

# It's a Hard and Happy Road

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## Introduction

### The Text

<sup>35</sup> And he said to them, "When I sent you out with no moneybag or knapsack or sandals, did you lack anything?" They said, "Nothing." <sup>36</sup> He said to them, "But now let the one who has a moneybag take it, and likewise a knapsack. And let the one who has no sword sell his cloak and buy one. <sup>37</sup> For I tell you that this Scripture must be fulfilled in me: 'And he was numbered with the transgressors.' For what is written about me has its fulfillment." <sup>38</sup> And they said, "Look, Lord, here are two swords." And he said to them, "It is enough." (Luke 22:35–38)

### What Did You Expect?

- A. Well known Biblical Counselor Paul Tripp wrote a book on marriage that he bluntly titled: **What Did You Expect?**
1. And the point is to say: We often get into marriage thinking it will somehow fulfill us, complete us, make us happy, that sort of thing—and we're often surprised and even blindsided by the fact that it's hard.
    - a. Is it beautiful, is it wonderful, is it satisfying in many ways? Yes. But is it hard? Absolutely.
- B. And I bring this up here because this issue of one's expectations is of great concern not just for when you're entering into marriage, but, perhaps most especially when deciding to follow Christ, to "become a Christian" as we might put it.
1. You see, we often come into this whole Christianity thing with a certain set of expectations—maybe from what people have told us, maybe from reading a few verses, maybe from a book or something like this—but we have this idea up front of what it will mean, of what will happen in our lives as a result.
    - a. And, in many cases, if I can just be blunt, we're off. We come in expecting one thing, and find it to be another.
- C. Perhaps I could set up the whole matter before us by asking a simple question: Do you think coming to Christ will make your life happier or will it make it harder? I wonder how you would answer the question. I'll tell you how I would: YES!
1. We want the first part of this question, don't we, but not the second. I want the happiness. I want Jesus to come into my life and make things right. I want Him to heal me and help me and bless me. And He will. Absolutely He will.

2. But, what we are often unprepared for is that associating with Jesus will also make things more challenging. The way He gets me to blessing and fullness of life is sometimes a bit painful.

- a. The Christian walks not just a happy road, but a hard one as well.

- D. And this is precisely the sort of thing that Jesus is trying to prepare His disciples for here in our text. And it's what He wants us to be aware of as well.

1. So I'll divide my thoughts here along these lines. I've got two points: (1) Yes, It's Harder; and (2) Yes, It's Happier! I begin with the negative piece because that's where Christ begins here. So let's dive in!

## (1) Yes, It's Harder

### Two Questions

- A. Remember this is now Thursday night. In a few short hours, Jesus will be strung up on a cross, gasping for breath, left for dead.
  1. He knows what's coming, but His disciples—in spite of how many times He's tried to tell them—clearly do not. So He comes at it here from yet another angle . . .
    - a. Look at [vv. 35-36](#) again: “<sup>35</sup>And he said to them, ‘When I sent you out with no moneybag or knapsack or sandals, did you lack anything?’ They said, ‘Nothing.’<sup>36</sup>He said to them, ‘But now let the one who has a moneybag take it, and likewise a knapsack. And let the one who has no sword sell his cloak and buy one.’”
- B. Now, with this there are immediately two pressing questions that emerge here . . .

### Question #1: Is Jesus Saying We're Left to Fend for Ourselves Now?

- A. To get at the first, we'll have to kind of back into it a bit. So bear with me a moment.
- B. The first thing we need to make note of is that Jesus here is referring back to earlier experiences He's shared with His disciples. Specifically, He's referring back it would seem to both [Luke 9](#) and [Luke 10](#).
  1. In [Luke 9](#), if you recall, He sent out the twelve to proclaim the kingdom of God among the various towns and villages around Israel and as He did so He gave them a particular set of instructions, precisely the thing He reminds them of here. To quote from [Luke 9:3-4](#): “<sup>3</sup>Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money; and do not have two tunics.<sup>4</sup> And whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart.”
  2. And in [Luke 10](#), it's largely the same sort of thing, only now with a broader group of disciples, the 72 or, perhaps, 70, the exact number is debatable. But the instructions are largely the same.

