

How Much is Jesus Worth? (26:1-16)

Turn with me, if you have a bible, to the passage we just read: **Matthew 26**. // Well, **ladies and gentlemen**: we have arrived at the *first* teaching of the *final installment* of our Matthew series. Thank you. I'm hoping that we are woo'ing because it's quite the accomplishment, and not because we're ready to be done learning from a book of the bible. But it has been quite a while, so honestly either one makes some sense.

If you're newer to our church, we have been making our way through every passage in the book of Matthew, at a bit of a snail's pace, for the better part of the last four years. **We kicked it off back in August 2020**, when the world had recently shut down due to a virus that shall not be named (it was COVID). We decided around that time that since we had no idea *what* our lives would look like for the foreseeable future, that we'd just spend a concentrated amount of time learning about the life, ministry, and teaching of Jesus. **We figured that was a pretty steady thing to spend our time on, even if nothing else in our world at the time was steady at all.** And *here* we are, in 2024, and pretty much nothing in our world is any more *steady*—but we do at least get to see the bottom halves of each other's faces again. So that's good, at least.

But **today, we kick off the final few chapters** in this book we call *Matthew*. If you're unfamiliar, Matthew is basically one of four biographies of Jesus we have in our modern bibles. And for the next two months or so leading up to Easter (and then a couple weeks *post-Easter*), we will be learning from chapters 26, 27, and 28 of this book. And if you didn't already *know*, these chapters, basically, are where things get quite dicey. **We now are well within the final week of Jesus' life, and for the most part, are gonna be in the final few days before Jesus' death by crucifixion.** At his point, **Jesus has been telling his disciples, with increasing frequency, that the end is near for him.** And in response to that warning, the disciples have done anything from *ignore* it to being *confused* by it to actively trying to talk him *out* of it.¹ So they're not doing great with that news so far.

But in today's passage, we are going to begin with him reminding them of that reality yet again. So start reading with me in chapter 26, v. 1:

[1] When Jesus had finished saying all these things, he said to his disciples, [2] "As you know, the **Passover (the Jewish celebration of when God brought their people out of Egypt) is two days away—and the **Son of Man** (that's Jesus' favorite name for himself) will be handed over to be crucified."** Jesus again making it

¹Matthew 17:22-23, Mark 9:30-32, Matthew 16:21-28, respectively.

abundantly clear what is about to happen. [3] **Then the chief priests and the elders of the people assembled in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas, [4] and they schemed to arrest Jesus secretly and kill him. [5] “But not during the festival,” they said, “or there may be a riot among the people.”**

Okay, let’s pause briefly for a bit of context. Jesus just told his disciples yet *again* that in a matter of days, he will be handed over to be killed. And turns out, right around the same time, this group of people known as the chief priests are plotting, behind the scenes, to accomplish precisely that.

Now, you might ask: *why* does this group of people have it out for Jesus? Sounds like there’s some *beef* there, right? Well in *short*, it’s because Jesus has been regularly taking aim at the chief priests as of late. Just a day or two before this, he waltzed into the temple, which was the chief priests’ place of employment and the center of the Jewish faith at the time. And while he was there, started turning over tables and calling out the chief priests for their corruption and immorality.² I don’t know what your experience is with calling out hyper-religious people and going after their morality, but it tends not to go well. So the chief priests don’t *love* that Jesus did that. Jesus has *also* been saying, in no uncertain terms, that the temple they prize so *highly* is going to be toppled and destroyed in the very near future. He *also* keeps doing this thing where he claims to be God in the flesh—which, according to the chief priests, is *blasphemy*. So take your pick really—but for one reason or another, this group is a tad peeved at Jesus at the moment, to put it lightly. And apparently, irritated to the point that they are ready to eliminate him altogether.

But there’s one caveat to their plan. They decide that they should *not* arrest Jesus “during the festival,” or there will be a riot. Here’s what *that’s* all about. We found out in our last section of Matthew that during this particular week of the year, leading up to Passover, the population of Jerusalem would *swell* from about 50,000 people to potentially over two *million*. Just for clarity, that would be like the population of Manhattan and Staten Island descending, for a week, on Kingsport, TN. That’s quite the population influx.

