

# The Radical Call of the Kingdom

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[ 0 : 00 ] Father, we are abundantly rich in so many things. You are the Father of all blessing, and you have blessed us with so much that if we were to name everything we have, our thanksgiving would fill a library of books.

Father, you are the one who is worthy of all praise because you are the fountain of all life. So often our thanksgiving only focuses on the physical blessings we receive, as if they deserve the greatest mention.

And yet you, the sovereign God, the creator of everything, who has no need of us, who has every right to turn away from us and ignore us and reject us, yet you choose to come down to us and call us to yourself through your Son.

I pray that we would never forget the privilege that it is that we are your children. May it stun and amaze us that you would love us so much.

Forgive us where we become so familiar with the gospel that it fails to wow us again. Please work in our hearts, Lord. Excite us with the glory of your name and how beautiful you are.

[ 1 : 19 ] Father, I want to thank you so much for ICF. Thank you for what you're doing in the lives of Irina and Fred and just so many other students. We pray that right there on that campus where there's so much pressure to perform, that they would have such a big God-centered view of things, that they would be so different from those around them, that they'd be a light, a beacon, Lord, to all those around, that they would have this confident security, that their worth is not found in how great their grades are, but their worth is found in how great you are and the love that you have poured on them.

Father, I pray for the local church in Hong Kong. Thank you so much for the faithful witness of men and women over decades and decades of being a light, Lord, in this city.

I want to think of Holy Light Church in Yuen Long and Pastor Paul there. Lord, thank you for them and their faithful ministry. Would you let the gospel go deeper and richer into that church as they celebrate 80 years of being in the city?

And would they just not rest on their past, but would they push into you more as they reach out to local kids and the elderly up in Yuen Long? Would they be a beacon of light to draw other people to know you?

Father, I want to pray for the Filipino community in this city. Many of them have religious backgrounds since their childhood, and yet many of them have never truly known you.

[ 2 : 51 ] Father, we want to pray for Janet and Arlene and Julie and Jonah and Zari and Leonara and the whole foundations of faith fellowship in our midst, Lord, as they are seeking to reach out to their Filipino and Indonesian friends and neighbors.

Lord, please, would they know the calling on their lives? Would they know the love that you have for them? And would you use them mightily in reaching out to this community? I pray for all of us.

Lord, I'm just so challenged by the fact that when we have so much, sometimes our faith can be so small. We can think we're following you, and yet I know so much in my own life and our own lives that our lives are consumed by little trinkets and not by the calling you have on us.

We worry far more about things that people who have far less do not worry about. But may we lay our lives down before you with open hands, not assuming that you have to meet our expectations of convenience and comfort, but seeing your faithful goodness will lead and guide us, and we can trust you with whatever's going on in our lives right now.

Father, we just lay ourselves before you. We thank you that you are good. We need you. Change us. Speak to us. In Jesus' mighty name.

[ 4 : 19 ] Amen. Amen. I'd love to invite Janet to come and read the scripture to us this morning. Thank you so much.

The scripture reading comes from Matthew chapter 4. Please follow along in your bulletins or on the screen. Now, when Jesus heard that John has been arrested, he withdrew in Galilee.

And leaving Nazareth, he went and left in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun in Naptali, so that what was spoken by Prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled.

The land of Zebulun in the land of Naptali, the way of the sea beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles. The people dwelling in darkness have been a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned.

For that time, Jesus began to preach, saying, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. While walking by the sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew, his brother, casting on it into the sea, for they were fishermen.

[ 5 : 48 ] And he said to them, Follow me, and I will make you a fisher of men. Immediately they left their nets and followed him. 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.

Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him. And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people.

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 hallowed them.

The great crowd followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis and from Jerusalem and Judea and from beyond the Jordan. And this is the word of God.

