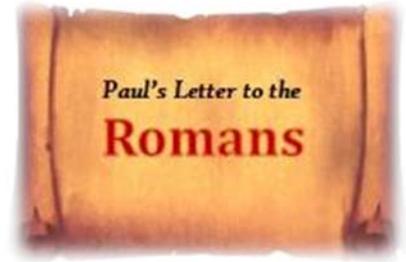


A number of weeks ago we started in the book of Romans. We're in a little series called SPEAK TRUTH because in this little section that's exactly what takes place, the Apostle Paul speaks truth. But before we got into that the first half of chapter 1 talked about the Apostle Paul. This is a guy who was known as a person that was out to kill Christians because he's a guy with huge convictions and he's a guy that is going to do what he believes to be the right thing to do when all of a sudden God gets a hold of his life and transforms him. And something happened on that road to Damascus that was so attractive when he saw Jesus that it so radically transformed him and changed him that he would never, ever be the same again. In fact, he couldn't keep his mouth shut. And he writes to the church in Rome, a church that he had never been to before, and he says, "I would love to come to you," and "I've heard all about you and your faith and what God's done in your life. I've heard about it all over the place. I would love to come to you because I would love to sit down and talk back and forth with you about the Gospel. About this thing that happened between me and Jesus that was so amazing that I want to talk back and forth with you about it."



Well, then he leaps into this, what we've discussed as a basically a legal treatise where he starts out by basically convicting the world of our sin, and he sub-divides it into three different groups of people. And we talked about the first group of people last week—we called them the heathens. They were the ones who look out over creation and God had made creation in such a way that if we look at it we'd say, "There must be a God." And we looked out over that creation and these heathens looked out over creation and in so doing said, "Yeah, there's not a God." And as they rejected God they began on a downward spiral away from God, and as a result Paul says they're guilty. And those reading it then, and even now, may quickly say, "I get that."

You think about the heathen, I mean, when we think of our preconceived notion of a heathen it's the question that we like to throw up this straw man, "Well, what about this heathen that has never heard about the Gospel, who has all these dark practices and all these things and they've never heard about God." And Paul says, "Yeah, you know what? They have. They saw it through creation." But the thing that's interesting in that moment, Paul knows what the next thing that we're going to think of—Yeah, they're guilty. They do all these dark things. They treat their women terribly. They kill their babies. They have these demonic practices. We get it that they're in that mode—but we're not.

And it's in that moment that he addresses what I would consider to be the norm of our time and the pushback of our time, the statement that you hear most often and that is: "I'm a pretty good person." If you ask just about anyone that you work with, "Hey, where are you at with God? Where do you see yourself, I mean, do you think you, you know, what makes you think you'll spend eternity in Heaven?" The preponderance of people that you talk to are going to quickly look at you and say, "Hey, I'm gonna go to Heaven." And you say, "Why are you gonna go to Heaven?" And they're gonna look back at you and quickly say, "Well, because I'm basically a good person. Yeah, I've done—" and they'll always, you know, sort of push off a little thing, "Yeah, I've done a few things here and there but I'm a whole lot better than, you know, those that do the bad things." Basically pushing off to that heathen, that one where they have this list of practices that the majority of people would say, "Yeah, yeah, that's not me." And what Paul will do this week in our text in Romans is he's gonna say, "Yeah, you know what? Being a moral person doesn't get you to God either. In fact, it's going to put you in a place where you, too, are guilty." And you say, "Wow. So are you telling me that if I live a really good life that's not good enough?" Because that is the standard comment of our time.

And so if you have your Bibles I would love for you to turn to Romans chapter 2 where we find ourselves today. If you don't have a Bible, that is fine, we have Bibles that can be yours on the back table. We also know that many of you turn to your phones at this point and you have a Bible app downloaded. And here's why I like that because many times during the week you're sitting in a doctor's office or you're waiting for a meeting or you're in-between things, it's a great time to open up your Bible and just read it. We're convinced that the Bible changes lives. And so one of the things that we hope to do on a Sunday morning is get you really looking in here and get you interested, get you thinking about it, get you starting to chase a few of these things down. So I hope that you have a pen and a piece of paper or you just take notes on your phone to just cause you to come back and look at this later.



Image source: theodysseyonline.com

So today we find ourselves in chapter 2 of Romans and verse 1 says this:

¹ Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges.

