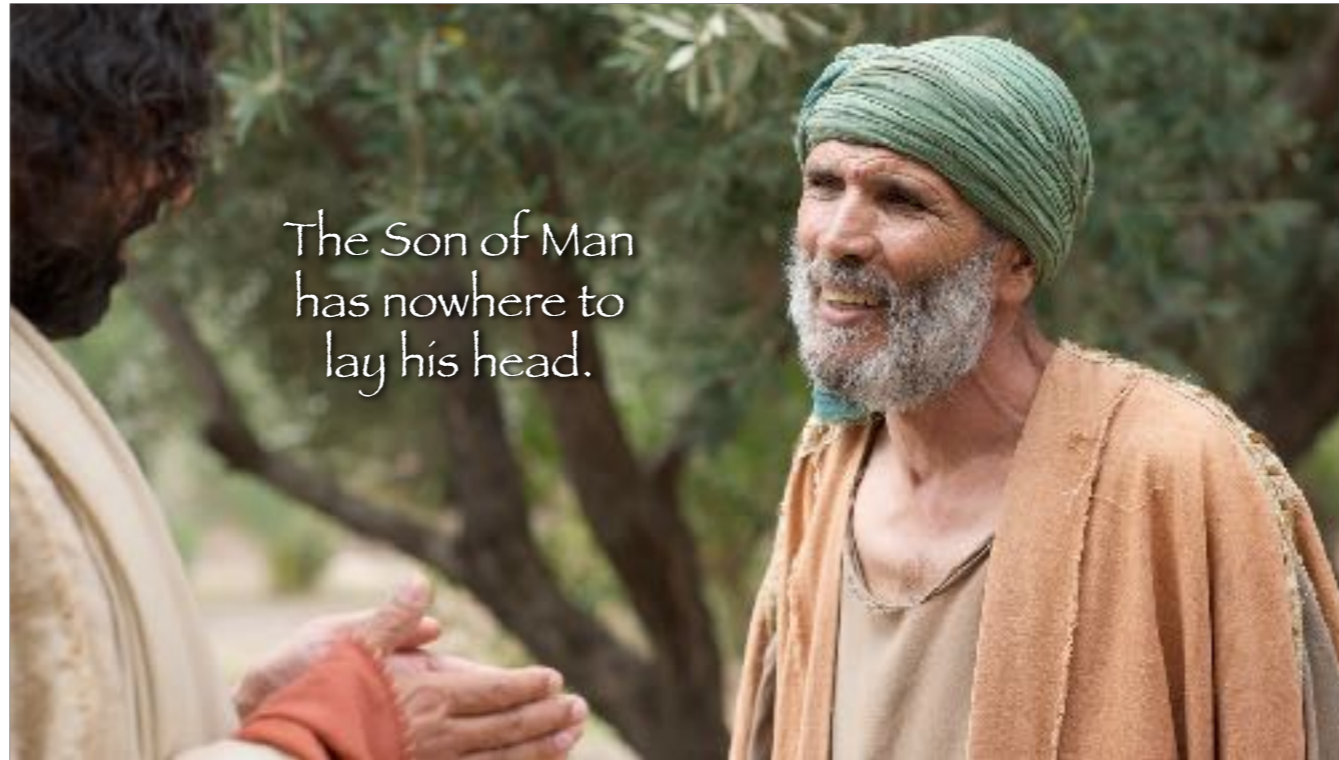
- Grumbled, Offended, Stopped
- “Lord, to whom shall we go?”
 - Is this hard to believe?
 - Accepting signs
 - Accepting teaching
 - Expectations of following Jesus



