

## FOLLOWING CHRIST

### Int.

1. Aim: To show what it means to follow Christ.
2. Mt. 16:24 NKJV "Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me."
  - a. To follow Christ we must deny self [turn away from self] - take up our cross [turn to Christ]
  - b. Mt. 4:18-19 Follow me "And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. 19 Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."
  - c. I Cor. 11:1 - Paul followed Christ "Be ye followers of me, even as I also [am] of Christ."
    - (1) Follow = Mimic
    - (2) NKJV "I imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ."
    - (3) ASV "Be ye imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ."
  - d. If any man will be a disciple of Jesus he must have the same views and follow his ways
  - e. We have been called by the gospel and are on our way to heaven.
3. When traveling three things are necessary:
  - (1) Saying farewell [To self] Farewell to self
  - (2) Carrying our baggage [our cross] Take up our cross
  - (3) Proceeding with the journey [follow me] and Follow Jesus
4. What does it mean to follow Christ?

Discussion**I. SAYING FAREWELL TO SELF**

- A. This really means I WILL BE OBEDIENT TO GOD not self
- B. Phil. 2:8 “And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”
1. Jesus was obedient to God Jn. 8:29 “...for I do always those things that please him.”
  2. It was even necessary that he die to show his obedience to God
  3. Obedience = fulfillment of God's commands.
- C. Heb. 5:8,9 “Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; 9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;”
1. He learned obedience by the things which he suffered
  2. He became the author of eternal salvation for all that obey him
  3. If we are going to follow Jesus we must obey him
  4. Christ became Savior by obedience, we are saved by obedience.
  5. There is no such thing as “faith only” taught in the Bible.
    - a. Mt. 7:21 “Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.”
    - b. Jas.2:17 “Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.”
    - c. Jas. 2:24 “Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.”
  6. Following Jesus means obeying his commands. When we obey then we are promised salvation.

## II. **CARRY OUR BAGGAGE [ OUR CROSS]**

A. It will be necessary for us to BE HUMBLE in our heart

1. Eph. 3:8 - Paul was following Jesus and he was a humble man "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;"
  - a. Paul felt that he was unworthy because he had persecuted the church
  - b. I Cor. 15:9 "For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God."
  - c. If we follow Christ then we will be humble
  
2. Mt. 18:1-4 Jesus explains that the greatest in the kingdom is humble as a little child.
  - a. Following Jesus means humbling ourself
  - b. Jas. 4:10 "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up."
  - c. Humility - thinking soberly about self, lack of pride.

B. Another responsibility in carrying our cross is to PRAY

1. Christ spent much time in prayer
  - a. Lk. 18:1 "And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;"
  - b. Luke records several parables of Jesus on prayer - Lk. 11:5-10 18:9-14
  
2. If we are following Christ in our life then we will be people of prayer.
  - a. I Thes. 5:17 "Pray without ceasing"

- b. Paul teaches us to pray always
  - c. As we pray more it becomes a part of our life -- it becomes a habit
3. Our prayers and the way we live must be in harmony
- a. Pro. 28:9 "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination."
  - b. Ps. 66:18 "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me."
  - c. God does not hear and answer the prayers of those who are wicked and will not obey him.
4. When we follow Jesus and carry our cross we are obedient to His will. One of those commands is that we pray. Mt. 6:9 "After this manner therefore pray ye:"
5. Humility and Prayer are two important things in bearing our cross.

### **III. PROCEEDING WITH THE JOURNEY - FOLLOWING JESUS**

- A. To follow Jesus we must be busy TEACHING GOD'S WORD
- 1. Commanded to teach others
    - a. Great Commission - Mt. 28:19-20 Mk. 16:15-16
    - b. 2 Tim. 2:2 "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."
  - 2. Jesus was courageous in teaching God's word
    - a. Mt. 23 - Jesus was not soft when dealing with sin and hypocrisy
    - b. Mt. 23:13-14 "But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in [yourselves], neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. 14 Woe unto you, scribes

and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation."

- c. He denounced the religious hypocrites of his day
3. It takes much courage to denounce sin both in and out of the church.
    - a. But when we follow Jesus we will have the courage!
    - b. II Tim.4:2 "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine."

#### B. To follow Jesus means we will HAVE COMPASSION

1. Jesus did not condone sin but he showed compassion by forgiving sin
  - a. Jn. 8:1-11
  - b. He did not approve of her sin
  - c. He told her to go and sin no more - you live a new and different life -- He had compassion
2. We who follow Jesus must have compassion and be willing to forgive sinners
  - a. We hate sin - but love the sinner
  - b. We are commanded to speak the truth in love. Eph. 4:15a
  - c. Eph. 4:32 "...forgiving one another,..."
3. Following Jesus means I will have compassion on my fellow man.

#### C. Another part of following Jesus means to live a life of JOY

1. Being a follower of Christ should bring great joy
  - a. Acts 8:39 the eunuch went on his way rejoicing
  - b. Phil. 4:7 "and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." NKJV

## 2. Joy should fill our hearts

a. Phil. 4:4 NKJV "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!"

b. Following Christ will bring great joy - happiness to our life:

(1) Our sins are forgiven

(2) He has promised that all things will work together for our Good - Rm.

8:28

(3) We have a hope for a home with God in Heaven

## Conclusion

1. Mt. 16:24 NKJV "Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me."

2. When traveling three things are necessary:

(1) Saying farewell

(a) To deny self

(b) Be obedient to God

(2) Carrying our baggage

(a) Taking up our cross

(b) Be Humble

(c) Pray

(3) Proceeding with the journey

(a) Following Jesus

(b) Teach God's Word

(c) Have Compassion

(d) Joy in our life

3. Following Jesus just means that I will live like Jesus in my life.
4. If we follow him and live like him here, then we will be able to live with Him in Heaven.
  - a. John 14:1-4
  - b. He is the Way - the Truth and the Life - John 14:6
  - c. Way of Salvation:
    - (1) Believe - Repent - Confess - Be Baptized
    - (2) LIVE a faithful Christian life - follow Jesus

---

Source - Bulletin Article by Kenneth McClain - 9/20/87 "What Does It Mean To Follow Christ?"

---

---

Sermon by Arthur Pigman - Sunday night May 10, 2009  
Evans Church of Christ  
515 Gibbs Road  
Evans, Ga. 30809  
706-855-1249  
evanscoc@bellsouth.net  
www.evansgachurchofchrist.org