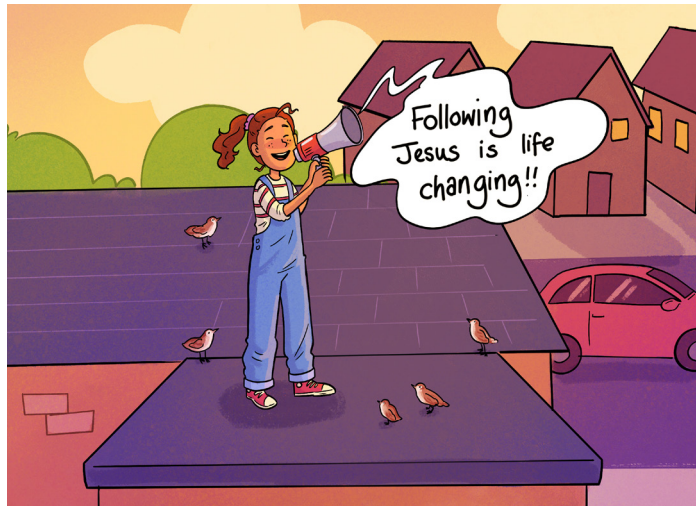


## No compromise

Matthew 10:24-39

Matthew continues Jesus' teaching on mission to the world pointing out that the disciples must expect opposition, including possibly from their own families. Following Jesus won't be straightforward, but he reminds the disciples of their value and of God's love for them.

Read this week's passage:



## Living Scripture

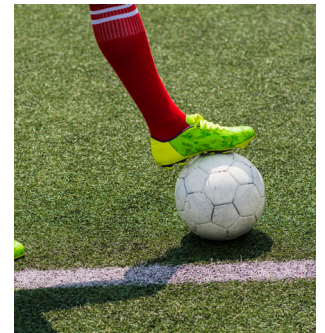
*'Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.'* Matthew 10:39

These words from Jesus are not easy to read or hear. For many of us, losing our lives for Jesus is not something that we will ever have to face, although for many millions of Christians it is a daily fear. But every one of us has a choice to make at times: to follow Jesus into a difficult situation or to take the easier way out. This may seem like the 'finding life' option: it's easier, may seem more fulfilling and avoids hard choices. But, ultimately, it doesn't have that eternal quality.

Yet this is what Jesus so longed to give us: eternal life. It's just that getting there can be hard. But we don't travel alone. He has promised that we are of value to him (v.31) and he will acknowledge us before God (v.32). He encourages us not to be afraid. He understands and he cares... but the challenge is still there. Do I choose the easy way that brings life now or the harder way that provides life with Jesus forever?

## First impressions

- What happens if you cross the line?
- Why do you think Jesus is so insistent that people decide one way or another if they are his followers?
- This week, how can you cement the idea that we are all precious to God?



## LISTEN



Listen to 'The Jesus Way', Phil Wickham. The lyrics can be challenging, so bring these challenges to God in prayer and choose one to take on this month.

## Grow

God knows the number of hairs on your head. Use a clean empty eggshell and fill it with damp cotton wool or paper towel. Stand it in a piece of the eggbox. Draw a face on the outside of the eggshell. Now sprinkle cress or grass seeds on the cotton wool/paper towel. Water occasionally and watch the 'hair' grow. How many hairs are there?

## Write

Is there something you feel strongly about? Find out how to write a letter to your MP and share your thoughts, asking the MP to take action.

## Pray



Jesus, you call us to follow.  
 You send us out in your power to preach the good news.  
 You challenge us to put you first in our lives.  
 Give us the courage to respond wholeheartedly to this call.  
 To follow you wherever you call us to go.  
 No compromise.  
 Amen.

## Questions

Sometimes the right way to act is not obvious. Write a list of questions to help you think through a situation and make the right choice, e.g. 'Does this feel like love?', 'Will this bring peace to this place/person?', 'Has this person been heard fairly?'

To help you, think about how Jesus treated those he met. Finish with: 'Have I prayed over this situation/person?'