- C. And the idea seems to be, on the surface of it at least: “Disciples, trust the Lord for your provision and your protection and things. You’re doing the Lord’s work, the Lord will provide.”
1. And if that’s what we make of this, then the instructions here now in [Luke 22](#) are especially peculiar and even alarming. Before it was: “Don’t take those things.” But now it’s precisely the opposite. “You better bring all you can. You’re going need it.”
- D. And the first question, then, that I’ve been building to with all of this is simply this: Is Jesus saying that we better take all of these things to supply our needs and what not because God no longer will? Is that the idea? Before we had God’s care and covering and now we don’t? Now we’re left to fend for ourselves?
1. Well that can’t be it. That cuts against the grain of so many other promises of Scripture (cf. [Phil 4:19!](#)). There’s no way this could be a call from Jesus towards self-reliance or something like this. That’s everything He stands against.
- E. And indeed when we look more closely under the hood of such a command, we see a bit more clearly what He is saying.
1. Here’s the nub of it: when you go back to [Luke 9](#) and [10](#), how is it that these disciples were, in fact, provided for? What means did God use? Well, I’ll tell you: It was the warm welcome of fellow Jews and things.
    - a. It’s alluded to in what I read there in [Luke 9](#), but Jesus’ words in [Luke 10](#) particularly bring this to light: “<sup>4</sup>Carry no moneybag, no knapsack, no sandals, and greet no one on the road.<sup>5</sup> Whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace be to this house!’<sup>6</sup> And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him. But if not, it will return to you.<sup>7</sup> And remain in the same house, eating and drinking what they provide, for the laborer deserves his wages. Do not go from house to house.<sup>8</sup> Whenever you enter a town and they receive you, eat what is set before you” (vv. 4–8).
      - i. So I ask again, how were they provided for? What means did God use? The open hearts of other families. That’s what it was.
- F. And, you see, this, Jesus is saying, is what’s about to change. It’s not God’s commitment to provide for His disciples that’s changing, but the means.
1. Jesus is saying, “You enjoyed, on the whole, a warm welcome and rich provision from others as you went about in My name, but expect that no longer. Times are changing. They liked Me and you when they thought I’d come to give them their best life now. But once they realize I’ve come to die, to deal with their sin and other subjects they’d rather not talk about, well, after killing Me, they’ll want to kill you too.”
- G. No doubt some of you have tasted of this in various degrees. Anyone else come to Christ and then lose your whole friend group in the process?
1. And we don’t know the half of what Christians in other countries experience.

## Question #2: Is Jesus Saying We're to Bring the Kingdom of God in By Force Now?

- A. But now we come to the second question and it really turns on this idea of a sword. Jesus says there in [v. 36b](#) (surely you noticed): “[L]et the one who has no sword sell his cloak and buy one.”
1. The idea is this: “In view of what’s about to change, you’re going to need a sword in your hand more than clothes on your back!”
    - a. This is an alarming instruction from our Lord. But the thing that really gets us, the question we have now is this: Is Jesus saying we’re now to bring the kingdom of God in by force? Is that the point of this sword here?
- B. Well, much like the first question, we know that can’t be it. Again, it cuts against the grain of so much that Jesus says and does elsewhere.
1. Let me spend a little time on this and show you what I mean, just so we’re clear . . .
- C. First, it’s right on the surface there in [v. 38](#) I think. When these disciples, hearing Jesus’ instructions, put forward two swords, how does Jesus respond? “[It is enough.](#)”
1. Now, there are many ways you could understand this. I do think there are probably layers of meaning here. But the first thing that needs to be said is that, if Jesus is really asking them to prepare for armed combat here, well it doesn’t take a military strategist to recognize that two swords would be woefully inadequate. So when He says “[It is enough](#)” surely He can’t mean it is enough to fight and win with.
    - a. This is why many commentators align themselves with the likes of Leon Morris on this when he says: “Jesus’ response, [It is enough](#), means not ‘Two will be sufficient’ but rather, ‘Enough of this kind of talk!’ He dismisses a subject in which the disciples were so hopelessly astray” (TNTC). They don’t get it. That’s why He says, “It’s enough.”
      - i. He’s not talking about literal swords. He’s not talking about physical force or armament. He’s talking about readiness for spiritual battle. But they’re stuck on the idea that the kingdom is coming now with the removal of Rome and things. They don’t get it.
- D. Next piece of evidence for this more figurative and spiritual understanding of the sword here is what happens just a few verses later down in [Luke 22:49-51](#).
1. Judas has led his crowd to Gethsemane and betrayed Jesus with a kiss, and as they close in to grab Him, we’re told the disciples ask: “[Lord, shall we strike with the sword?](#)” ([v. 49](#)). “We’re ready, just like you said Jesus. Let’s do this!”
    - a. Well one of them (it doesn’t require too much discernment to guess who) refuses to wait around for an answer. He pulls out that sword and cuts off the right ear of the man who had come closest to Jesus. But Jesus turns and says, not “Well done good