— this is what I just talking about, there is this response that we have that's like, "Well, I'm not as bad as *that* person," and so that's this judgment. "I don't do the things *they* do." And then it says —

For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things.

I've just been thinking about this all week long. I mean, there are — how many times have I looked at someone else and what they are doing and I've been so frustrated at what they're doing and so frustrated at their life or their lifestyle or their sin, but if I were to take a mirror and look at myself I would find, "Ouch!" That is my issue and I am just projecting it onto them. You'll oftentimes notice when someone's always beating you up over the same thing, just coming after you over the same thing, very often that is their issue and it's really huge in their life and so they see it from a mile away with you, and so they're quick to go after you on that. And here he says, verse 2:

² We know that the judgment of God rightly falls on those who practice such things. ³ Do you suppose, O man—you who judge those who practice such things and yet do them yourself—that you will escape the judgment of God?

~ ROMANS 2:1-3

Now by the way, we get this word judgment here. I mean, you think about it for a moment. I was thinking this week I'm glad when these couple weeks of talking about judgment are over. This isn't the kind of things that most people go, you know, "Hey, honey, let's get up and go to church this morning. I'd like to hear a little bit about judgment from God, that'd be good. I need that to get my week started just right." I'm just like, man, I don't like that and I wish these three weeks were over where we're done talking about it.

And then I got to really thinking, no-no-no-no. Here's the deal: There is no hope if we don't really understand what the problem is and we don't understand what the source of the issue is. If there is not a problem, then there really is nothing to solve and there is no hope. And it's interesting because we all say we're all good and we all think that everyone is just fine, just sort of different levels of fine, and yet when we have our conversations we're all really quick to talk about how bad the world is and how messed up everything is and we feel this tension that is around us. And in this piece right here that we just read, what he says is do you practice these things and do them yourself and think you're going to escape the judgment of God? And then I like this:

⁴ Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience,

— and what he’s saying is for many of us we have come to this place where we understand we have a loving God who loves us and so we just think everything’s cool. So regardless of what I do or where I go God is fine with it. And we’ve created this image of God where He’s fine with everything and anything we do. And what he says next is so absolutely attractive to me and I believe it’s attractive to you. He says —

not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?

~ ROMANS 2:4

Isn’t that cool?

Now we talked about repentance last week. I see it, so I see my sin, I see something, you know, like right here, I realize, “Whoa, yeah, I am wrong in that area.” I see it. I own it. I go, “Yep, that’s me. I’m a sinner.” And I turn from it and I walk the other direction. And it’s God’s kindness that causes us to turn from our sin, not to just keep on repeating that sin over and over again. He says it is God’s kindness that leads us to repentance.

Verse 5 says:

⁵ But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.

~ ROMANS 2:5

Let’s stop for a moment and ask the question: Is it okay to judge? And he says, you know, that’s what we end up doing when we say, “Oh, yeah, there’s this heathen and yes, they do that, but I’m pretty much okay.” Is it all right to judge? And he says, you know, when you judge you’re actually judging yourself. It’s sort of this boomerang effect that causes us to come and look at ourselves. You look back to the book of Matthew, Matthew chapter 7, Jesus talks about this very thing. Chapter 7, verse 1, he says:

¹ “Judge not, that you be not judged. ² For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. ³ Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? ⁴ Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when there is the log in your own eye?

— and then He says this word that we hate in our world, He says —

⁵ You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.”

~ MATTHEW 7:1-5

So I grabbed this off the woodpile last night and I grabbed this one because if I leave it here it doesn’t matter. This is so wet I can’t seem to get it to burn anyhow and it’s so big, it won’t burn. But even as I think about how big it is and I picture that log in my eye, at this point I can’t see one person in this room. And this is where most of us are at in our lives. There is something so big in front of us that is occluding our vision, and he says our first response has to be to remove that log out of our own eye. That many of us sitting here today and we’re looking at that heathen, we’re looking at those other people and we’re saying, “Well, I am basically good.” And the moment that I’m in that mode of saying, “I am basically good,” I am at risk of



being a hypocrite because of this log that is occluding my vision. Jesus says listen, quit looking at everyone else, grab that log and get it out of your own eye.

