

Give Me Jesus To Follow

Introduction. Jeremiah's contribution to the teaching of God's salvation in Jesus Christ is profound. His prophecy of the New Covenant in 31:31-34 contrasts how the Old Covenant focused mainly on externals, while the New Covenant focuses on internals. One of the major reasons why God can "put my law in their inward parts" is because of the power of the gospel (Romans 1:16; Hebrews 4:12). The gospel is powerful because of Jesus Christ.

John's first epistle establishes the reality of Jesus Christ as the Son of God. Knowing and abiding in Jesus Christ is defined as keeping His commandments (1 John 2:3-6). What can we learn as we try to walk as He walked? I'd like us to analyze four ways we can follow Jesus.

I. Follow Him Through Discipleship

- A. Jesus told us, "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Mark 8:34).
- B. All four gospels record multiple times the simple command Jesus gave His disciples: "Follow me" (Matthew 4:19; Mark 2:14; Luke 9:23; John 1:43). It is one of the first commands of Jesus.
- C. Discipleship means a sacrificing of oneself (Romans 12:1) and counting everything but loss for Christ (Philippians 3:7-8). This also means constancy or faithfulness until the end (Psalm 31:23; Matthew 10:22; Hebrews 10:34). There are several examples of faithfulness mentioned in the New Testament:
 1. Timothy (1 Corinthians 4:17).
 2. Tychicus (Ephesians 6:21).
 3. Epaphras (Colossians 1:7).
 4. Onesimus (Colossians 4:9).
 5. Silvanus (1 Peter 5:12).
 6. Antipas (Revelation 2:13).

II. Follow Him Through Doctrine

- A. Jesus proclaimed, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (Matthew 7:15).
- B. The "doctrine of Christ" (2 John 9) includes an understanding of critical subjects:
 1. His nature.
 - a) He was born of a woman (Galatians 4:4).
 - b) He was also fully divine (John 10:30).
 - c) Some passages combine the two (Philippians 2:5-11).
 2. His salvation.
 - a) Belief (John 8:24).
 - b) Repentance (Luke 13:3, 5).
 - c) Confession (Matthew 10:32-33).
 - d) Baptism (John 3:3, 5).
 3. His church.
 - a) Jesus came to establish His church (Matthew 16:18; Acts 20:28).
 - b) It would be established shortly after His death (Mark 9:1; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4).

- c) It is a spiritual organization (John 18:36; Romans 14:17).
 - d) It has a simple task (1 Thessalonians 1:8; 1 Corinthians 14:5, 17; Acts 4:32-35).
 - e) It is to remain pure and without blemish in the world (2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:27).
- C. If we do not abide in the true doctrine of Jesus, we are not following Him (Acts 2:42; Ephesians 5:11; 1 Timothy 4:13, 16).

III. Follow Him Through Disappointments

- A. Jesus said, "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague" (Mark 5:34).
- B. Because of Satan and the curse of sin, mankind has to deal with many trials and problems, but put your trust in Jesus who can see us through them.
 1. Sickness (2 Corinthians 12:9; James 5:10-11).
 2. Persecution (Isaiah 50:6; Acts 4:25-28)
 3. Marriage difficulties (Ephesians 5:22-33; 1 Peter 3:1-7).
 4. Discouragement (John 14:1, 27; 15:18-21; 16:7, 20, 33).

IV. Follow Him Through Disinterest

- A. Jesus declared, "Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:60).
- B. Satan takes away the word within the heart (Mark 4:15), so apathy is a real threat to children of God (Matthew 22:1-14; Luke 14:16-24). This is not a New Testament phenomena (Joshua 18:3; 2 Chronicles 24:5; Haggai 1:2).
- C. Diligence is a key idea when the character of a Christian is described in the New Testament (2 Peter 1:5-11; cp. Romans 12:8, 11; 2 Corinthians 8:7-8, 16; Hebrews 6:11; Jude 3).

Conclusion. I love the fact that the only recorded words we have of Mary the mother of Jesus in the gospel of John are, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it" (John 2:5). Follow Jesus as His disciple. Follow Jesus in pure doctrine. Follow Jesus through life's disappointments. Follow Jesus even when you don't feel interested. You will never regret the decision once the book of life is opened (Revelation 20:12).