and faithful servant,” but “No more of this!” (v. 51). And then He touches the guy’s ear and heals him

- E. You could almost see Him shaking His head in bewilderment. “That’s not what I meant.” As He says in Matthew’s account: “<sup>52</sup> Put your sword back into its place. For all who take the sword will perish by the sword.<sup>53</sup> Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels?” (Matt. 26:52–53).
  - 1. “This is not how we fight. This is not how we bring the kingdom in. My battle isn’t against Judas or Pilate, Caiaphas or Herod, flesh and blood. No. It’s against the powers and principalities of darkness. And I will get victory over them not by wielding the sword, but by dying in love as a sacrifice for sin! You guys have got it all backwards.”
    - a. You know, interestingly enough, the swords of Muhammed are on display in a museum in Istanbul. But, note it, you can find no such thing for Jesus nor for any of the apostles.
      - i. That’s not how the kingdom of God is going to advance in this world. And it’s certainly not what Jesus is referring to here.
- F. And, of course, all of this is only further supported by the very text with which Jesus grounds His instruction to buy a sword in the first place. Look back at Luke 22: “<sup>36b</sup> And let the one who has no sword sell his cloak and buy one.<sup>37</sup> For I tell you that this Scripture must be fulfilled in me: ‘And he was numbered with the transgressors.’”
  - 1. I mean you see this right? Jesus grounds this whole idea of buying a sword in the reality that He will be numbered with the transgressors. It’s a reference, as we’ll see, from Isa 53, where the whole thing is about, not how Jesus is going to come and mow over His enemies with the sword, but how He’s going to let the sword fall on Him—“numbered with the transgressors.”
- G. And this is the text Jesus grounds His instruction to buy a sword in? Well, that ought to tell you right there, we’re not talking about literal swords here. We’re talking about spiritual readiness and spiritual warfare.
  - 1. He’s saying the crucifixion is going to throw the world into crisis. That’s why the Scriptures talk about the cross and the resurrection of Jesus as essentially initiating the last days. It catalyzes a seismic shift, as it were, in redemptive history.
    - a. And God’s people need to be ready. Not to strike down the physical enemy. But, ironically, to strike down every fleshly urge to do so. It takes more firepower to kill the sin in me and overcome the devil, than it ever would to blow out Rome or some other worldly regime. Do you get that?
- H. This is the sort of thing Paul would write about later in 2 Cor 10:3-5: “<sup>3</sup> For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh.<sup>4</sup> For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds.<sup>5</sup> We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ . . .”

1. Paul does not here identify what our weapons of our warfare are, but undoubtedly he's thinking of things like what he writes of in [Eph 6](#), most notably what he calls "[the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God](#)" (v. 17b).
  - a. It's the gospel in particular and the Word of God in general that alone has an edge sharp enough to slice through the spiritual powers of darkness. This is the sort of thing Jesus is driving at here.
- I. These disciples don't get it yet. But they will . . . soon enough. The question now, though, is: Do we?