Plus, many of those two million people, because of another stunt Jesus pulled, now believe him to be the “Messiah”—the long-awaited liberating king of God’s people. Jesus *almost* started a riot a few days ago when he rode into the city on a donkey.³ So around two million people, in tight quarters, under Roman oppression, celebrating a past time of

² See Matthew 21:12-16

³ See Matthew 21:1-11, specifically v. 11.

liberation from *past* oppression—and who now believe their liberator is in their *midst*. To put it mildly, tensions are a bit *high* in Jerusalem at this very moment.

So the chief priests are *angry*, yes—but they’re also *smart*. They know if they arrest Jesus in broad daylight while everyone thinks he is the Messiah, they will have a very unideal situation on their hands; and people will likely turn on *them* for what they’re doing to *Jesus*. So they decide to wait until *after Passover* to do what they’re going to do. Or at least they decide that for *now*.

And it’s at *this* point that the author, Matthew, pans the camera over to a totally different scene. He’ll *return* to the chief priests before we’re done; but for *now*, the scene *changes*. Keep reading with me in v. 6:

[6] While Jesus was in Bethany in the home of Simon the Leper, [7] a woman came to him with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, which she poured on his head as he was reclining at the table.

So Jesus is at a guy named Simon’s house, enjoying a meal. And while he’s there, a woman approaches the table, and uses a jar of her *perfume* to anoint Jesus’ head. Now, this would be a show of honor and affection in that culture at that time. We *also* know from the gospel of John that this isn’t just any woman—it’s Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus, who we think was also one of Jesus’ female disciples.⁴ The jar of perfume she uses would’ve been worth approximately a *year’s* wages.⁵ So the description “very expensive,” by Matthew here, is a pretty good description. **Think about something you own, that is worth a year’s salary. Chances are, that’s a pretty important item to you. Economically, this was very likely the most expensive item Mary owned, by a long shot.**

But then she does the unthinkable *with* it: she pours it all out on Jesus’ head in an act of worship. Now, the disciples notice this and don’t like it, v. 8:

*[8] When the disciples saw this, they were **indignant**. “Why this waste?” they asked. [9] This perfume **could** have been sold at a high price and the money given to the **poor**.”*

Now, on the surface, that probably seems like a very understandable objection, right? **Jesus has talked a lot in his ministry about caring and providing for the poor—it**

⁴ See Luke 10:38-42 cf. Luke 8:1-3.

⁵ See John 12:5

seems like it's fairly important to him. And yet here is *Mary*, with this jar of perfume, that is worth quite a bit of money—and she just “wastes” it all by pouring it all out on Jesus' head. That money could've gone to better places! It could have been *sold*, and then the proceeds used to provide for the poor—something that Jesus evidently cares a lot about. Likely, if you and I were sitting at this table, we would have the same objection. We would be saying and thinking something very similar.

But there's actually **a bit more going on** under the surface. The gospel *John's* account of this same event tells us that **the primary disciple who voiced this objection was a disciple named Judas** (and yes, *that* Judas). We're told there that...

...(Judas) *did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it.*⁶

So **Judas isn't genuinely interested** in caring for the *poor*—he's interested in his **own bottom line**. He is actively *stealing* from Jesus' ministry, and that's why he raises the objection to Mary's act of devotion. He knows that he can't personally *profit* from spilled perfume; he *can* profit from money given to Jesus' ministry. Judas, at least by this point in the story, seemingly has very different **objectives** than Jesus and the rest of the disciples. Which is going to become even *more* evident here in a bit. But for now, we get Jesus' response to this objection from Judas and the other disciples. Verse 10:

[10] Aware of this (meaning, what the disciples are thinking and saying), **Jesus said to them**, “**Why are you bothering this woman? She has done a beautiful thing to me.** [11] **The poor you will always have with you, but you will not always have me.** Jesus is once again trying to emphasize what is about to happen to him any day now. [12] **When she poured this perfume on my body**, Jesus says, **she did it to prepare me for burial.** [13] **Truly I tell you, wherever this gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her.**”

Now, the way this story plays out **continues a theme we've seen repeatedly** in the gospel of Matthew. And that's **the theme of reversal**. Over and over again in the gospel of Matthew, we've seen that the characters that *should* understand things about Jesus, typically *don't*. And the characters that *aren't* expected to understand things about Jesus—based on their ethnicity or background or lifestyle or any number other factors—often *do*. Jesus will repeatedly point out that people his society *esteems* (like the chief

⁶ John 12:6

priests and the Pharisees and the teachers of the Law), aren't all that *impressive* in his book. And then he'll *marvel* at the faith and *devotion* of people that *his society doesn't esteem* (like prostitutes and tax collectors and Roman soldiers and Gentile women).

