



“Come, Follow Me”

BUT WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

Jesus' consistent command to follow

- Jesus calls His first disciples – Matthew 4:18-22
- In Matthew 8 when some men were asking to be His disciples Jesus simply says “Follow Me” – Matthew 8:22
- Jesus called Matthew the tax collector by asking Matthew to “Follow Me!” – Matthew 9:9
- In speaking about being His disciple as Jesus send his disciple out to the Jews He states “the one who does not take his cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me”

Jesus' consistent command to follow

- Jesus conversation with the Rich Young Man leads to Jesus testing him about his money and ends with the invitation – “...come, follow Me” –Matthew 19:20-21
- After Jesus resurrection, He foreshadows Peter's eventual death in His service but reminds Peter to “Follow Me!” John 21:19

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Over and over Jesus told
those he met in scripture
“Follow Me!”

He commands this of us
today too.

To be His we **MUST**
FOLLOW HIM...

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But what does it mean to
FOLLOW?

Let's look first at what it doesn't mean

- Following Jesus doesn't mean just going to church
 - Assembling with the saints and encouraging one another **IS** commanded of us but this is *only a part* of following Jesus.
 - Some who assemble are not there to Follow Jesus.
 - Mark 1 tells us of a man possessed by a demon who was in the synagogue. (Mark 1:21-28). Just being there isn't following.
 - Many people who aren't following Jesus go to church.
 - "Going to church" is not the same as following Jesus.

Let's look first at what it doesn't mean

- Following Jesus does **not** mean just believing in who He is.
 - James tells us the demons believe who Jesus is – James 2:19-20
 - John tells us many of the rulers believed who Jesus was too. – John 12:42-43
 - These believed in Jesus but were lost because they would not follow Him.
 - Many in our modern world believe in Jesus but do not commit to Him. They are unwilling to follow Him.
 - Just believing is not following.

Let's look first at what it doesn't mean

- Following Jesus doesn't mean you "like" Him
 - In this day and age of social media where we can "like" and "follow" our friends and family, our favorite writers, and the like - we have nearly unlimited access to each other.
 - We can "follow" those we admire and look up to. We can read their words and enjoy what they have to say.
 - Following Jesus is not just "liking" Him or just reading and appreciating His words. Following Jesus means more than this

So what DOES it mean to follow Jesus?

- Lets look at our examples again:
 - Matthew 4:20 – Peter and Andrew “immediately left their nets and followed Him”
 - Matthew 4:22 – James and John “immediately left the boat and their father, and followed Him”
 - Matthew 9:9 - Mathew left the tax collectors office “and he got up and followed Him”
 - All these men left things behind and followed Jesus - they left their jobs, their plans, their appointments – all kinds of things to follow Jesus.

So what DOES it mean to follow Jesus?

- So following Jesus means we have to do things differently
 - there may be some things we need to leave behind.
- Now - we are not living with Jesus physically here on this earth in the flesh. He is not standing physically in front of us asking us to follow him in His travels. But don't let that difference stand in the way of His message – we will have to leave our old lives behind to follow Him.

So what DOES it mean to follow Jesus?

- It means:
 - You will leave behind the life you might have planned, centered around your wants and desires.
 - When you follow Jesus your life is about HIM!
 - No longer is the question “what do you want to do with you life” but now “what does Jesus want you to do with your life?”
 - Not what you feel like doing but what He instruct you to do.
 - Not what you can achieve on earth but what you store up in heaven
 - You are leaving your old life to follow Him in your new life

So what DOES it mean to follow Jesus?

- It also means you leave behind your sin.
 - Following Jesus doesn't mean you can keep on doing what you were doing before, only now your sins are forgiven as Jesus "paid it forward" for you.
 - Really following Jesus means leaving behind that old sinful life and following Him in a new and holy life.
 - John 8 reminds us that there is no sin we can't leave behind:
 - John 8:2-11
 - Truly following Jesus does not mean you keep on doing what you were doing and Jesus will forgive you - NO! It means change is required.

Following Jesus means spending time with Him

- Jesus followers walked with Him, spent time with Him, asked Him questions. He called them to minister and preach yes, but initially he called them to be WITH Him.
- Salvation is this – to be with Him forever. God made us to be with Him but "we all have sinned" and separated ourselves from Him
- Jesus died in the cross to redeem us back to Himself
 - 1 Peter 3:18
 - He saved us to bring us back to God so we can be with Him

Following Jesus means spending time with Him

- Jesus gave Himself in order to buy us back from our sinful lives.
- In following Him we have the privilege of salvation in the end, but we get to start being with Him now by reading His words, listening to His teachings, praying to Him and worshipping Him every day.
- But following Him means more than just spending time with Him.
- Matthew 10 talks a LOT about what it means to follow Him

Following Jesus means confessing Him

- Matthw 10:32
 - “Therefore, everyone who confesses Me before people, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven.”
- Part of what it means to follow Jesus is to publicly align with Him as your Lord and Savior – naming Him as the Son of God
- This is what some of the rulers of the Jews were not willing to do, even though they believed He was the Christ.
- The Lord gives us opportunities throughout our lives to publicly stand for and with Jesus.

Following Jesus means being baptized

- Another part of following Jesus is being baptized into His death – dying to the "old life" we once lived for ourselves and rising a new person – a life remade for us by HIS BLOOD.
- In baptism we are putting to death our old lives and living a new life in Christ
 - Romans 6:4-7
 - The purpose of baptism is so that we can leave behind the old life purposed only for ourselves and live a life purposed for HIM.

Following Jesus means becoming like Him

- Matthew 10:24-25a
 - We are to be like Him as a disciple is like His teacher and a slave is like His master
 - Our character is to become like His – Matthew 5:3-12
 - Our ministry is to become like His. In Matthew chapter 10 Jesus gives His disciple a command to follow which boils down to this:
 - Worship God and serve Him by reaching, teaching and caring for people
 - We are to reflect Jesus in our attitude, our faith, our actions, and our entire lives.

We are to follow Him by loving Him

- Matthew 10:37
 - We are to love Jesus more than anything in this Life
- 1 Peter 1:8 details what our love for Jesus should look like:
 - Even though we have not seen Him we love Him
 - Even though we do not see Him now we rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory
 - This love of Jesus leads to greater faith and salvation of our souls
- A big part of following Jesus is loving Him just like Mary who “was seated at the Lord’s feet and listened to His word”

All of these things are part of what it means to "Follow Jesus"

- It means
 - We leave things behind
 - We confess Him publicly
 - We are baptized into his death
 - We spend time with Him
 - We are becoming like Him
 - We do the things He did when He was here on earth
 - We LOVE HIM!

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Are you following Jesus?

Would you like to start?