## Two Implications

- A. There are a couple of implications that spin out from this that we'd be wise to reflect on here momentarily:

### Implication #1: We Should Expect Hardship

- A. Some of us perhaps are bitter with God because we've come, we've repented, we've trusted, we've joined a church, we've done the Christian thing, and our lives seem to have gotten, not better, but worse. It's not gone how we've wanted. It's taken a turn for the gutter. And we're disenchanting and jaded.
  1. But we learn from this text before us, Jesus never said, in every sense, that He would make our lives easier right away. In fact He everywhere warns us about the opposite.
    - a. This is why He's telling guys to count the cost before they come. This is why He's saying such seemingly outlandish things like unless you take up cross daily and follow me, you can't be my disciple.
- B. The Apostle John, in his gospel, gives us a much larger accounting of all that was said on this Thursday night. And there we see quite plainly, Jesus spells it out for these brothers. "Things are going to get hard for you because of your association with Me."
  1. Here's what He says, [John 15:18-21](#): "<sup>18</sup> If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. <sup>19</sup> If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. <sup>20</sup> Remember the word that I said to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours. <sup>21</sup> But all these things they will do to you on account of my name, because they do not know him who sent me."
  - a. This is the sort of thing that awaits the follower of Christ in these the last days. He's up front about it. He's not trying to hoodwink. He's not a salesman nor a swindler. He's not trying to bait and switch. He wants you to come in wide-eyed and aware of what you're signing up for.

## Implication #2: We Should Be Prepared for Hardship

- A. So we should expect hardship, but, implication #2, we should also then be prepared for it. There is a difference between knowing something's coming and actually being ready for it when it comes.
- B. I get these booklets in the mail from PG&E and others. Sometimes they're about what to do with earthquakes. Other times it's about wildfires. I know these things are potential issues here—not so much a question of if but when.
  - 1. And I keep those booklets. And I have every intention of going through them and getting that emergency and everything in place. I have written there in my to-do list: "Prep for fires and earthquakes." But I haven't done it. I know to expect it, but I'm not prepared for it.
- C. And Jesus here is telling us these things because He wants us to be prepared. This is not just realigning our expectations, this is learning to live in light of it.
  - 1. If I'm understanding Jesus here, what this means is that we ought to have a wartime lifestyle. You live differently in times of relative peace than you do in times of war. And Jesus is saying: "Don't be fooled by your prosperity Americans. Don't be lulled to sleep by your comforts and ease. We're in the last days. Stay awake. Stay alert. Be vigilant. Take up your sword, in the right sense, and fight!"
- D. It's like what Paul writes of in [1 Cor 7](#): "<sup>29</sup> This is what I mean, brothers: the appointed time has grown very short. From now on, let those who have wives live as though they had none,<sup>30</sup> and those who mourn as though they were not mourning, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they had no goods,<sup>31</sup> and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. For the present form of this world is passing away" (vv. 29–31).
  - 1. It's a call to stop settling your heart into the things of this earth and instead fix it firmly on God and the kingdom that's coming soon in Christ.
- E. Are you living as if in wartime? Are you not just expecting hardship in this life, but actually ready for it in a spiritual, cruciform sense?

## (2) Yes, It's Happier!

### Verse 37 and Isaiah 53

- A. Now, having said all of this, it is my great pleasure to remind you that coming to Christ—while you should expect, in some senses it will make your life harder—it will also fill your cup . . . you will also find access to happiness and satisfaction and joy that you did not previously even know was possible.
- B. For this, I'd love to take us back to [v. 37](#) and Jesus' reference there to [Isa 53](#). Look at [Luke 22:37](#) again: "[For I tell you that this Scripture must be fulfilled in me: 'And he was numbered with the transgressors.'](#)"