So in the two chapters before this in Matthew, Jesus says okay, listen, if you have been angry with another person it's the same as if you've murdered them.¹ Jesus says if you've lusted after someone else, it's the same as if you've committed adultery with them. And real quick we begin to realize wow, Jesus is looking down deep into the heart of mankind and He says you condemn the heathen, you love to say I'm not as bad as them, but He says here's the deal, you are without excuse. So I go back over to Roman's again and there's just a couple other verses that I want to draw your attention to and this is what the moral person says, "Listen, I've tried to do everything by the book." So let me walk you through just a couple verses that I'm gonna put up on the screen. So verse 6:

⁶ He will render to each one according to his works:

~ ROMANS 2:6

To those of you who've sat in here for a long time, that may seem a little contradictory to what we've had to say because, remember, I'm always saying, "Hey listen, it's by grace alone that you're saved—has nothing to do with works." But here's what I want you to hear and what I want you to know today: The point of the law was to let us know that we can't fulfill it. It was to let us know that all of the works that we could possibly do won't get us there.

So I was thinking about this this week, I was trying to think through this question I created my head. The question is this: How many ways are there to be saved? In some ways you might say two—it's like by works but I'd have to have *perfect* works. I'd have to be perfect all the time. You don't get one mistake; one mistake separates you from God. Or you could say the second way would be I'd have to have Jesus who is the righteous One place His righteousness on me so that God would see my works as perfect because of Jesus. Either way you could go back to saying there's just one way: Having perfect works. So if I go through my life and I do all this moral stuff and I live as perfectly as I can, I still haven't lived perfectly enough because fail at one point and I'm out. At that point I realize—and it was the purpose of the law is to get me to realize—I need help. I can't do this on my own. And so what Paul's trying to say to the moral person is, yeah, you can do all these works, but you're still going to be lost. Look at verse 11:

¹¹ For God shows no partiality.

~ ROMANS 2:11

So in the midst this we realize God is the judge and we're guilty. And what Paul's trying to say is we're *all* guilty. And we keep on sort of moving the goal line giving another excuse to say, "But I think I'm okay here." And I do believe it goes back to what we were talking about last week where you have this initial experience with God, where people see God in creation and they respond to God, "No, I'm not sure that you are God," to this latter response that we have right now where we say, "Well, I understand that there is a God but *I* can make that God happy." So in other words, you sort of put yourself in the place of God by doing enough things because you're good enough to do that, when he sells us over and over no, we're not.

And then the final verse that's listed here is verse 16 and he says this:

¹ See Matthew chapter 5:21-48

¹⁶ on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.

~ ROMANS 2:16

"I did everything by the book" -moral person

Romans 2:6 - He will render to each one according to his works

Romans 2:11 - For God shows no partiality

Romans 2:16 - On that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus. - God

And it is in that verse that I would just say that most of us stand back and go, “Oops,” because we might be able to fool each other and look a certain way and create this public persona of who we are, but God looks beyond that. God knows differently. And so, again, this is why we need something more than just our public persona. God looks down and says, “No, I know what you think you look like, Lee. I know what you think they all think of you. I know you have created this aura of who you are, but you're not. You're just not.” And He begins to look inside of my heart and He sees those things that are in secret and He says, “You're not there. You're not there.” And I believe that brings us today to absolutely this key issue that we deal with in our time of morality. The Bible tells us here, written here in this text,² that God has placed within each one of us a conscience and we attempt to live out what we consider to be a right life based on that conscience. But He says even after having lived out that right life based on that conscience, we don't make it.

All right, go back to where I started, the Apostle Paul, a guy who is out killing people, he writes to this church, he says, “I can't wait to sit down and talk to you. And the reason why I can't wait to sit down and talk to you is I can't wait to share back and forth this Gospel, this righteousness that comes in Jesus Christ. Let me read the words again, chapter 1, verse 16:

¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who

— and this is the keyword of the book —

believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

— this is to everyone but in the next two chapters he's going to try to get everyone lost, he's gonna try to tell you that they are all far from God, but he says in Jesus—to those who *believe* in Jesus. Verse 17 says:

¹⁷ For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”

~ ROMANS 1:16-17

² They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them ~ ROMANS 2:15

So here's what we have: We have the righteous saying, "I am a sinner and I am only righteous because of what God has given to me in His Son Jesus, and that's placed on me." So what he's trying to do is get us all to a place where we go, "I am lost," and we respond to that, and the only response to that is belief.