Great. If you don't know, my name is Chris. I'm one of the leaders here at Watermark. And we're continuing in our series of going through Matthew's gospel. And so, I don't know if you've had a recent performance review at your work, but what happens when you do a performance review is you look back over your past history of what you've done, whether in the last three months, six months, or year, and you evaluate it, and then you hope that you will actually, from the mistakes that you've learned and the good things you've done, you'll actually move forward to not repeat the same things and to grow and improve.

[ 7 : 39 ] That's the idea, I think. Well, the people of Israel, God's people, had been given enough performance reviews by God throughout a thousand years of history and every single performance review they'd failed.

Every one of them, they'd made exactly the same mistakes that the previous generation had made again and again and again and again. They never seemed to learn. And yet, God had been so good to them that they kept trusting in other gods.

God kept showing them His goodness. He brought them out of Egypt, out of slavery. He brought them through the wilderness and provided for them. He brought them again and again, provision and grace, and again and again, they refused to trust Him.

Every trial, every test, they failed. I don't know if any of you have ever felt like that. But that is actually not just Israel's story, that's our story.

before a holy God. And Matthew, in his gospel, has been showing how the story of Israel, their life, it needs a rewrite.

[ 8 : 56 ] It needs someone to come and rewrite the story so that their future will be different from their past. And so John the Baptist has come proclaiming, repent for the kingdom of God is near.

There's a new future coming. And there's someone who's coming, the only person who can actually rewrite your future. The only person who's actually passed the performance review, which is Jesus Christ, who comes.

And so Matthew has been showing us how he's been baptized in the Jordan, just like Israel went through the Red Sea. He's led into the wilderness, just like Israel did.

But where they failed, he succeeded. Where they failed the test, he didn't. And now John the Baptist's ministry of saying, pointing to this one who's going to come to bring in the future, John the Baptist got arrested.

His deal is done. And he's passing on the baton to Jesus. And Jesus heads into his time of ministry. And this is where the rest of the book of Matthew is going.

[10:05] And we're going to see his teaching coming up in the Sermon on the Mount. But before that, we're going to see some key things about what Jesus is doing in gathering a new people, a new community, who know how to repent and follow him.

So what we're going to do, I'm going to go through three key points today. The first one, Jesus goes out into the darkness. And the last one, which is going to be about Jesus calls us to something bigger than ourselves, they're going to be short.

The middle one, which is going to be about Jesus calls us to himself, is going to be most of our time. So if you're wondering at the end of the second point, are we ever going to end? Take courage.

We will. So let's kind of dive in. If you've got your bulletin with you, the first point, Jesus goes into the darkness. This is verses 12 to 16.

What you'll see, it says, Jesus withdrew into Galilee. And he's called Galilee of the Gentiles. It says, the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light.

[11:12] And for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned. And Jesus, in fulfillment of a prophecy from Isaiah 700 years before, which was related to this place, Galilee, in the north of Israel, from where in Isaiah's time, Assyria had brought God's judgment for their sin onto the people of Israel.

But now, into that same place, Jesus is heading. Now what you probably don't realize is it's Galilee of the Gentiles is not a compliment for a Jewish writer.

If you think about, you know, the walled city in Kowloon that got knocked down 25 years ago, you know its reputation was kind of like this den of iniquity, of like prostitution, gambling, all kinds of darkness there.

Well, that's the same kind of idea for Galilee. That it was a place of compromise where unclean, non-Jewish people had settled there with their different religions.

And Matthew quotes Isaiah saying, this people there, they dwell in a darkness. They dwell in the shadow of death.

[12:31] And what's really interesting is Matthew has actually changed the word that Isaiah used. Isaiah said, the people walk in darkness. But Matthew says, he uses the word, they dwell in darkness.

The word dwell means to sit, to sit down, to settle. And he's making a point. He's trying to say that the people in this area, they hadn't just switched off the light temporarily, but they were still up so they could switch it back on and see again.

He's saying, they were so entrenched in darkness it was like Norway in winter time. There was no daylight. And they were never going to get back up out of their spiritual darkness.

