

Central Hall Service Sheet for 14th June 2020

- Think about a recent important decision you have made. In this service we will be considering the important and sometimes hard decisions that we make when we follow Jesus.
- **Hymn** – Singing the Faith 332 – Lord, I lift your name on high

Prayers

Lord Jesus Christ, you were brought low, yet you have been lifted high. You were the servant of all, yet you are above all and beyond all. You were despised and rejected, yet your name is exalted above all names. You were fully human, yet you are divine. You were taken into heaven, yet you are here by our side. You are higher than our highest thoughts, greater than our minds can ever grasp. So, with all your people in every age, we bow before you and confess you as our risen Saviour, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords to the glory of God the Father. Amen. [Taken from Nick Fawcett No Ordinary Man 2]

Lord, as we come before you now we confess that so often we do not put you first in our lives, So often we follow our own selfish plans and reject the great plans that you have for us. So often our thoughts, words and actions do not glorify and honour you .Lord, we thank you that you are a God of forgiveness and mercy and we come before you now to ask for and to receive your forgiveness for those times when we have been selfish, for those times when we have not shown and reflected your love in our lives. Lord, as we receive your forgiveness and mercy help us to know your love and help us to show your love this day and every day. Amen.

Hymn – Be bold, be strong

Bible Reading: Matthew 10 verses 24 – 39

Talk

We all have to make decisions and some are easier than others. Let's think about football fans for a moment. Think about how a football fan would behave when they are in the crowd and discover that they are surrounded by supporters of the other team. How will it make them feel? Should they stay quiet and not admit which team they support? This might be a bit difficult if they are wearing their team's football colours.

As Christians who are living for the Lord, Jesus tells us we shouldn't be afraid to stand up for him [Matthew 10 v. 26]. You might decide to be quiet in a football crowd because you don't feel safe, but living for Jesus is much more serious [Matt. 10 v. 28]. We can be brave because God loves us so much that he even knows the individual hairs on our head [Matt. 10 v. 35]. Who else but God would know the answer to that one? The phrase 'stand up and be counted' means to let people know your views even though they might not be popular. In football by the colours you wear you stand up and are counted as a fan. In the same way Christians should also stand up and be counted for Jesus. This means being open about their faith and sharing Jesus with others.

Football fans know the songs and chants and sing and shout them loudly. They declare publicly which team they belong to and support. Jesus says we need to shout out, declare and proclaim for him. A football fan will always shout out for his team because he loves them so much and is so committed to them. Are we able to respond to Jesus in the same way?

In Matthew 10 verse 38 when Jesus speaks about following in his steps he means that we should imitate him and choose his way over all others. Each time we encounter a situation that challenges our Christian faith we have a decision to make. Will we stand up or choose not to make a fuss? Will we shout out when we need to speak up for Jesus, or be silent? Will we follow by imitating Jesus' way, or will we choose what we think is acceptable? We can have confidence that God cares for us [Matt. 10 v. 31] and that Jesus will speak up for us when we speak up for him [Matt. 10 v. 32]. When we follow Jesus we will win the prize of eternal life [Matt. 10 v. 39]. Amen.

Hymn – Stand up, stand up for Jesus

Prayers

- Pray for people for whom it is a challenge to stand up for their faith, both internationally and at home
- Pray for those involved in Mission and Outreach locally, across the Circuit and internationally.

- As Coventry prepares to be the City of Culture in 2021 pray for Central Hall and the Circuit as they seek God's guidance on how best to use this opportunity to share God's love.
- Pray for all affected by the Coronavirus outbreak, pray for those who have lost loved ones, those who are ill, pray for all who are caring for patients.
- Ask for the strength and power of God's Spirit to fill you afresh so that you can stand up for Jesus at all times.
- Say the Lord's Prayer

Hymn – O Jesus I have promised

Final Prayer

May we stand up for you, Lord Jesus!

May we shout out your good news, Lord Jesus!

May we follow you as closely as we can this day and every day. Amen.