

WORSHIP AT HOME

Deny Your Self | Take Up Your Cross | Follow Jesus

Deny Your Self

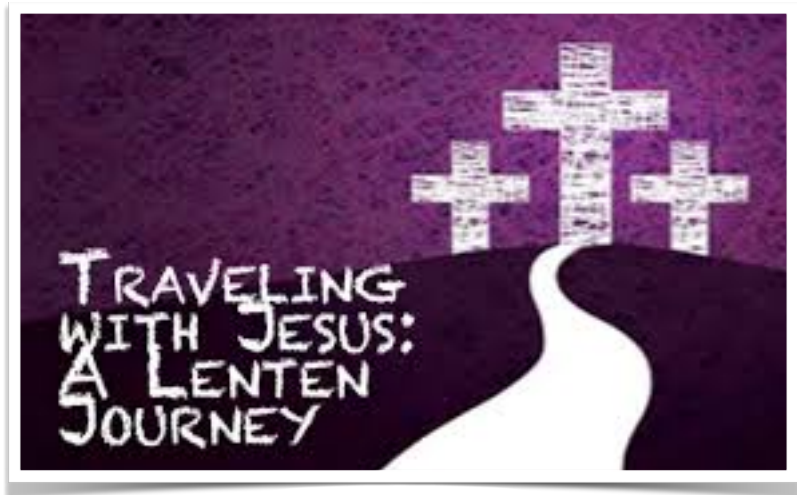
Repentance means we turn away from the ways of the world to learn Jesus' Kingdom Ways. IN other words we deny our answers to ask Jesus his answers.

Take Up Your Cross

Like Jesus lifted high on His Cross we pray, "Father, forgive them; they don't know what they are doing. The Way of the World does not know the Way of Mercy.

Follow Jesus

Give thanks for your teachers, leaders, and heroes. They are not Jesus. Follow Him with mercy, to Grace, which over flows with unconditional love.



Prelude

Special Music

Welcome

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.



Rest Stops

Prayer is a rest stop. Prayer seldom requires words. Prayer requires listening to hear the still small voice of God.

Fasting teaches us how things like food, things, and people's opinions control our lives.

Almsgiving teaches us to share resources not to be seen and praised by those who receive. It teaches us to do unto others as we would have them do unto us.

Reading Scripture to hear God's voice instead of proving our knowledge right.

Holy Communion turns the altar of sacrifice into God's table where we gather to satisfy our hunger and thirst for righteousness with mercy, grace, and love.

Practice makes us Holy as God is Holy.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing,
always and everywhere to give thanks to you,
Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

You have made from one every nation and people
to live on all the face of the earth.



And so, with your people on earth and all the company of
heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the
highest.**

Prayer of Self-Denial

Lord of Heaven and Earth we want to “come after” you. Our teachers have taught us their ways. In turn we have taught our teachers’ ways to others. Not many of us have rose to the heights of “heroes”. Some of us have become leader - teachers. Thank you for our neighbor — teacher, leaders, and heroes.

Open our minds with reason and logic. Reflecting our teachers knowledge reveals our teachers to the world, not Jesus. Open our hearts with hunger and thirst for righteousness. Reflecting our leaders image reveals our leaders to the world, not Jesus. Open the eyes and ears of our souls with mercy, graces and love. Equip us to love our teachers, leaders, and heroes with Jesus’ mercy. Unite us in Grace greater than all Sin. Restore us to be Love as God is Love.

Through Jesus you reveal how denying the best and worst the world offers frees us to be people of Peace, Patience, Kindness, and Hope who Love as Jesus Loves. Amen

Hear His Word

21 “You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘You shall not murder,[a] and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.’ **22** But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister[b][c] will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, ‘Raca,’[d] is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ will be in danger of the fire of hell.

23 “Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, **24** leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.

25 “Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still together on the way, or your adversary may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison. **26** Truly I tell you, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.

Music Meditation

Message

Jesus calls us to repent and enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Throughout the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus speaks as the King of the Kingdom. He tells his disciples the cost of following him into His Kingdom he establishes here on earth through His suffering, death, and resurrection. Disciples who choose to follow him into His Kingdom here on earth must deny what they have learned from their teachers, leaders, and heroes.

Our teachers, leaders, and heroes equip us to survive, thrive, and live in this world of suffering and death. Jesus teaches us to reflect God's mercy, grace, and love. By this we are experienced and known as the Light of the World, and Salt of the Earth.

Denying something simply puts it in its proper place. Mercy puts right and wrong - black and white thinking - in its proper place. The proper place for the fruit of "right and wrong" thinking is the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Jesus teaches his disciples to recognize and tend the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil without eating its fruit.

