



In the past 4 weeks we have explored slowing down, letting go, listening deeply, and facing ourselves honestly. This week we reflect on apprenticeship to Jesus... learning to walk in the way of Jesus through steady faithfulness, practiced again and again in the ordinary stuff of life.

Scripture Readings

Mark 8:34–37

³⁴And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. ³⁵For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel’s will save it. ³⁶For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? ³⁷For what can a man give in return for his soul?

Philippians 2:5–11

⁵Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Reflection

Jesus was a straight shooter. To be His apprentice is to deny oneself, take up the cross, and follow Him. This apprenticeship is not a call to heroics, but to a pattern of life...that often feels counterintuitive, moving downward before it moves upward, relinquishing control.

Jesus does not cling to power or status. He releases them. He chooses humility, obedience, and love, entering fully into the human story for the sake of others. He models this and then teaches us to walk like he did.

Resistance to this way often shows up in our reluctance to surrender control, or in our desire to protect ourselves, in our impatience with slowness, or in our preference for recognition over faithfulness. These moments are often subtle. They surface in conversations, decisions, conflicts, ambitions, and expectations we carry each day.

As apprentices of Jesus, we learn His way by confessing our resistance and then choosing obedience when it costs us and love when it feels inconvenient. This kind of formation unfolds slowly. It takes shape through ordinary faithfulness and a repeated “YES” to Jesus’s way.

Consider

1. What does following Jesus look like in your everyday life right now?
2. Where do you feel resistance to Jesus’ way of humility, surrender, or obedience?
3. What small, faithful step might Jesus be inviting you to take this week?
4. How does walking with Jesus reshape how you understand success, power, or faithfulness?

Prayer Prompts...

- **Reflect on Philippians 2.**

Read the passage slowly, paying attention to Jesus’s posture—His willingness to release power, His trust in the Father. Ask God to form in you the same mind and way of being that was in Christ, not through effort, but through grace.

- **Name resistance honestly.**

Bring before God the places where His way feels costly, uncomfortable, or unclear. Notice where you resist surrender, where obedience feels inconvenient, or where humility feels risky. Name these places without self-judgment and invite Jesus to meet you there.

- **Pray for grace to walk faithfully.**

Ask God not for dramatic change or heroic faith, but for the grace to take the next faithful step. Pray for steadiness, and trust in the slow work of becoming more like Jesus.

- **Pay attention to ordinary moments.**

Throughout your day, notice moments where Holy Spirit is inviting you — to listen longer, to choose love over self-protection, to slow your pace, or to release control. Offer these moments to God as places of apprenticeship.

Intercede (Corporate Prayer for our Collective)

Pray that the Underground TN and churches across our region... that we would become a people who walk faithfully in the way of Jesus. Ask God to shape his bride to walk with humility, courage, and love. Pray that our shared life would reflect the downward way of Christ, marked by service, sacrifice, and trust in God’s leading.

Closing Prayer

Jesus, teach us Your way. Give us the courage to walk with humility, grace to obey even when it costs us, and trust to take the next faithful step. Form us as apprentices who learn Your pace, your posture and your love. Lead us as we walk with You. Amen.

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