There is spiritual death hung over them like a shadow. Like a no hope slum. Many of you, maybe you feel like your workplaces feel like that.

A toxic environment filled with self-interest and greed. Sometimes some of your family gatherings, you're worried about Chinese New Year coming up because they can feel like that.

[13:34] Places that sometimes feel so dark, you wonder, can light ever really break through in those places? That was Galilee. And just as we write off places and people, it's precisely into that place that Matthew says Jesus headed.

And he says this, light has dawned. It's been a long night in Galilee, but the sun is beginning to rise over the horizon because Jesus is here.

And because Jesus doesn't just go into the comfortable suburbs, he heads right into the place where he knows that the message of repentance, that the kingdom of God is near, is needed more than anywhere.

Because he's saying the king and his kingdom is within reach. The king has arrived and when the king arrives, what does this king do? What does he do when he comes?

And that's my second point. Jesus calls people to himself. You know, Kevin talked about repentance three weeks ago.

[14:51] And repentance is the entry point into coming into God's new kingdom, his new future, but it's also the ongoing life of those who are in God's kingdom. And Matthew wants to show us now what repentance looks like.

So let's have a look at this story, which you're going to see from 18 through to 22. Jesus is out for a stroll by the lakeside, getting some air.

And then he sees these two disciples, Simon and Andrew. And this isn't the first time Jesus has seen them. Because we know from John 2 that he actually spent at least a whole day with them, maybe a bit more, so it's not cold.

But these guys are right in the middle of their work day. Okay? But some of us think that the disciples are just these kind of poor working class people.

But actually that's not true. The disciples, though they were uneducated, they were probably not desperately poor in their terms of that time.

[15:53] Because they have a small family fishing business, which we know from Mark 1, that actually they have employees as well. So this is like an SME. Okay? This is their small, medium business, and they're right in the middle of trying to get a catch to sustain their cash flow.

This is the equivalent of them on the trading floor, them in the meeting room, them in the classroom, them in the hospital ward, them taking the kids to school.

It's a normal day, it's the normal events that happen at work, they're fishermen, and Jesus comes along and he says, follow me, I will make you fishers of men.

There's a few things that I want to pull out of this, because I want to really unpack this phrase, because this is dynamite if we get this. First thing that this says, who takes the initiative to call the disciples?

Jesus does. Do you know, that was really unusual in that day, because if you had a rabbi, rabbis didn't go out to find disciples, they actually waited for disciples to come to them.

[17:05] And so, Jesus, though, where is he? Jesus is in Galilee, a place in darkness. Nobody's getting up to go and find him.

And so, nobody there was going, Jesus, we'd love to be your disciple, please make us your disciple. They're not doing that. He is the one who has to reach out down to them in their darkness.

That's actually the same for us. Do you know that? How many of you here saved yourself? No, because the only reason, if you are a Christian here today, the only reason you are a Christian is not because you made some smart intellectual decision to think, yeah, that sounds reasonable to me to follow Jesus.

Okay, I'm going to do it. It's not that. The only reason you are a Christian, it's not because you were born in a Christian family. It's because Jesus called you and Jesus saved you.

Nobody saves themselves and he's calling us today to himself, whether you are a Christian or not a Christian, again and again.

[18:18] But you know when Jesus calls you, it's the second thing. He's always going to disrupt your life. You see, the disciples didn't go away from meeting Jesus saying, oh, that was a nice time we had, nice guy.

Let's just get back on with fishing. Because he says, he doesn't say either, follow me and all your problems are going to go away. Because you see, when you meet with Jesus, you will never be, and you truly follow his call, you will never be the same afterwards as you were before.

There's always going to be a different before and after shot. He's coming to disrupt your life and your plans and your dreams. And if you're not living and feeling the tension with living for his kingdom, if you don't feel the disruption in some of the way that you wish your life was, then it may be you're actually not living for his kingdom at all.