Here in *this story*, again, the twelve guys that *should* "get" what's about to happen to Jesus (mostly because Jesus has now told them about it *repeatedly*) don't *seem* to get it at all. While *Mary*, who hasn't spent anywhere near as much time with Jesus as *they* have, who *hasn't* been privy to many of those same conversations, apparently *does* "get it." Jesus points that *out* to the disciples and then says that because she gets it, "wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told." No doubt, a big part of that is this story's inclusion in three of the four gospels that people read and study to this day.

Now, we *don't get to know how all the disciples respond* to this rebuke from Jesus. But we do find out how *Judas* responds. Verse 14:

[14] Then one of the Twelve—the one called Judas Iscariot—went to the chief priests (remember them? The ones actively trying to find a way to locate and arrest Jesus? He went to *them*...) *[15] and asked, "What are you willing to give me if I deliver him over to you?" So they counted out for him thirty pieces of silver.*

Now, we *don't know exactly how much this is*, because the original language here is kind of obscure, but it's *likely* around four month's wages. So it's not *nothing*, but also *significantly less* than the perfume worth a *year's* wages that *Mary* poured out. Which I think is at least part of Matthew's point in mentioning it. **Judas is willing to betray Jesus for far less money than Mary is willing to devote in worship to him.** Do you see that? We're going to talk a bit more about that momentarily. But then *Matthew closes this story* with one of the most horrific sentences in the gospels, if not the whole bible—v. 16:

[16] From then on Judas watched for an opportunity to hand him over.

For reasons we're not entirely privy to, something *shifts* in Judas. *He takes the deal*, and prepares to betray Jesus to the chief priests—the people who will eventually see to it that he is *crucified*. Now, we're going to circle back to one key detail about this whole story before we're done. But for now, I want us to *answer the question: what does this story mean?* We've talked for a while about what it says, now we want to know what it *means*. And specifically, what it means for *us*.

Here's where I think we start. **At its core, this is a story that asks the question, how much is Jesus worth? How much is Jesus, worth? And specifically, it is a story about two very different answers given to that question.** Mary answers it *one way*, while both Judas and the chief priests answer it in a very *different way*. Those people have very different perspectives on the *worth* of Jesus. And part of **what we find out** in the passage is that that *question* isn't really a question that can be answered just *theoretically*. At least not *well*. I feel confident that *most of us* who follow Jesus would quickly answer that question by saying "everything. Jesus is worth everything to me." But here's the thing: **how much Jesus is worth isn't a question that can only be answered with your words; it gets answered with your life.** It's not a *theoretical* question at all; but rather a very, very *practical* one.

In the story, we figure out how much Jesus is worth in **very practical, measurable terms**: four months' wages, versus a year's wages. The most valuable possession Mary has offered up in worship to Jesus; versus the very *life* of Jesus for a bit of financial gain. From those details in the story, we might say that **there are two ways to measure how much Jesus is worth to a person.** To people like Judas and Mary, *and* to people like you and I today. *First*, how much Jesus is worth gets measured by...

What you use Jesus to gain

In the story, **Judas leverages his relational proximity to Jesus to offer Jesus up to the chief priests.** In just a couple weeks, we'll read about how Judas leads a crowd directly to Jesus as he prays in a garden, betrays him with a kiss, hands him over, and collects his thirty pieces of silver. **Judas sees Jesus as an item in his arsenal to be traded and bartered with, in order to obtain what he really wants.** In his case specifically, it's *money*. We're told that Judas "helped himself" to the communal money Jesus and the disciples carried around. And *here*, he betrays one of his best friends for just thirty pieces of silver. The thing Judas wanted **most was money, and he used Jesus in order to get it.**

So I would just ask you, *are there any things that you often use Jesus, to gain?* **Maybe** for you, *like* Judas, **it's money.** Maybe you were told, somewhere along the line, that if you followed Jesus, he would in turn ensure that you were *blessed* financially. And if you're honest, that's at least a big *part* of why you became a Christian—for *money*. Maybe you believe that in the sort of way that you see televangelists with nice cufflinks talk about on TV. Or maybe you believe it in a much more *subtle* way. You just think that if you believe in God, he will ensure some measure of financial stability and provision in your life as a direct result. Maybe that's it for you.