So I'd like to write something down on the white pad in front of you here for just a moment. I know you probably won't be able to see it, but I think you'll get a grasp of the idea real quick. Over the years in a church setting we have told you that listen, the first thing that you need to do is believe [he writes



"Believe" on easel board]. And when you believe, if you believe, you then belong here [he writes "Belong" on easel board]. And if you belong here, then you

will become like Jesus [he writes "Become" on easel board]. And so it's just sort of this progression that takes place that each person finds themselves on [he places arrows → between the words].

I mentioned at the very beginning that we want to talk today about following Jesus. When Jesus walked here in this earth you read over and over in Scripture about how the crowds followed Him. And what we learn is that the crowds were following Him because of what He was saying was so powerful and amazing. What He was doing was even more exciting; I mean, you get 5,000 people into a place and He feeds those 5,000? That's an amazing thing. He was healing people right there on the spot. I mean, all of a sudden you have this huge attraction, you have this huge group of followers who are following after Jesus to hear His every word and they're hanging on those words. And He even says in the midst of this, John chapter 7, He says my words are coming straight from the Father, they're coming from God.³

And so the response at that point has to be wow, we're hearing the very words of God. And all that went fine as long as He's feeding them, as long as He's healing them, as long as He's saying all these things that are blowing their minds. They're all there in the crowd, they belong there. But there comes a moment where their response is they don't like something that He says and they begin to just leave Jesus.⁴ So what you begin by having a crowd that is following Him, that begins to get whittled down. In fact, the very closest followers of Jesus in John chapter 6, Jesus looks back at them and says, "Are you going to leave also?"⁵ And their response was no way, where would we go if we were to leave?

It's sort of like Paul when he meets Jesus and he finds out what it is to follow Jesus, the very thing that he's been trying to figure out all of his life—now all of a sudden there is hope. This mess of a life is put back together, these things that are broken are healed, and all of a sudden he recognizes purpose and joy in life. He notices that his life changes and he goes, "Wow." That's the hope that I want to share with everyone that's around. But many people say, "Nope, I'm not in," and they flee, they take off and they say, "I don't want to have anything to do with that."

As we've been thinking about that, one of the things that we've talked about a lot over the years here at Calvary is this—is that actually we find that people need to belong here first of all. And it's why we say to everyone that walks into this building, anyone who we invite, "You will belong here." You'll

³ So Jesus answered them, "My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me. If anyone's will is to do God's will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority. The one who speaks on his own authority seeks his own glory; but the one who seeks the glory of him who sent him is true, and in him there is no falsehood." ~ JOHN 7:18-19

⁴ See John chapters 6, 7, 8

⁵ After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. So Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you want to go away as well?" Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God." ~ JOHN 6:66-69

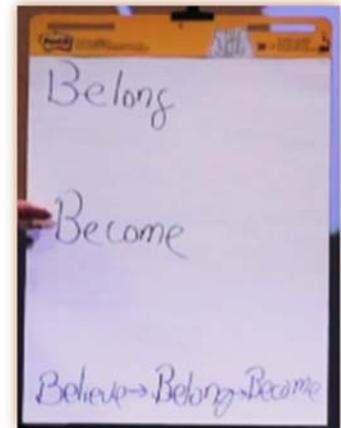
remember Jesus' words where He says, "They will know that you are my disciples by your love one for another."⁶

I have a response to people constantly that whatever you're going through get over here, get over here as quick as you can. And whether it's during the week, you can come right in to our front desk, I've watched them over and over pray with people. I haven't watched them over and over call one of the pastors out to pray over them because this needs to be a place where wherever you're at in your life you belong here, you are accepted here. In fact, I think you'll see it, I'm not a hundred percent sure, but I think if you pull up our website right now one of first set of words that come up is "You Belong Here." Because we want you to know that wherever you're at, wherever you've come from, whatever thing is going on in your life, that you can find belonging here. Jesus said that you will know that you are my disciples by your love for each other. I tell people all the time, "Just show up on a Sunday morning." I don't know if I—I was a little freaked out; I go in there and hear all that singing and people standing up and people, hey, that's fine, just sit in the cafés and have a cup of coffee. People will come sit with you, they'll surround you, they'll encourage you, and they'll pray with you if you want them to because there is this place where you need that first step.



