

## INTRO

Anya started her sermon by sharing Ibrahim's story of radical sacrifice for his faith.

*"In the eyes of the world, Ibrahim's choices make no sense. He lost his possessions, his position, his livelihood, his status in the community, he suffered physical pain & emotional anguish."*

- What aspects of his testimony most challenged or inspired you, and why?
- Have there been moments in your faith journey where your actions made no sense in the eyes of others? Share more

## MAIN IDEA - THE WAY OF THE SUFFERING MESSIAH

The Scriptural focus for the sermon was Mark 8:27-35. Take a moment to read the passage as a life group.

In response to this passage, Anya highlighted a few key points:

1. Peter gives an accurate, but misunderstood, title for Jesus.
  2. Jesus explains his mission of suffering.
  3. Jesus calls his people to follow the way of the suffering Messiah.
- If Jesus were to ask you today "Who do you say that I am?" how would you respond?
  - Have there been moments in your life where you've been like Peter? You've used the right words to describe who God is but misunderstood what they actually mean?
  - How does the suffering servant description in Isaiah 53 challenge our views of Jesus and the Christian life today?
  - Where are we tempted like Peter to see "things merely from a human point of view, not from God's?" What areas in your own thinking might be more aligned with cultural values than Kingdom values?

- As Jesus calls his people to follow the way of the suffering Messiah, he invites us to “deny yourself” and “take up your cross”? What does Jesus mean by this? In your own words how would you explain these phrases?
- In simple terms, Anya defines "denying yourself" as meaning "it's not about you anymore" and giving primary allegiance to Jesus. What specific rights or privileges might you need to relinquish to live this out more fully?

## EXPERIENCING GOD TOGETHER: LISTENING PRAYER

Throughout the sermon, Anya referenced this quote from Jim Elliot:

*"He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose."*

Take a few minutes in listening prayer and ask Jesus:

**Where have I been a fool, seeking to gain what I cannot keep?**

**Where are you inviting me to deny myself, take up my cross and gain what I cannot lose?**

Invite people to share back as a group.

## PRACTICE FOR THIS WEEK - WHAT DO YOU VALUE MOST?

Continue to consider what it means for you to “deny yourself” & “take up your cross.”

1. **Start by taking time to reflect on what you value most** – considering where you spend the most time, money & attention.
2. **Then ask your kids, spouse, colleagues, family members, church friends, and God, the same question.** What do they think you value most?
3. **Reflect on all the values that came to light, ask God what it looks like for you to express allegiance to Him as your highest value?** And consider if there are things that need to change in your life for this to happen. Ask the Holy Spirit to bring His conviction and guidance.