Maybe for you **it's not money; it's relationships**. If you were completely honest, you'd say you decided to follow Jesus because you were under the impression that if you did, he would provide you with someone to date and eventually marry. And it doesn't help that sometimes, churches and pastors will at least *hint* at this if not outright *promise* it. 'Follow Jesus, entrust yourself to him—and then, when you're least expecting it, he'll bring along the right person for you. It'll happen eventually. ~~But then you waited and waited and waited some more, and that person never came along.~~ Maybe *that's* the thing you thought Jesus would *gain* you as a result.

Maybe for you it's something more like **social acceptance**. Living in the Bible Belt can be so weird. Because at least *most* places in the country, saying you're a Christian doesn't get you much of anywhere, socially speaking. But **here in the South**, at least *some* of the time, it can actually work to your advantage. Sometimes, people will say they're a Christian because the job they're applying for is at a faith-based organization. Or a faith-*friendly* organization. Or because the people *at* their job claim to *be* Christians.

Or say they're a Christian because it **helps them find friends** in a city where a lot of people still claim to *be* Christians. Maybe you showed up at *our* church, and *stuck* around our church, simply because you love the *community* here. And listen: we're *glad* you love the community here. But just so we're clear, the *reason* you likely love the community here is because this is a community of people that have decided to leverage their lives for the cause of Jesus. *That's* what makes it appealing. And so if you're around our church but you haven't decided to actually *follow Jesus*, there's a good chance you will always feel just a little bit on the "outside." And for **some of you**, if you were completely honest, would say that's where you're at: you don't have much desire to follow Jesus in most arenas of your life; it's just that *claiming* you do helps you gain some things you *do* want, like friends and community. That's *using* Jesus, to *gain* something else you really want more.

Or **maybe it's something else**. *Comfort. Health. Security. Control. Power.* Maybe it's something as simple as an easier *life*; just believing that nothing terrible will happen to you if you're a Christian. My point is that there is virtually no *shortage* of things people will *use* Jesus in order to *gain*. But it's here that we have to understand a very important distinction. **Following Jesus is not about using him to gain all the things you actually want more than him.** That's not how it works. Following Jesus is about seeing *him* as an end in and of himself. **He's the prize; not the means to the prize.** The late Timothy Keller put this so helpfully. He once said:

*Religious people find God **useful** (in other words, they use him to gain something else they want. But...). Christians find God **beautiful**.*

Or, instead of “beautiful,” we could say, “worthy.” **That’s what it means to follow Jesus: not to see everything else in the world as worthy of giving him up, but to see him as worthy of everything else.** If Jesus is what you *use* to *gain* something else, that means you’re actually worshiping something *other* than him. You’re in essence worshiping *yourself* by *claiming* to worship him. But that’s not following Jesus. Following Jesus is about seeing Jesus himself as the prize, worthy of everything else we have to *give*. Which brings us to **the second way** of determining how much Jesus is *worth*. And that’s...

What we give up to gain Jesus

Mary, in the story, is **quite the contrast to Judas**. We’re told that she arrives at the house where Jesus is reclining at the table for dinner, and she pours out a year’s worth of wages. In all likelihood, the most expensive possession she had. And she pours it *all* out on Jesus. “Wastes” it all on him—at least from the perspective of the disciples. And yet **Jesus commends her for what she does**. He holds her up before Judas, before the disciples, as a picture of what true devotion looks like. Of what it truly looks like to see Jesus as worth *everything*, even your most prized possessions. Mary understood Jesus to be worth, literally, *anything and everything* she had to give.

I can’t help but see Mary’s example and wonder if we need to **recapture some of that** in our *own* hearts. Because here’s the reality: **at least right now, in the modern West, we don’t always feel like we have to “give up” much to follow Jesus**. Right? Certainly not our most prized possessions, or the things and people closest to us. **Like, for most of us: when our families found out** we had decided to follow Jesus, they probably *didn’t* disown us. Maybe they pushed back on it a little, maybe they got a little weirded out by that decision of ours; and maybe for a select *few* of us, they *did* turn hostile towards us. But that probably didn’t happen for the *majority* of us. Most of us **probably didn’t get fired from our job** when people *at* our job found out we were Christians. Right? Same thing—maybe they got a little weird, maybe we didn’t get invited to go out to drinks after work with the rest of the crew as much or something like that. But I highly doubt that very many of us lost our *jobs* over it. The simple fact is that at least *currently*, that’s not typically the situation here in the States.