Calvary Fellowship website home page

You think about the crowds that we're following Jesus around, yet did they all have the right motives? Were they there for the right reasons? I don't think so. Obviously at the end of the day a lot of them walk. But their first step of following Jesus was to belong in that crowd. He fed them all. He loved them all. He taught them all. He reached out to them all. Interestingly enough, what many of those people found is as they were hearing His truth they began to practice what He was teaching. It's what we would possibly call "becoming" [*he writes "Become" on easel board*]. And as you think about that for a moment, is doing things God's way is *the* best way to live. And if we will do things God's way we will live in the best way possible and we will see God's results.



Easel board

Now, here's my fear in that and oftentimes people do that; they come to church and they'll hear a few little things and go, "Man, that works," because – guess what – the Bible works. God's teachings work. They will result in the right responses in your life. But where this can be risky in a church like ours is that our attendance, our belonging can stop right here [*gestures at Become*] and become just merely about morality—how can I live my life a little bit better? And there is an incredible amount of relief in living our lives a little bit better. You do things God's way, you get God's results. That's why a lot of people will say, "Aw, I don't like God's rules and all the things that God says to do." I'm like, "Boy, I'll tell you what. I would encourage you try them. Try living them." Instead of buying the lie that they're a weight and that they're a burden, when you do it the way Jesus says to do it, you get incredible results. And as a result of that you have love in your life, you have joy in your life, you have peace in your life.

⁶ "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." ~ JOHN 13:35

All of a sudden there's self-control in your life. These fruits of the spirit⁷ that are happening. But if we just stop at the becoming and the morality piece, or if we become a group of people that all we try to do is figure out how to be more moral, we miss the very key element.

This is a group of people that Jesus is talking to. He's talking to a group of moral people who by their conscience do a lot of right things and say, "I've got it going on." But this whole little section began with the words at the end of chapter 1 of Romans. And remember, these chapter markings and these verse markings weren't in the original writing, so he's writing this long piece just straight through to the people. So just before he said this—it may have been what we talked about two weeks ago—just before he said this he said, "*I am not ashamed of the Gospel.*" That's the good news of Jesus Christ. That by the grace of God—not by any works we have done on ourselves—by the grace of God He saves us. He says, "*for it is the power of God to salvation to everyone who believes.*" And then he says that's how you receive the righteousness of God—by faith. And there comes a moment that we realize that Jesus + Nothing = Everything. And in that

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."

~ ROMANS 1:16-17

moment we believe.



I'm guessing that in this room today we have people in every one of these categories. And maybe even in a category that is pre- this category [pre-Belong] and the reason I say that is this may be your first week here. Someone invited you here so you're sitting here going, "I don't know if I feel like I belong yet. No one's said 'Hello' to me yet." And I hope that's not true. I hope someone did. I hope someone was friendly to you. I hope they turned to you in your seat and at least smiled and said, "Hey, welcome. Good to see you." But it's possible they didn't.



Maybe you slipped in late and you just slid in those back doors and you just slipped in here. You're still in this, you haven't even gotten to the belonging place yet. You haven't gotten to that place where you feel accepted, where you feel the love of God's people, the Christians showing that Jesus is real by our love. And we want to be that place, and I want to invite you into that belonging here at that place. And that's why I was so passionate about jumping the students together today because I want them to

belong. I want them to have a group, a place to belong where they can begin to be with other Christians. Once you've come that place I would love to invite you to that place of Becoming because in this passage that we were just looking at, in verse 15 it says:

¹⁵ They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them

~ ROMANS 2:15

We need to move to a place where we say, "I want to obey God's ways. I realize that His way is the best way to live." And I find that many people test-drive this plan of God for our lives; where they say, "Hey, let me see, what is it like if I live in the right possible way?" And as a result of that you come to a

⁷ Fruits of the Spirit are listed in **GALATIANS 5:22-23**: *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.*

place where you're going, "This the best way to live, but just doing a bunch of right things I still need a Savior." And you come to a place where you believe.

Here's what I want to throw out to you today. I'm hoping that you've quickly said where you find yourself on this trajectory this morning. And here's what I would love to suggest to you, wherever you find yourself, is would you take the next right step? Some of you, if it's your first time here today, would you give us an opportunity to let you belong? Go out there and grab a bagel and sit down at a table and see if we don't show up next to you just to connect with you and get to know each other. By the way, I'm trusting on you church that you'll reach out to that person. Test us. But because we're Christ followers the love of Jesus flows out of us, we want to reach out to you.