Because maybe you're just living for your own plans. Because Jesus is calling you today just like he was calling the disciples and he's going to call you to disrupt your life.

Anyone still on board? Okay, second thing. Now, when he comes to disrupt your life, what's the call?

[19:43] The call is follow me and I will make you fishers of men. That was the call to these four men that day. It's the call to every person who throughout history, every other disciple that's the same call.

And there are three words here which he calls these disciples to which would change their lives forever. Three words which if they had not responded positively to, we would not be here today talking about these people 2,000 years later.

These are three words which everything changed. Do you know which three words they are? You see, some of you are confused because in English you only see two words which are follow me.

But in Greek there are three words which literally are come after me or come behind me. That's what the Greek says. And so I want to spend a little bit of time unpacking these three words one by one because they are challenging words and we need to hear this.

the first word is come. When I say come here, what am I doing? Okay, so does one.

[ 21 : 06 ] If I say come here, what am I doing? I'm giving you a command, right? I'm saying come here now. If I say come and join me, what am I doing? I'm inviting you.

It's an invitation. What's common between a command and an invitation? Basically, we're trying audience participation here. Both of them require a response.

Both of them require a response. You see, if you answer on Facebook maybe, that is not a response.

Or in fact, it is a response. You're trying to postpone a response but actually your response is no, not now. Right? You see, Jesus also had other people.

He said, follow me to some other people in Matthew 8 and they go, hey, I'm busy. I've got a family funeral. I've just got some work stuff. And Jesus is straight down the line. He goes, maybe and not now means no.

[ 22 : 09 ] It means I've got other priorities, not you. But do you notice in the passage what the response of the disciples is. It says, Simon and Andrew immediately, they left immediately.

Do you see that? And then James and John in verse 20, it says, they immediately, they left. Do you see that? Immediately. 20 and 22.

He's saying procrastination is not an option. Jesus is calling you today and you have to respond to him. How are we going to respond?

That's the third thing. He takes the initiative. He responds. He's going to disrupt your life. He calls for a response. Next thing is the next word.

After or behind. The response that we are to give is always a call to surrender to his leading.

Because there were many, when Jesus says, follow me, follow after me, come after me, there were many rabbis at the time.

[ 23 : 22 ] And you could tell whose rabbis a person were by the behavior of the disciples. Because they'd seek to imitate their rabbi in everything. So if Rabbi Leo had a three-inch beard, then all of his disciples would have a three-inch beard.

You've got to grow a little bit. If Rabbi Leo had a nervous twitch like this, and walking down the road you saw a whole load of people doing this, you would know they were all disciples of Rabbi Leo.

You see, I visited Cambodia a couple of years ago. We went to a landmine museum. And one of the boards in the museum told the story of a guy called Aki Ra.

And he'd been responsible for putting down landmines for the Khmer Rouge government. But then later on he felt such guilt for what he'd done that he actually became this kind of ninja landmine remover.

So he would go out into landmines walking barefoot with just his hands and a stick, and he would remove thousands and thousands of landmines. And so when the UN expert landmine removers came in, they asked for his help.

[ 24 : 37 ] Because he knew everything. And so what happened was when he would go in front of all the other UN experts, and he would say, listen, just put your foot in the same place that I've put my foot.

Just put your foot in the same place. Don't put it anywhere else. Because if you put it anywhere else, you may get blown to smithereens. You've got to put your footprint in my footprint, because I'm going to lead you into safety.

You see, that is exactly what Jesus is saying here. when he says, follow me. Come after me. Don't think that to be a Christian is to get a ticket to heaven, and then you can kind of plot your own course through the minefield of life, and hope that maybe he can just give you some guidance occasionally when you're having a few problems.

That is not Christianity, because you'll get blown up. God, I want you to He's saying, I want you to entrust and surrender every part of your life to me.

Let me lead you. You are my path, is what he's saying. You are the shape and direction of my life, for my finances, for my relationships, for my work.