1. I mentioned already that Jesus points to this text as grounds for why the disciples ought to be ready for rejection and suffering in the world.
  2. But that is not the full meaning of this verse, is it? Not even close.
    - a. When we go back into the context of this OT verse, we shall see, the main thrust isn't actually He will suffer so you will too.
    - b. While that's certainly a corollary implication when properly understood, the main thrust is quite the opposite: namely, He will suffer in a particularly unique way under the wrath of God for your sins in your place. . . so that you don't have to.
- C. In other words, we don't just learn of our coming hardship here. We learn the secret to human happiness. We see the gospel and the surprising love of God. We discern the path out from guilt, shame, and exile. We discover the way back to the One for whom we were created!
1. And the road runs through this Suffering Servant described by Isaiah who will be “[numbered with the transgressors](#)”—though He Himself is not one of them.
- D. Jesus quotes here from perhaps the most pronounced and vivid of all prophecies in the Old Testament. [Isa 53](#) is simply staggering in the way it describes this coming Servant of YHWH who will one day offer Himself up sacrificially for the sins and ultimate the salvation of God's people.
1. When you sit down and read this chapter, you feel like you're reading from the pages of the New Testament, not the Old. In many ways, it seems to me, it paints with more color and detail than even the gospel accounts themselves do.
    - a. Indeed, I think that's why Jesus quotes from it here, and why Luke is so jealous to record this for us. They want to be sure we see all that is about to take place in the coming hours, with the passion and crucifixion of our Lord, in light of this prophetic portrayal.

## A Powerful Apologetic

- A. Jesus quotes here from the very last verse in the chapter ([Isa 53:12](#)) and in so doing He's really just dragging in the whole of the prophetic utterance that's come before it. So I'm going to read from that in just a moment . . .
- B. But before I do, let me just add a quick parenthesis here to say how powerful an apologetic we have in this OT chapter—what great evidence of the validity of the Christian claims about Jesus and the gospel.
  1. Bear in mind, this prophecy was written over 2700 years ago—that's some 700 years then before Christ.
    - a. David Baron wrote in the preface to his exposition of [Isa 53](#): “. . . it is beyond even the wildest credulity to believe that the resemblance in every feature and minutest detail between this prophetic portraiture drawn centuries before his [Jesus'] advent and the story of his life, and death, and glorious resurrection as narrated in the



gospels, can be mere accident or fortuitous coincidence” (Baron, *The Servant of Jehovah* c. 2000, p. viii).

- C. You say, “But how do we know that Christians didn’t come after the fact and tamper with the text a bit? A little massaging here and there and now it fits the story of Jesus?”
1. Well, before the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in the 1940s and 50s, the earliest manuscripts we had of Isaiah were from around 1000 A.D. So one could wonder a bit whether what we have here is truly what would have preceded Jesus and His ministry.
    - a. But with this discovery, which many consider to be the single most important archeological manuscript find of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we now have the entire scroll of Isaiah—the “Great Isaiah Scroll” as it’s called—and it’s dated with widespread consensus to the second century B.C. You can go to the Israel Museum in Jerusalem and see it. The scroll of parchment is some 23 feet long.
      - i. And when you compare the [Isa 53](#) we have today with that dated before the time of Christ there is minimal difference and no substantial shift in import.
- D. This is why, it seems, by the way, Jewish rabbis have been reluctant to include the reading of this chapter in their synagogues. One Jewish scholar went so far as to say: “[Because of the Christological interpretation given to the chapter by Christians it is omitted from the series of prophetic lessons for the Deuteronomy Sabbaths . . . the omission is deliberate and striking](#)” (Rabbinic Anthology, C.G. Montefiore & H. Loewe, p. 544). They don’t know what to do with it.
1. The parallels between this prophetic word and Jesus’ life and ministry are almost so clear as to be unmistakable!

## Verse-by-Verse

- A. So let me read it now and I’ll make brief comments as we go along . . .

<sup>1</sup>Who has believed what he has heard from us? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?<sup>2</sup> For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him.