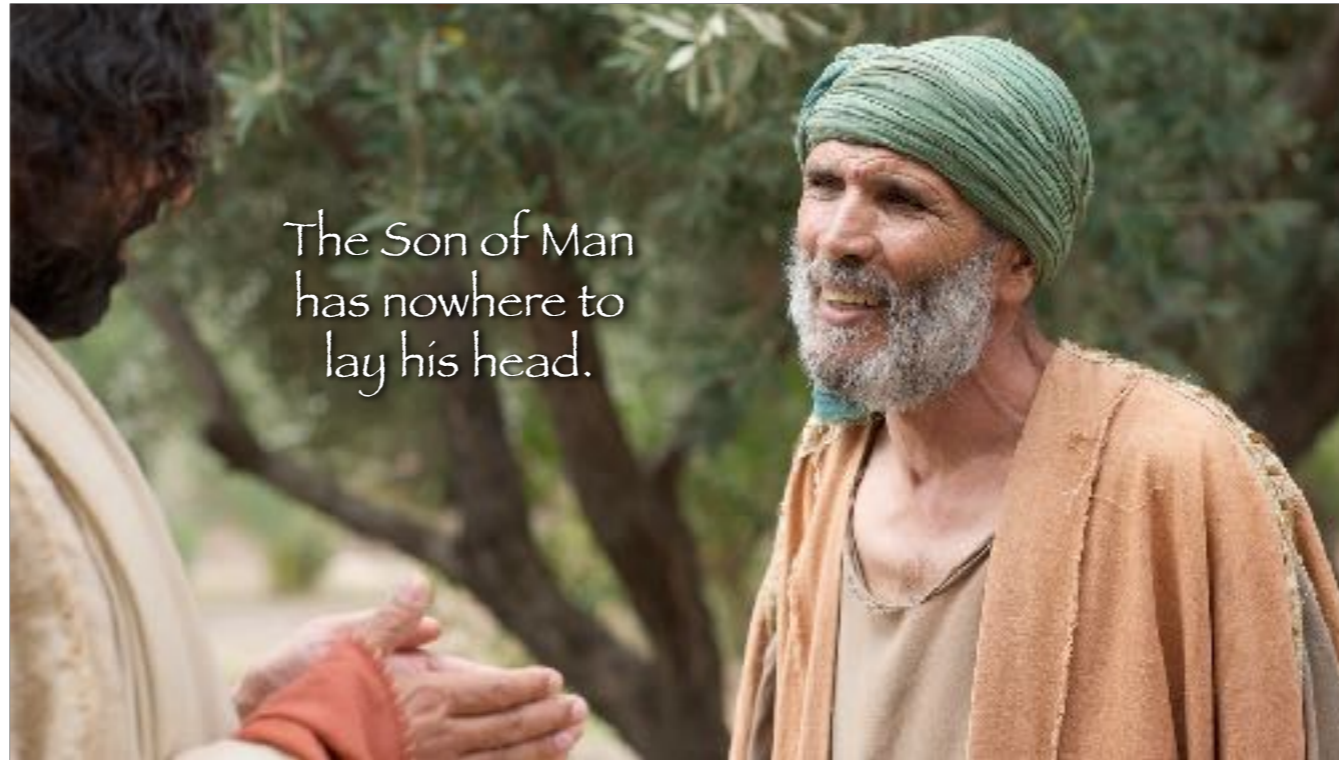
- Jesus knows it's hard!
- Matthew 8:18-22 (ESV) 18 Now when Jesus saw a crowd around him, he gave orders to go over to the other side. 19 And a scribe came up and said to him, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go."
- How would Jesus feel about this?
 - Isn't this why he came? Isn't this what he wants for all of us?
 - But Jesus is also very realistic. And he knows us ... he's flesh and blood too.



- 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.”
- Of all the things for Jesus to tell this man about why it would be a hard choice to follow him.
 - What about leaving his Father, and heaven
 - What about becoming human
 - What about being born in a barn, fleeing to Egypt, growing up in Nazareth (?)
 - What about all the rejection he faced from his people
 - What about the suffering and death that was coming



- Rather, Jesus' focus is on the very pragmatic: The daily grind
 - "I don't have a home"
 - Each day is going to be difficult.
 - There's no glory in this right now
 - it's difficult and tiring work
 - constant travel
 - some people have been nice
 - most are not



- Jesus made this hard choice to follow His father
 - knowing all that he gave up
 - 2 Corinthians 8:9 (ESV) 9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.
 - knowing how it would all end: suffering and death
 - knowing it would be a difficult path
 - not just at the end
 - but every single day



- 21 Another of the disciples said to him, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father."
 - 22 And Jesus said to him, "Follow me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead."
- Luke 9:59-60: 59
 - To another he said, "Follow me."
 - But he said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father."
 - 60 And Jesus said to him, "Leave the dead to bury their own dead. But as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God."



- Luke 9:61-62:
 - 61 Yet another said, “I will follow you, Lord, but let me first say farewell to those at my home.”
- What does this mean?
 - There may be a lot of things Jesus is teaching here
 - But I’d like us to think about just this one
 - choosing to follow Jesus requires that we make hard choices.
 - Just like he did.



- 62 Jesus said to him, “No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.”
- This is what Jesus has done for you.
 - From the very beginning
 - Through the daily struggle
 - To the suffering and death
 - To exaltation



- Will you follow Jesus
- The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak
 - It's going to be hard!
 - But it's the only way to eternal life.

We implore you
on behalf of Christ,
be reconciled to God.

2 Corinthians 5:20

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YEAST OF THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES

Matthew 16:5-12

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Follow Me!

Matthew 8:18-22

Synopsis: Although Jesus called some to follow him, and often great crowds followed him, following Jesus is harder than we think. But our brother knows our struggles for he has left all to save us.

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“Let all that you do be done with love.”