But I’ll tell you **right now, there are plenty of places in the world** where that *is* the situation. There are places where, if your family finds out you decided to follow Jesus, they hold a *funeral* for you—because you’re essentially *dead* to them from that point on. Places where, if people at your *job* find out you follow Jesus, you’re *done*. Immediately. If the local government finds out you’re a Christian, you’re detained or jailed or worse. And

here's what's fascinating: in a lot of those places where *that* is the dynamic...Christianity is *growing like crazy*. The kingdom of God is growing and expanding faster in those places than you'd ever imagine. Why do you think that is? Well, I'd imagine at least in *part* because those harsh dynamics force each and every follower of Jesus to make a decision: *is Jesus worth that?* Is he *worth* losing everything? Or is he not? And over and over again, we're seeing Asian believers, and Iranian believers, and Nigerian believers say "yes. Yes he is worth losing everything, if that's what it comes to. Jesus is worth anything and everything I have to give up to gain him." The posture of those believers reminds me so vividly of Jesus saying in the gospels, "whoever saves his life, will *lose* it. But whoever *loses* his life, for my sake and the gospel, will *find* it."⁷

Now, for clarity: I don't bring that up to shame or guilt anyone here in the U.S. I don't think we need to feel *bad* about the fact that our country is, at least *comparatively*, less openly *antagonistic* towards the Christian faith. But I do bring it up **as a way of asking: what do we need to be okay losing, or giving up, for the sake of Jesus?** For the cause of Jesus? For the *kingdom* of Jesus to go forward? You may not ever be asked to lose your family for following Jesus. But you absolutely may have to face *estrangement* from your family. You may *absolutely* have to face many difficult, uncomfortable, awkward *conversations* with your family. You may absolutely have to stand *up* to your family. You might be in a position where you can make things easy and comfortable with your family, or you can stick with your convictions—but you can't do both.

You may not ever have to forfeit your job for following Jesus. But you *absolutely* may be passed over for a promotion. You may absolutely have to answer uncomfortable questions about what you believe and be accused of hating groups of people that you do not in fact hate. You might be in position where you have the opportunity to do what's *right*, or do what's going to get you a *raise*. You might be in a position where you can lie to get *ahead* or tell the truth and stay exactly where you *are*. You may be misunderstood, misinterpreted, misrepresented because of what you believe. All of that could very *well* happen at your job.

In the world of *dating*, you very well may find yourself in a position where you can stay *with* a person you really, really like, who really, really, wants to sleep with you—or, you can faithfully follow Jesus in the arena of your life, even if it means likely losing the relationship and/or being mocked or judged by the person you were *in* the relationship with. As a *parent*, you might find yourself in a position where you can have your kid in every single extracurricular activity there is on offer—or you can say *no* to some of those

⁷ Matthew 16:25

opportunities so that your family can be involved in a local church, even if that means your kids missing out on some fun activities.

You see, whether we fully realize it or not, in every single one of those scenarios, the question we're being asked to answer is **how much is Jesus worth?** How much is he worth to us? What are we willing to *lose*, for his sake? What are we willing to *give up*, because of him? To *get more* of him? You and I, just like Judas, just like Mary, are faced weekly with decisions, big and small, that reveal our *functional* answers to that question. Is he worth the fear of missing out? Is he worth the pain of strained and awkward relationships? Is he worth *singleness*? Is he worth a loss of potential *income*? Is he worth giving up a night every week to go sit around a table with other followers of Jesus, even when it's inconvenient and frustrating and awkward? Those are not theoretical questions in the least. They're very practical, *measurable* questions a lot of the time.

