

FOLLOWING JESUS (PART 1)

Matthew 19:27 (KJV) Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?

Peter is asking Jesus a question here. He wants to know the reward for following Jesus. Peter understood that no one can follow Jesus for free or for nothing. There is a benefit somewhere to those who follow Jesus. What a revelation! Indeed, there are benefits to those who follow Jesus or to those who are his disciples.

In his response, Jesus did not hide the benefits. He put them out to Peter and the disciples in the next two verses as recorded in the book of Mathew.

Matthew 19:28-29 (KJV) And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

vs 29 And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.

Did you notice something special in the conversation between Peter and our Lord Jesus? Peter said "we have left everything and followed you" and in response Jesus said "everyone who has left everything and followed me shall inherit everlasting life "

The key words are **LEFT (FORSAKEN) & FOLLOW**. Which means, you cannot successfully follow Jesus without leaving something or forsaking something. You have to somehow lose so that you can gain.

My question to you today is, what have you left behind for the sake of following Christ? What have you dropped ever since you claimed to be a disciple of Jesus? Some have left jobs, some have

left their nations, some their comfort, some have left their previous behaviours and some have left friends. What have you left for the sake of following Jesus?

Jesus wants you to enjoy the benefits of following him but you need to show him those things that you had to leave or lose for the sake of following him. You cannot be a follower of Jesus with your hands too full of the world. You need to drop some things to gain some things. You are too loaded to follow Jesus. Just drop some unnecessary items that you are holding onto in your life....
Hallelujah.

To be continued.

Pastor C & S

FOLLOWING JESUS (PART 2)

Matthew 16:24 (KJV) Then said Jesus unto his disciples, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

Jesus said those words (in the above scripture) as he lays the conditions for those who would follow him. You do not follow Jesus the way you want but the way he wants.

Jesus gave two conditions for following him which are "denying oneself and taking up the cross daily." Most people have claimed to be following Jesus today but choosing to completely ignore these two conditions. Let us look at them both in detail.

1. Denying yourself

When Jesus said this, he meant that those who would follow him should be people who are ready to say NO to themselves and say YES to God. When you deny yourself, you cease to seek to please yourself before pleasing God. You are not happy until God is happy. Whatever pleases God is what should please you. It is no longer about yourself but about Jesus. You cannot be a follower of Jesus when you are too full of yourself.

For example, there are a lot of things I would want to do but I cannot do them because they do not please God. I am a disciple of someone. I seek to please my master before myself. In other words, self-denial is putting yourself on the altar of obedience daily and say 'not my will Lord but your will' If you cannot do this, you cannot be a successful follower of Jesus. Be prepared to lay down your will. You do not just do what you want, you check whether it pleases the Father first.

2. Take up his cross daily.

The cross is a symbol of sacrifice, of pain of loss, of shame. When you become a follower of Christ, it will take daily commitment. You will suffer the shame for him. You will go through pain for the Gospel. Some of us think that coming to Christ is to just present our wish list or shopping list (our needs). We forget that Jesus has called us to carry the cross like he did.

Are you prepared to be ashamed because of the Gospel? Are you prepared to go through pain just for the sake of the Gospel? Sometimes when we follow Jesus, he just does not lead us through good things alone. Sometimes Jesus takes us through tough moments for the sake of his glory. Some think that when I follow Jesus, everything will just be flowing and will always be happy. It is not like that. There are tears in following Jesus, there is shame and even death in following him **(Galatians 6:17)**

The cross is the symbol of suffering. We suffer daily because of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Never run away from suffering for Jesus. That suffering will produce in you glory. **Romans 8:17** "If we suffer with him, we will also be glorified with him." Rejoice when you are given a privilege to suffer for Christ. It means you would have been found worthy to suffer for him. Not many people have been chosen for that privilege.

Look at the disciples of Jesus (the apostles) they counted it joy that they were made to suffer shame for Jesus. **Acts 5:41 (KJV)** "And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name." Hallelujah

Pastor C & S

FOLLOWING JESUS (PART 3)

1 Corinthians 11:1 (KJV) "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."

Paul is teaching the Corinthians church another way of following Jesus. He advised them to follow him, as he follows Christ.

For all those who are still young in the Lord or in faith, this is the best way they can follow Jesus. It is through following a man. A man of God is very important in modeling Christ for you. For you to understand Christ, you need to see him in a man of God. You cannot learn Christ on your own, he will give you people who will teach and guide you to the full knowledge of Christ. **Ephesians 4:11** "He gave some Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers."

Again, Paul is speaking to the Galatians and says in **Galatians 4:19 (KJV)** "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you."

Did you see that Paul had to travail until Christ be formed in the hearts of the Galatians? Someone should travail for you to come to the full knowledge of Christ. The word travailing here means labour, effort and pain. For anyone to know Christ, there should be a man who is putting effort and pain. The pain of travailing is the same pain as the pain of giving birth in the physical but in the spiritual, you do not travail once but many times for one person until Christ is formed in them.

Never give trouble to those who are in travail for you, they are already in pain so do not make it worse. Allow them to do their job of making Christ be formed in you. If you are teachable, humble, submissive and loyal, you will make the job of the man of God bearable. Paul said he had to travail AGAIN which means once was not enough. Check your life. Do not let the man of God travail for many times over you. The Galatians brought Paul back to the labour ward again.... you can do better than them by just being teachable.

Even cell group leaders are in travail. They are labouring for you to help you understand Christ more. Do not hurt them. Do not let their travail be in vain. It is like being in labour for the whole day expecting a bouncing baby only to be told that your baby has died during the process, what a

pain! That is exactly how you feel when after the labour of visiting and praying for someone, then they backslide aaah.

I declare today that those who are labouring will not labour or travail in vain. I declare that you will give birth in this season. God said in Isaiah **66:9 (KJV)** Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the LORD: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God.

Indeed, God is not going to shut the womb. Surely this time, he will bring forth. The time of travailing in vain is over. This is a new season.....**Hallelujah... PASTOR C&S**

Daily Bread

17/09/2021

FOLLOWING JESUS (PART 4)

Matthew 4:19-20 (KJV) "And he saith unto them, FOLLOW me, and I will make you fishers of men.

And they straightway left their nets, and FOLLOWED him."

When Jesus calls you to follow him, he will make you or turn you into something new....If you notice in the above scripture, Jesus said to the two men who were fishing, "follow me and I will MAKE you fishers of men". You cannot follow Jesus and not be turned into something new. **2 Corinthians 5:17.** "If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature."

There is always a new identity that comes with following Jesus. You become something that you were not before he met you. Some were made preachers, some were made business people, some were made singers, some leaders of various things in Church. You have to discover what Jesus has made you to be the day you believed. That is your new purpose.

Let me hasten to say, in their response the two men (Peter & Andrew) quickly left their nets and followed Jesus. Which means, following Jesus will always call for you to leave the old and go with the new. You have to leave your nets behind (your old life) and follow Jesus. If you do not leave your old life, it will drag you back or weigh you down such that you will not follow Jesus with joy. Read **Ephesians 4:22-24.**

The power of salvation is not seen in you asking for things from God or for help from God, it is seen first in your ability to change into something new, something that you were not. If the Gospel cannot change you first then it cannot give you anything. Many think that they are following Christ but unless you change for him, you cannot be his follower.

If you are still the same person you were before you were born again, then you are not yet saved, because saying yes to Jesus is saying yes to transformation and change. You cannot be baptised in Christ and come out the same. We want to hear testimonies of how he changed your character by the power of the Gospel.....Amen

End of the series.

Pastors C & S