If you feel like, "No, I belong. I feel like I'm accepted here. I feel like I get it. I feel like I feel the love of the Christians here." I hear it from people every week in this place, "I feel the love of God in this place. I feel the relational thing." I have people say to me, "It's hard to believe it's a big church. I feel like I'm already connected with people." And then, "Am I ready to start saying, hey, you know, I'm gonna test out a few of these things. I'm gonna make that next step in my spiritual walk and I'm gonna start reading my Bible and I'm just gonna start trying to live it out." Maybe you've been doing that. Maybe you've been coming here a while and you've been taking notes and you're doing some of those things and you're like, "Yeah, this works pretty good in my life." But that's all the further you've gotten. You've just hit that morality piece and I today say to you, "Yeah, Paul is saying to us and God is saying to us, "Yeah, your morality is not going to get you to Heaven." Could I ask you to put your trust in Jesus? Believe in Him. Put your faith and trust in Him alone for your salvation. And seriously, that's as simple as you confessing in your heart to Jesus right now, "Yes, I want what You offer through the cross. You died on that cross to forgive me of my sins. You went into the grave with my sins and You came up out of that grave victorious over the sins. You're alive today and I want You to forgive me of those sins. I trust in You for that. Would You come into my life to do that for me right now?"

I think some of us need to get beyond just trying to become get a few more rules and a few more good little tidbits from a great little message to help me through this week and let God's power take over. That's what the Apostle Paul saw when he met Jesus for the first time. It was a radical transformation.

By the way, if you're here [Believe.] the temptation is to just go, "I've arrived," and I never want any of us to see ourselves in that. We're actually going to get there next week when we talk about religion because it's very quick that we come to a place where we live a life without Jesus and that becomes religion, and we don't want to settle into that. Here's what I'd encourage you to start living this out, I'd encourage you to invite someone to come here next week to feel the love of Christ in this place. So wherever you're at today here's what I'm going to ask you as we close this service: Would you make that next right step, and what is that for you? Would you be willing to do that?



Image source: pfwc.net

We started the service with the song, “I Have Decided to Follow Jesus,” and team, if you'll just come up here and lead us in this, we're gonna end with those words and I would like to invite you to say, “I will follow Jesus. I have decided to follow Jesus.”

I Have Decided to Follow Jesus

I have decided to follow Jesus;
I have decided to follow Jesus;
I have decided to follow Jesus;
No turning back, no turning back.

The world behind me, the cross before me;
The world behind me, the cross before me;
The world behind me, the cross before me;
No turning back, no turning back.

Though none go with me, still I will follow;
Though none go with me, still I will follow;
Though none go with me, still I will follow;
No turning back, no turning back.

My cross I'll carry, till I see Jesus;
My cross I'll carry, till I see Jesus;
My cross I'll carry, till I see Jesus;
No turning back, no turning back.

Will you decide now to follow Jesus?
Will you decide now to follow Jesus?
Will you decide now to follow Jesus?
No turning back, no turning back.

– Attributed to S. Sundar Singh⁸

Lord Jesus,

I right now pray for each person that are trying to figure out where they're at in those steps. That those who don't feel like they belong here yet, that they'll find the love of Christ in this place. And some people will start practicing becoming, just seeing if this works because I know that when they start living in this way You will draw them to yourself as You say You draw all men to yourself.

Lord, I pray that this morning there are some here that say, “Yeah, I've been doing a lot of right things, but it's time to put my trust in Jesus and I want to do that today. So Lord, I pray for each person in this room that's in that moment right now that they would take the next right step.

Maybe you'll just pray along, “Jesus come into my life. I believe in You. I want to believe and be saved. I want the power of salvation in my life. I want God to see me as righteous. Come into my life and change me forever.

It's Your Name we pray. Amen.

⁸ Source: https://library.timelesstruths.org/music/I_Have_Decided_to_Follow_Jesus/score/

Here's what I'm going to ask you to do. If you're sitting on the left end of a row, there's a bucket under there, that's our offering buckets, we'd love for you to take that and pass it down to give your gifts back to the Lord. But don't miss this moment, what I'd love to ask you to do is to respond to Jesus, "I have decided to follow Jesus." How have you decided to follow Him? By belonging? By becoming? By believing? By taking that next step, whatever that next step is for you? Inviting someone to come back next week? Would you consider how you would respond to Jesus in this time?

Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/319320239>

YouTube: <https://youtu.be/HalhsHzKgSg>

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