



General Topics :: "Come, follow Me"

"Come, follow Me" - posted by moreofHim (), on: 2004/5/25 10:48

I am posting this writing from my good friend that the Lord sent to me. Our hearts are so very similar in our passion for the Lord. This is such a strong message especially for those who already call themselves Christians.

Following Jesus

Picture in your mind, if you will, the Lord Jesus walking up to you while you are socializing with a group of your friends. He stands there in all of His humility, not in His Glory, although He always has that. He is dressed simply, He stands there in quietness and gentleness, but you just know His strength is there also. He reaches out His hand to you and says, "Come, follow Me." What is your response?

Do you hesitate? Do you start to think about it? Do you think about the inconvenience or the lousy timing? Do you think about your loved ones? Do you think about your job? Do you think about the good time you were having before it got interrupted? Do you think about the new boat or car or house or clothing you were going to purchase? Do you think about the meal you just ordered that you are looking forward to eating because you're hungry? Would you hesitate? Would you refuse? What would your response be?

Search your own hearts, right now because Jesus is standing before you asking the question right now, today. Be very careful, though, how you answer this question because there is a cost to following Him and great consequences if you refuse. He is looking for true disciples today, right now, ones who will give up everything and follow Him. Are you willing?

Let's look at a few Scriptures that will shed some light upon this crossroads you now find yourselves at. You can no longer proceed the way you have been going up until now. Now you are brought to the choice. Your eyes have been opened. The choice is one you will live with, forever. What are Jesus' words here? In Matthew 9 when Matthew was called by the Lord, Jesus saw him and said to him, "Follow Me." What was Matthew's response? He was a tax collector. Was he busy? Probably. Did he have lots of work to do? Probably. Did he hesitate or think about these things? No.

Let's also take into consideration that this is the book of Matthew so it is his own words telling his own story here. It says he arose and followed Him. No question. No hesitation. Did Jesus know ahead of time that Matthew had a willing, obedient heart? I believe He did. For in Matthew 22:14, He says, "Many are called, few are chosen." So who are these few? In Matthew 7:13-14, we see that Jesus explains, "Enter by the narrow gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life and there are few who find it." Why only few? Because of the cost.

Let's look some more at Jesus' words about following Him. In Luke 9:57-61, He gives us a very clear picture of the heart He's looking for, the right response. And the consequences of hesitation and refusal are clear.

Again, listen and search your own heart and see what is really there. Today, when you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts. Today is the day where you are standing before Him, His hand is reaching out, and His offer is to you, now, "Come, follow Me." Be careful, though, that you do not answer lightly, but weigh and count the cost because you must be willing to go without anything holding you back. What did the man, who is nameless here, say to Jesus? He said, "Lord, I will follow You wherever You go." What did Jesus reply to him? "Foxes have holes and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head." Why did Jesus say this? Because he already knew that the conditions and cost of following Him were going to be beyond what this man was willing to give.

The next thing written here is Jesus saying to another man, "Follow Me." But the man said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." What was Jesus' response to this man's concerns? He said, "Let the dead bury their own dead but you go and preach the Kingdom of God." Did Jesus already know this man's

response? Yes, I believe He did. And He saw what was first in his heart. And the next thing Jesus says to yet another man who says, "Lord, I will follow You, but let me first go and bid them farewell who are at my house." He wanted to first go and say goodbye to his family. Doesn't seem like such a bad thing, does it? How many of you would say the same thing to Jesus? Let's look and see what Jesus replied to him, "No one, having put his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the Kingdom of God." Harsh words? No. Jesus is looking for a few good men, men who will follow Him, wherever He goes with willing, obedient hearts, who will commit to Him, who believe, and do not love their own lives more than they love Him. This is why many are called and few are chosen. Not many are willing to just go and follow Him.

He's asking you today, right now, "Come, follow Me." What is your response? Are you willing to leave everything and everyone and follow Jesus today, right now? What do you love more? Jesus or your own life? Jesus says in John 12:25, "He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life." And then in verse 26, "If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me, and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honour."

Let's look at some more that Jesus Himself has to say about following Him.

In Luke 14:26, "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple." Strong words - they expose whether or not you have a divided heart. To be a disciple and follow Jesus - to be one of the chosen few - you must be willing to leave everything and everyone behind. You must have the Lord as first place in your heart. You must love Him more than anything else; your own wants, desires, ideas, and opinions. More than your loved ones, more than the desire for things, more than your own comfort and self-indulgence, more than self-preservation. The one who does this and has an undivided heart is the one who will count the cost and follow Jesus, who loves the Lord more than his own life. The next verse in Luke 14:27 says, "And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me, cannot be My disciple." What does this mean? What does it mean to bear our cross? Whatever we give up in this life, whatever suffering we must bear, whether it be the pain of giving up ourselves, our family, our health, our livelihood, exchanging our ways for His, Jesus says unless we do this we cannot be His disciples. Are all Christians automatically disciples? No. It is very clear here that not many are willing.

And Jesus presents the choice. If anyone . . . Jesus elaborates more in the next verse, "For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it - lest after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.'"

Let's take a look at this passage and hear the voice of the Lord and understand what He is clearly saying here. He is talking about counting the cost of agreeing to follow Him. He is the foundation to build on. Accepting Him and believing on Him for salvation is our laying the foundation. When we choose to accept His gift of eternal life and believe on Him, we must count the cost, for we cannot enter into this new life lightly. It cannot be just for our own gain, it must be a total willingness to lay down our lives in exchange, just as He did. The mockers here are those who look at your life after you've called yourself a Christian - for what does a Christian mean but being a follower of Christ - and see that you are not going to finish building upon the foundation of believing and following Jesus. They mock because they see nothing fruitful. They see a lack of going any further than sitting at the gateway - the entrance - to the Kingdom of God and then telling others they should enter it too. Why would they? Believing in Jesus and recognizing that you are a sinner and repenting means a 180 degree turn, to count the cost and accept His free gift of salvation and to walk His way, no longer the way of self, but the way of the Cross, giving up everything and following Him. The caution here is do not start down the road, if you are unwilling to finish - or to enter beyond the gate, for you will be mocked and will not be representative of Jesus, for He says, You cannot be my disciple, unless you are willing to go the whole way. And if you are still unsure of Jesus' meaning here, let's look at His words in verse 33: "So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple." Pretty clear here, His meaning.

To forsake all. To give it all up, every dream, every person, everything you ever hoped to do or possess in this life, even your own life - this is all inclusive - to hold nothing back, to answer the call, to look into Jesus' eyes, filled with love for you, and He is saying, "Come, follow Me." Are you willing to go, to give up all, to deny yourself, to go to the cross, to be a bondsman for the rest of your life, no matter what it costs you, no matter what happens, today . . . are you willing? What will your response be to the one who forsook His life to come and give His life in exchange for yours. Flesh and blood, at the cross.

He has already paid the greatest price possible, He laid down His life for you, how can we do anything less? The Lord is

looking for a few good men . . . will you follow Him today?

Lois Davis
May 22, 2004