**Sunday 17th March 2024: John 12:20-33: How to Avoid Losing Your Life**

*20 Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. 21 They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, ‘Sir, we wish to see Jesus.’ 22 Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus.*

*23 Jesus answered them, ‘The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. 24 Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. 25 Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. 26 Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honour.*

*27 ‘Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—“Father, save me from this hour”? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. 28 Father, glorify your name.’*

*Then a voice came from heaven, ‘I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.’ 29 The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, ‘An angel has spoken to him.’*

*30 Jesus answered, ‘This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. 31 Now is the judgement of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. 32 And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people[*[*a*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+12%3A20-33&version=NRSVA#fen-NRSVA-26602a)*] to myself.’ 33 He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.*

**Notes**

What did Jesus mean when he said “Anyone who loves their life will lose it”? In Matthew 10:39 and 16:25 there are similar references to “finding” or “saving” life and “losing” it.

Jesus is talking about values. What we believe and feel to be important. The things that guide us, sometimes sub-consciously, and prompt us to make the decisions we make.

We might value some things, not in themselves wrong, over and above our faith: power, status, respectability, family life or indeed money. But if we prioritise these things above following Jesus then we will lose the thing in life that is most important – and that is surely our faith in God.

However, we might say we can’t give or increase our gift due to the cost of living crisis. That’s ok. We have no desire say how much you should give. It is a personal matter between us and God.

But before making our decisions, let’s consider some Bible examples of those who gave despite their own quite extraordinary financial crises: The Macedonians in 2 Corinthians 8: 2 for whom “their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity”, the widow on Mark 12: 44 who “gave all she had to live on” and another widow in 1 Kings 17: 12 who gave the very last of what she had.

The truth is, when things are really tough, we get the chance to make those difficult decisions that count, and reflect our core values.

So take some time to meditate on what’s really important for us, and then let’s decide what to give honestly and privately before God, reflecting those values.

**End**