

Come here after Me

Introduction

Last week- challenged us w/this question- are we fans or followers of Jesus Christ.

Fans observe from a distance while followers get down on the field/get involved- know coach.

Fans know about the one they are cheering for, followers know who they are following.

One operates from a place of knowledge, the other from a place of relationship.

We can walk with Jesus everyday in the Gospels- we can see what He did/hear what He said empowering us to live like He lived.

God is calling us- be followers- not just observers.

James 1:23-25

23For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; 24for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was.

25But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.

We look in a mirror to see what we look like in the physical so we can make ourselves look good.

As we look into- Word of God we see in the Word a reflection of what we look like spiritually.

We are challenged to comb our hair or wash our face, to look more like Christ- image of God.

Also, as we look into- Word of God we see- not only our shortcomings- we see His glory.

Isa 6:5 Then I said, “Woe is me ... I am a man of unclean lips ... For my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.”

Peter saw Jesus miracle of filling their nets w/fish- in that miracle Peter saw the glory of God.

In the working of the miracle, Peter saw Christ, not just Jesus the man, but Christ the God.

Lk 5:8 But when Simon Peter saw that, he fell down at Jesus' feet, saying, “Go away from me Lord, for I am a sinful man!”

Without the Word to remind us of who we can be in Christ- we revert back to- natural behavior.

When I read my Bible I like to mark it up ...

A well marked up Bible is not a sign of true spirituality. A sign to true spirituality is when we allow the Bible to leave its mark on us.

Come here after Me

This morning-look at what it means- be a follower.

Mat 4.17-22

What did Jesus mean when He said- Follow Me? What does “follow Me” mean for you and I today? Follow Me- (alternate)- come here after me.

Young man interested in a young woman. Would like to get to know her- but- having trouble connecting w/her. She is holding him at arms length. How would he feel if she said to him ... come here after me? That would take the relationship to a whole new level.

The God of- Bible is not holding us- arms length. Jesus entered our world- put on human flesh w/all its frailties/fears/temptations- so He could say to us as a man- follow me- come here to me

Mat 11:28 “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.

Follow combined with Me (Greek)- speaks of binding the one being called w/the one calling.

2 Cor 4:5 For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus' sake.

In- OT Israel- constantly going after other Gods. To go after God/other gods, speaks of obedience to that god.

When Jesus says “follow me” He is looking for something more than just lawful obedience- He is looking for commitment.

Obedience- compliance, acquiescence, following certain rules/laws (good/bad attitude- I obey).

Commitment- goes beyond just obedience- devotion, allegiance, loyalty, faithfulness.

Jesus calls for total commitment which requires from us a self-surrender to God/will/purposes.

Lk 9:23 And He was saying to them all, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.

Follow me is a call both to die and a call to live- life comes forth out of death, self-surrender.

We must settle in our hearts that Jesus, as the Son of God, has the right to call

us from our normal pursuits of life, to follow Him.

We must acknowledge His right over our time, energies, resources, devotions, allegiances.

If we are not willing to acknowledge His right to call us to follow Him- then we have

no right to hope for eternal life from Him.

Looking back at the beginning of this passage ...

Mat 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach and say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Jesus is saying, turn around, “come here to Me,” face Me, learn to behold me ...

2 Cor 3:18 (AMP) And all of us, as with unveiled face, [because we] continued to behold [in the Word of God] as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are constantly being transfigured into His very own image in ever increasing splendor and from one degree of glory to another; [for this comes] from the Lord [Who is] the Spirit.

Biblically ALL are called- but few are willing to “come here after Me”.

Mat 7:13–14

13“Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it.

14“For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

We get to choose what path we go down in life.

As our country grows more unfavorable towards Christian truth/morality-

we are going to find ourselves swimming against the cultural current.

In other words- we choose the wide/narrow gate. Jesus calls His first four disciples and begins the process of depositing His life/gifts into men ...

2 Cor 4:7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves;

A fusing together of the spiritual and the natural into one new man in Christ ...

2 Cor 5:17 ... the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

Going further in Matthew 4 ...

Mat 4:23-24

²³Jesus was going throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people.

²⁴The news about Him spread throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all who were ill, those suffering with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, paralytics; and He healed them.

Jesus took His newly called followers and modeled for them Kingdom living ...

Jesus demonstrated the rule of God, the power of God breaking into the hearts

**and lives of men, releasing God's power
in signs and wonders of compassion,
healing, and deliverance.**

As He prayed ...

**Mat 6:10 'Your kingdom come. Your will
be done, On earth as it is in heaven.**

The healing of diseases/casting out of demons
were powerful signs that the KofG was
breaking into the lives of men.

There purpose was to demonstrate both the truth
of Jesus Words and the authority/power
we can walk in as His followers.

**Mat 12:28 "But if I cast out demons by
the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of
God has come upon you.**

When we hear the call to "follow Me," "to come
here after Me," there can be no turning back.

Jesus- speaking to men- wanted to follow Him ...

**Lk 9:62 But Jesus said to him, "No one,
after putting his hand to the plow and
looking back, is fit for the kingdom of
God."**

Being a follower of Christ means belonging
exclusively to Christ ...

Phil 3:8-14

Jesus invites men to follow Him not just so they
can know Him and go to heaven, but so He
can transform them into His image.

It is only a transformed life of a follower that can
pass the message of- Kingdom on to others.

The call to follow Christ is not for wimps.

When Jesus was talking to His followers about
eating His flesh/drinking His blood ...

Jn 6:66 As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore.

It is important to note ...

Once we turn to Christ, He sets the conditions of being His disciple. The one receiving the invitation does not decide what it will cost to be a disciple.

Jesus' invitation to follow Him was an all-or-nothing invitation- come here and come now!

There is a cost to God's call in our lives.

There is also a purpose in God calling us to follow Him ...

Inherent in the "follow Me" call on our lives is Jesus multiplying Himself in the earth through our relationship with Him and our passing that relationship on to others.

God has chosen each of us to take the message of His Kingdom, His life alive in us, to- world.

Conclusion

The first verse we read in Mat 4 ...

Mat 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

... summarizes Jesus message to mankind.

The KofG is here/now- walk toward it, receive it! Get your lives in order, for God's Kingdom is approaching.

In **Mat 4.18-22** ... when Jesus says- follow Me- this is- proper response for men to make to rule of God in the earth.

Only those who submit to God's reign in advance, will be ready when he comes to rule the whole world.

Mat 4.23-24- demonstrate God's rule/authority over sickness and demonic activity.

A picture of God breaking into the lives of men.

As you go on to **Mat 5-7-** Sermon on the Mount, Beatitudes- see what repentance looks like in a believers life and how we are to walk out our Christian life.

At one point the Pharisees said ...

Jn 12:19 ... look, the world has gone after Him."

May this be our testimony- the world would look at us and recognize- we are followers of Christ

As followers of Christ we must ...

- >proclaim- imminence of KofG- it is NOW
- >demonstrate God's rule over sickness and demonic activity

>pass on the teachings of Christ to others

Matthew 28:19–20 (NASB95)

19“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,

20teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”