

QUEST: CALLED TO SOMETHING GREATER

VIDEO TWO

Stories like Wilson's draw us in. Journeying with them as they follow a call to adventure speaks to something deep within us.

It's profoundly human to chase a bigger purpose. To pursue not just the thrill of adventure, but a life that really matters.

The best quests are lifelong. They call us to give ourselves to something bigger than ourselves.

As Martin Luther King said, "Life isn't worth living until you've found something worth dying for".

And that's the kind of life Jesus calls us into.

"Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves"

We're familiar with denial. In pursuit of fitness, we'll deny ourselves sleep to attend early morning training. In pursuit of relationships, we'll watch films that we'd ordinarily not watch.

But the kind of denial Jesus is calling for is all encompassing. Not a simple addition or add-on to life. But a reorientation.

It's common to imagine here that Jesus is asking us to deny *things* to ourselves. Giving stuff up for lent. Not having sex outside marriage. But it's far more radical.

Our *stuff* isn't the problem, our problem is the way we view our entire lives.

All of us instinctively live with ourselves at the centre. Making sure our relationships serve us, using what we have to further our own interests, deciding how *we* want to live our lives.

But Jesus' call is this: surrender our whole selves to *Him*. Allow *Him* to shape all of who we are.

And he's upfront about what this will mean.

In Luke's day "to take up your cross" was the most shameful of deaths. Jesus is saying: it won't be easy and it won't be safe. Sometimes it will feel like dying.

Jesus lived in ways that made others deeply uncomfortable. Where he went, and who he prioritised, left him being misunderstood, betrayed and eventually killed.

And Jesus calls – will you follow me?

Which begs the question – is it worth it?

To which Jesus boldly responds,

“whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it”

Whilst embarking on an easy quest might feel comfortable, Jesus says we risk missing out on life itself. We were made to know Him, the living God. Jesus says it is only in following Him that ultimately we will gain everything, even if we lose everything along the way.

Like Wilson, we’ll discover that denying ourselves for something greater is paradoxically life-giving. In following Jesus we find the life we were made for.

But we can’t do it by ourselves. We need Jesus’ help.

Jesus’ own quest required him to leave his home, not to discover himself, but to give of himself.

He embarked on this costly quest willingly.

His death was him going into battle for those he loved most. To win us back from our self-inflicted destruction so that we needn’t remain lost and far from home.

And so, if we start the quest of following Jesus, unlike Wilson, we can be sure of our destination. No matter how painful or demanding the footstep, it’s never wasted. Jesus’ resurrection guarantees a future that not even death can rob. As he walks with us today, Jesus shows us that that is all we need.

The question is: will we follow him?