[ 25 : 51 ] That's what every believer would try to say, God, I want to discern where are you leading? Right now, in your life, where are you leading? I don't want to go my own way. I don't want

to go the way that everyone else says. I want to go your way.

The response is a call to surrender to his leading. Next, he takes the initiative. He's going to disrupt your life.

He calls you to respond, and it's a call to respond in surrender. Then he said, the call of Jesus is costly. You know, these guys are fishermen.

They're fishermen. Their money is in fish. No fish, no cash. That's their financial security. No food to feed their families if they don't get fish.

And we know that right here, Peter is married as well because he's got a mother-in-law. So he's got a whole family to look after. And when Jesus says, come after me, follow me, he's asking him to put a blank check on the table and to say, Jesus, you can fill this in however you like.

[ 27 : 06 ] You can fill in my future how you like. You can fill in my career path how you like. You can fill in my bank balance how you like. You can, you know, I've got my savings plan.

I've got my NPF. I've got my investments. But that's held loosely for you to guide me. And you can lead me anywhere.

And for Peter and Andrew, that meant leaving behind their business dreams. I don't know what it's going to mean for you. But it's costly.

You see, Jesus then walks along. He said, hey, your financial things to Peter and Andrew. But then he walks along and then he sees James and John. And they're there with their dad. And you notice in the passage, he actually repeats the dad's name twice.

He says, he's the son of Zebedee. And then he calls him Zebedee. And then they say, their father twice. Because Matthew is making a point here. When he calls them to follow him, James and John are not only just walking off with Jesus and leaving behind all their potential cash in the nets behind them.

[ 28 : 21 ] They're also leaving the most precious thing in Jewish society, which was their family. Their dad had hopes and expectations for them, I'm sure.

And probably most of those were tied up in the family business. And so, in the dad's opinion, really counted. A rebellious son was shame on the family.

And you think about it, for many of us, our parents' opinion counts a lot. Some of us, it has carried so much weight over us that it actually has stifled our own call to follow Jesus.

You know, you fear what they would say if ever you made a decision to adopt a child or to choose a different career path than they would expect. We live under the weight of parental expectations.

And Jesus is clear, we're meant to honor our parents, we're meant to listen to them because they have great wisdom, but your parents are not your ultimate guide in life. Sometimes the call to follow Christ puts you in tension with even the most close people to you, even your parents.

[ 29 : 32 ] And Jesus is saying, I'm calling you to put your feet after me, not just after your mom or your dad. And that's challenging. That's challenging. But he's saying, will you write a blank check for me?

Will you write a blank check and let me lead you? Let me lead you. Come after me. You see, this is challenging, right?

But our response is based on who Jesus is. You see, Jesus isn't asking you to just leave everything for a series of doctrines.

You know, Islam will tell you, follow the Quran, follow the five pillars. Buddhism will tell you, follow the ninefold path. Judaism will tell you, follow the law.

Marketism says, follow the market analysts. Careerism says, follow whatever your boss tells you. Fashion. Fashion. Just think, you're always a disciple of somebody.

[ 30 : 43 ] You're always a disciple of somebody. Fashion is just clothing discipleship. Right? Culture is just society discipleship.

Like, why does everyone in Hong Kong want to be a lawyer, doctor, engineer, or finance and business guy? Why? We're just following along. Right? And look at actually how that often enslaves many of us who actually wish we weren't one of those but we've just been shoved into that.

We're all disciples of someone because we've all got to trust someone. But I'd like you to think if you received this text, I don't know if you can see that.

Let me just move the curtain. Hey Chris, great meeting you the other day. I want you to quit your job, your neighborhood, and your family and follow me wherever I go.

Let me know by the end of the day. What questions, if you received that text, would be going through your mind? Sure. Who are you?

[ 31 : 51 ] Yes. Yes. Any other questions? What do you want? Yes. Sorry.