Right and Wrong judgments accomplish two things. First, it equips us to survive, thrive, and live in this world of suffering and death. Second, it opens hearts and minds to Sin that separates us from God, neighbor, and self. Notice the tension between the way of the World and Jesus' Kingdom Way. Let us give thanks for our teachers, leaders, and heroes. Without them we would not have the skills to survive this world.

When we repent we see that our teachers, leaders, and heroes are not Jesus. They are not the King of the Kingdom of Heaven. Their word is not His Word. Their power and authority is not like His Power and authority. He fulfills their teachings with Mercy greater than all our Sin. In His Kingdom nothing has the power to separate us from God. Yet, following Jesus makes us appear as aliens and strangers to a people living in survival mode. Let's listen to Jesus introduce us to teachers, leaders, and heroes whom He would have us deny to follow Him.

20 For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 5:20

The Teachers of the Law follow Moses. The Pharisees follow the Law of Moses and the Prophets. Their Heroes are Abraham, Moses, King David, and Prophets like Isaiah and Jeremiah. Jesus says that he will fulfill the Law and the Prophets with a superior way of righteousness.

21 “You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘You shall not murder,[a] and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.’ **22** But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister[b][c] will be subject to judgment. Matthew 5:21-22

Listen closely and hear Jesus quote the Ten Commandments God gave to Moses. Surely we understand that the Giver of the Ten Commandments is superior to the one who receives it directly from God.

The Christian message centers on the belief that Jesus is God living on earth in a human body. In John’s Gospel we are told that Jesus is the Incarnation of God. Matthew tells us the same thing in different words; Jesus shall be know as Immanuel, God with us. The righteousness he teaches is superior in every way. His righteous way is based on reconciliation, not sacrifice.

23 “Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, **24** leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift. Matthew 5:23-24

The Altar Jesus speaks of in this passage is made of acacia wood covered in bronze. It has horns which the priest use to sprinkle the blood of the sacrifice. The Priest are Law Keepers and Redeemers. They follow the Law which makes provisions for sinners to be made righteous in God’s sight. Every time a person remembers a trespass they must make restitution and often submit to retaliation. Jesus says His way of righteousness is superior. He tells his disciples that reconciliation is greater than all their sacrifices.

The World seeks righteous justice through making people pay fines, community service, time in prison, and the death penalty. Jesus clearly says that his disciples live in the world, but not according to its ways. He instructs his disciples to make the appropriate sacrifice at the altar and be reconciled with their neighbors. Notice Jesus’ ways is both/ and. Jesus lives the World and reconciles sinners with God.

So far Jesus has told His disciples to deny the Teachers of the Law and the Pharisees. IN telling his disciples to leave their gifts at the altar he tells them to deny the Priest who tend



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the Altar. These people are their teachers and leaders who follow heroes like Abraham, Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, King David... Next, Jesus warns his disciples about government and courts.

25 “Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still together on the way, or your adversary may hand you over to the judge, and the judge

may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison. **26** Truly I tell you, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.

The court of which Jesus speaks is civil. He warns his disciples that if they do the crime they will do the time. Ask anyone who reports to a probation officer. "You will not get out until you have paid every penny."

The World demands justice based on restitution and retribution. Jesus reconciles us with God through Mercy greater than all our sin. Notice that Jesus' forgiveness is eternal in nature. Its eternal nature frees us to focus our attention on the ministry of reconciliation. A gathering of forgiven people reconciling themselves with each other is a community of Grace. It is known by its love.

Let us give thanks for our teachers, leaders, and heroes. They equip us to survive this world bent on suffering and death. Give thanks for them and deny them. They are not the King of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Thanks for the opportunity to teach and even lead. Follow Jesus, not me.

One in Christ,

Robert

Holy Communion

This is the Body of Christ Broken for you! Hear it crack. It is the sound of Jesus suffering our Sin. See Jesus lifted high on the Cross. His silence denies the Teachers of the Law, The Pharisees, Prophets, Priest, and Civil Authorities. They sacrifice him. Jesus blesses those who curse him. He forgives them.

This is the Cup of the New Covenant. It is full of mercy. It gathers us in Grace Greater than all our Sin. It reveals righteousness that fulfills the Law and Prophets. God's nature is Love. God's love is all action, void of emotion. God is Patient with our right and wrong.

Holy Communion opens the eyes of our soul to see both right and wrong, and experience Jesus offering us mercy, grace, and love. This is the King of the Kingdom's way, to reveal the truth of God's unconditional love. Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Special Music

Tithes and Offerings

Postlude