1. Here we see immediately the meekness and humility of this Servant. He didn’t look like much. A baby born in a stable and laid in an animal’s feeding trough “[because there was no place for them in the inn](#)” (Luke 2:7). “[Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head](#)” (Luke 9:58). Nathanael asks: “[Can anything good come out of Nazareth?](#)” (John 1:46). He seemed like nothing special. Hence, what we read next . . .

<sup>3</sup> He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

1. He was despised and rejected. You hear the mocking crowds around the cross, don't you? "If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross" (Matt. 27:40). "If You're so powerful, why are You still hanging there? Now's Your chance. Show us what You've got!"

<sup>4</sup> Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.

1. "You want to know why I'm still hanging here, why I won't come down?! Because I love you. I'm not bearing my own grief. I'm not carrying my own sorrows here. I'm bearing and carrying yours. Am I being stricken and smitten and afflicted by God, yes. But not for My own sin. For yours."

<sup>5</sup> But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. <sup>6</sup> All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

1. He takes my sickness, I get His healing. He takes my iniquity, I get His righteousness. He takes my condemnation, I get His salvation. He takes my death, I get His life! "For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Cor. 5:21).

<sup>7</sup> He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.

1. "Behold [John the Baptist said] the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29).

<sup>8</sup> By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people?

1. Still no one knew what was going on, what God was up to. We were all clueless to the wonder of mercy that had just been put on display for us. Nobody got it.

<sup>9</sup> And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.

1. Six times in [Luke 23](#) alone Jesus is said to be innocent of any crime worthy of death. Luke's going to riff on this theme of Jesus' innocence which is intended to set out all the more starkly His surprising willingness to still suffer and die in place the truly guilty and wicked.

<sup>10a</sup> Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief . . .

1. This is not ultimately man's doing, but God's! What men mean for evil, God will turn for their good! You puncture Him and out flows not vengeance and wrath, but grace and mercy. And I mean that literally. That's what the cross is!

<sup>10b</sup> . . . when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. <sup>11</sup> Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.

1. Here now we move towards Sunday and Christ's resurrection triumph. It's not death that gets the last word here, but life! And we find new life in and through Him. We're His offspring, adopted in the Spirit, brought into the family of God.

- a. And now finally we come to v. 12 . . .

<sup>12</sup> Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.

1. You remember what we said back with Peter, and how Jesus prays for him . . . He lives to make intercession for us. And He's interceding on our behalf, transgressors though we be, even now.
- B. And Jesus, back in [Luke 22](#), putting His finger on the fringes of this prophetic tapestry, says: "[Listen disciples . . . 'this Scripture must be fulfilled in me'](#)" (v. 37). "It's why I'm here. It's what I've come to do . . . for you."

## Here's Your Reason!

- A. During the first part of this sermon, you may have found yourself wondering: Why would anyone sign up for this? If following Jesus doesn't immediately give me the life I want but often makes matters harder, why do it?
1. Well, brother/sister, here's your reason! This is why. You come to experience His love—what it means to be forgiven, accepted, cared for, covered, saved. You don't have to pretend, you don't have to blame-shift, you don't have to deny, you don't have to clean yourself up. You just come as you are and let Him love on you.
    - a. The world can't even come close to offering what's being offered to us here—freely, in the face of all our guilt and shame. God's arms are open.
- B. This is why guys say: "Listen, I don't care what may come of me in the world. If I have Christ, I'll be okay." Or like Paul says: "<sup>7</sup> [W]hatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. <sup>8</sup> Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord" ([Phil 3:7–8](#)).
- C. This is why all the apostles are ready and willing to go with him to death. It's because of this love . . . that they know will see them through to life eternal in the end. And they want to share it with others. That's what transforms these guys. It's Christ's forgiveness and love.

1. Read the book of Acts. You won't see a single sword wielded by one of the apostles. They get it. They're not taking up swords anymore. They're laying down their lives in love for others. . . just like their Savior, the Suffering Servant, laid down His life in love for them!
- D. So I don't know where you are this morning, but I know where Jesus is: He's right here, arms open wide. Come on in and let Him love you back to life!