Block. Yes, block. Why block? Weird. Yeah, like, like, where are you going?

Like, what's in it for me? Yeah, what do you want? What about money? What about my family? Are you going to just mess up my life? What if that's a scam?

What if you're just trying to play with me? What if? Right? A lot of questions we have. Because doesn't that kind of call actually raise a whole load of fears within us?

A whole load of what ifs? Because we don't precisely know A, who this is really and where they're taking us.

[ 32 : 55 ] You see, we want to have the five-year plan ahead of us. But sometimes in discipleship, there's an element of it's like a mist where you can just see the two meters in front of you.

It's uncertain. And when you can't see your way, we often try and clutch onto the things that we feel are secure. But the call of discipleship is always the call to answer those two questions.

Who are you and can I trust you? Who are you and can I trust you? That is the ultimate questions for deciding a discipleship.

You know, who here has ever played Assassin's Creed? Okay, this is admission time. Mike has.

You know who the original Assassins were?

The original Assassins were not a video game. They were a Muslim sect which had, at one point, they had one leader who to prove his authority to people around him would, when they came up to him, he would order some of his followers to just jump off a cliff at his command.

[ 34 : 05 ] And they would follow. They would run and they would jump off a cliff to their death. I think that's sometimes what we think God is like. We actually think that this call is actually a call to either make my life miserable, lonely, hard, or just make me suffer.

You're going to ruin my life. Because we maybe know the doctrine about who Jesus is up here, but we don't really know who are you?

Can I trust you? And the whole of Matthew in his first four chapters has been trying to tell us again and again who Jesus is so that we can say I can trust you.

You know, in a world where every politician, every boss, every spouse, every friend will let you down at some point, Matthew says he's the promised Messiah who is always faithful to his word. He always delivers on his promises and he will never use or manipulate you. Do you know him? In a lonely world where we're craving acceptance and love, Jesus draws near as Emmanuel, the creator God, God with us to love us, to save us, to deliver us.

[ 35 : 17 ] Do you know him? In a world which is power hungry, filled with nationalism, filled with division, filled with self-interest, Jesus is the global king who calls people from all nations in unity to come and worship him.

In a world of injustice with families and communities torn apart by greed and oppression, Jesus is the unbribable judge who has a winnowing fork in his hand and he will bring justice to bear on this world.

Heaven and hell are in his hands. Do you know him? In a world of indulgence and faithlessness and where we lack self-control, Jesus is the faithful, obedient one who has never failed.

Do you know him? In a world where it's every man who seeks to exalt themselves, Jesus humbles himself, identifies with us in his baptism, in our weakness, takes our sin on the cross to lift us up and bring him to himself.

Do you know him? In a world where the strong eat the weak, Jesus is the tender king who will not break a bruised reed, but he lifts up those of us who right now feel crushed and broken.

[ 36 : 37 ] In a world where we're called to be disciples of fashion and technology for the sake of increasing business profit margin, Jesus is calling you to himself for the sake of his glory and your good.

Do you know him? Do you know him? It was 1783. George Washington was facing a mutiny from his troops.

They hadn't been paid for ages. And they were refusing to fight for him and they were on the verge of going to the parliament to overthrow the parliament to get what they wanted.

Washington stood up and he made a speech to try and persuade all of his troops to trust him and to follow him. But they refused to listen. None of them trusted.

And then at one moment he went to get a letter from a senator to prove that the troops were going to get paid. And as he did he pulled out of his pocket, he fumbled in his pocket and he kind of pulled out a pair of glasses that not one of his even closest officers had ever seen him wear.

[ 37 : 48 ] And as he pulled and opened the letter and held it up he said this, he said, Gentlemen, I, you must pardon me for I have grown not only grey but blind in the service of my country.

All the troops were stunned. Many just started weeping. Washington read the letter and he walked out within ten minutes the mutiny was called off.

Every troop swore allegiance to Washington because they trusted him. Because they saw who he was and the sacrifice he had paid for this cause.