So I **want to ask all of us that question today.** Point blank: *how much is Jesus worth, to you?* How do the decisions and priorities and choices in your life answer that question at a *functional* level? What have you used Jesus to gain? And then what are you willing to *give up*, to gain Jesus? I think it's worth spending some time *reflecting* on that question this week. Maybe reflecting some on it on your own, and some with your LifeGroup; but let's not *overlook* that question as followers of Jesus. **I would argue that we *can't not* answer that question; in fact, we are functionally *answering* it every day of our lives.**

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But at the same time, I also **don't want us to end there.** I want us to end by asking and *answering one more* question. Here's **the other one** I'm very interested in as I read through this story: **what did Mary see in Jesus?** What was it, exactly, that prompted her to believe he was in fact *worth everything*? Doesn't it seem like we need the answer to *that* question, too? What caused Mary to draw the conclusion, that Jesus was *worth* the most valuable possession she had, and ultimately, worth her *life's* devotion? What did she see in Jesus?

I believe the answer is in **what could seem like minor details** of the story—but they aren't minor at all. When we read *John's* account of this story in John 12, *he* gives us one additional detail that Matthew doesn't. He says that this interaction between Jesus and Mary *happened* on a very specific day. Namely, that it happened **"...six days before the Passover."**⁸ Now, that likely doesn't mean a lot to most of *us*. But it absolutely would mean something to the average Jewish person reading this story. Because they would know that **something *happened* every single year, six days before the Passover.**

⁸ See John 12:1

If you're a Jewish family celebrating the Passover, exactly six days out, you would go and select the Passover lamb from your flock that would be offered as a sacrifice six days later. You would go out into the field, choose a lamb "without blemish or spot,"⁹ and bring it into your home. That lamb would be inspected to ensure it met all the criteria for the sacrifice. *And then, assuming that it did, the lamb would then be anointed with oil, in preparation to be killed.* That's how it worked. *Which I think means that in this story, when Mary anoints Jesus' body with perfume six days before Passover, it's because she realizes something. What she does is a show of worship and devotion and affection—but it's not just that. It is her demonstrating that she believes Jesus to be the Passover lamb.*¹⁰

She understands, seemingly better than most any of the male disciples at this point in the story, what is about to happen to Jesus and why. She understands that he is about to become the sacrifice for all of them. He will be demonstrated to be the "lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world."¹¹ She understands that Jesus will soon give up *everything*, even his very life, to become what she, and the disciples, and you, and I, all needed him to be. What we all *currently* need him to be. His body will be broken, his blood will be shed, for us. **That, to her, is what makes him worth anything and everything she has to give up.** That is what makes him worth losing *anything* in order to gain. *That*, to her, is what makes him *worthy*.

So this is a story about what Jesus is worth. But it's ultimately a story about what makes him worthy. It's about understanding who Jesus is, who he would become, and how he would become it. It's about understanding him as the one who gave up *everything* to gain *us*, and then allows *us* to gain *him*. *Before* it's a story about *our* sacrifice, it's a story about *Jesus'* sacrifice. About him *becoming our* sacrifice. *He was* the one who gave up *everything* on the cross. And if that's what he did for us, it follows that we would be compelled, as his people, to take the same posture in return. Jesus is *infinitely, ultimately* worthy. He demonstrated that so clearly for us at the cross.

So **each week as a community**, we come to the tables together around this room and we remember that precise moment in history—when Jesus *became* the Passover lamb for us. The moment when Jesus *demonstrated* just how worthy he truly is. We take the bread that represents his broken body and the cup that represents his spilled blood; we

⁹ See Exodus 12:5

¹⁰ See 1 Peter 1:19

¹¹ John 1:29

take those elements into our very beings and we ask that he would help our lives and our hearts reflect that glory. That *worth*.

So as we do that, **I do want you to consider** the question, “what is Jesus *worth*, to *me*?” What does *my life* currently communicate that Jesus’ worth is? And in the areas where it falls short, to offer those things up to him and ask him to *change* our hearts. **Maybe there’s some work you need to do there. Maybe you need to grab someone you came with or someone in your LifeGroup and wrestle through that. If you’re here for the first time this morning and came by yourself—and don’t feel like there *is* anyone you can talk to—you’re in luck. Because today, for the very first time, we’re going to have a team of people down here—our prayer team. And they’ll be down here ready to talk with you through whatever it is you need to talk through. They’d absolutely *love* to do that. And then they’d love to pray over you and even offer to connect you to people that can help afterwards.**

So **feel free to participate in any and all** of that. All of it’s available to you, as we respond by reflecting on and celebrating just how *worthy* Jesus is.

Let’s pray.