He wasn't just saying words. He had paid for it with his very own body and his life. Jesus didn't just grow old, didn't just grow blind and grey for us.

He died for you and me on a cross. He's not going to call you to jump off a cliff because he's already jumped off the cliff for you. He's already taken the hit for you and for me though we did not deserve it so that he can lead you to safety and wholeness and freedom to the kingdom of God that he wants you to be involved and be part of.

[ 39 : 12 ] And so he calls every single one of us today. Will you follow me? It's a costly call. It's a call to go into the unknown wherever he leads.

But it's a call to trust the one who has loved you more than anyone has ever loved you or ever will. Will you follow? Will you follow? You know, as I've been reflecting on this, I realize how so many of my fears come from that fact that I don't really know him well.

And my prayer, I've been a Christian over 30 years. I can never assume that I already know him enough.

Is our prayer that we want to know him more so we can trust him more so that we can walk with him? If you are not a Christian today, he's calling you to respond to him.

Some of you have been in church for a long time. You know the message, but you've been saying maybe. Today is a day where God says, no, today I'm calling you to respond to me.

[ 40 : 32 ] Will you lay down and write that blank check in repentance and say, I want you to lead me wherever. Forgive me for leading my own life my own way. Some of you may have more questions.

We're going to be starting a Christianity Explored course in a few weeks' time in March. That's going to be an opportunity for you to respond and just say, I want to come to know Jesus more. But if you're a Christian this morning, I don't know where you are.

I don't know what God has been saying to you, but I know that he is calling you right now with whatever you're wrestling with to lay that blank check on the table and to say, Jesus, you can take me.

I surrender to you today. Would you lead me? That's what repentance looks like. That's what repentance looks like. It's a daily thing.

I was going to share another point, but I think I'm going to just stop and allow us just to close your eyes for a minute.

[ 41 : 46 ] I want you just to ask God, where are you calling me today?

Where are you calling me? And I want you right now to just do some business with God. Just lay before him your life.

Lay before him the things which have been wrapping you up. Lay before him the things which have consumed you. Are you willing to say, as he's calling you to follow him, to lay down with open hands to say, God, would you speak to me?

Jesus, I want you to lead me wherever. And I'm scared, but I can trust you because you're good. If the musicians just want to come up.

You know, some of us, we've been saying, oh, Jesus, you would never call me to dot, dot, dot.

[ 43 : 12 ] You would never call me to take a lower-paid job. You'd never call me to quit my job. You'd never call me to place my kids in a school which none of my peers would dream of sending their kids to.

Jesus, you'd never call me to move to a less comfortable neighborhood. We say that a lot. Jesus, you'd never. But if you're laying a blank check before him today, just give him all the you would nevers and just say, you can lead me.

And for some of that, that will be him leading you on his mission, maybe to another country, maybe into ministry.

For some of you, that will be leading you into Morgan Stanley, leading you into the hospital, leading you into the Chinese New Year gatherings, with a heart to pray for those who don't know him.

with a heart to be his instrument, as he goes into the darkness, that you will be there following him as a light, because he loves the people around you.

[ 44 : 44 ] But I maybe ask even just in the prayer team if you'd like to come forward. I think that maybe some of you, God's just speaking to you right now, and you just need to come forward to have prayer. Maybe there are things you feel like you've been holding on to for a long time.

Maybe you've been saying no, you've been saying maybe, you've been saying wait. Maybe you just come and say, Jesus, I need to know you more. I just need to know you more.

Show me yourself. Father, thank you that your love for us is immeasurable.

And yet we are so afraid sometimes to follow you because it feels like, it feels sometimes that our own securities are more trustworthy than you who have given everything for us.

forgive us, change our hearts. Would we hear and see you this week and immediately follow you?

[ 46 : 00 ] Father, have your way. Thank you that you're so good to us. We love you. Jesus' name. Amen.