

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO “FOLLOW?”

Matthew 4:18-22, John 21:18-19

April 7, 2024

Followers refuse to be satisfied just to be saved and on their way to heaven. For followers, Christianity is a passionate pursuit of Christ.

As followers, we replicate the grace, mercy, love, justice, compassion, truth, and righteousness of Christ our leader.

It is the voice of Christ, who simply said, “Follow me.” No conditions. No negotiations. No particulars. No contractual exceptions. Just follow.

Many identify themselves as “Christian” simply a way to differentiate themselves from other kinds of people. For some it means little more than not being a Muslim, Hindu, or Buddhist.

Think of the difference it would make if we answered the question of who we are by saying, “I am a follower of Christ.” “What is your religion?” “Christ-Follower.”

Many live out their faith in Christ as though he exists to follow us. We come to believe that Christ exists to satisfy our demands.

Some of these distorted perceptions of Christianity teach that power of faith and prayer are instruments designed to get Christ to serve us; for our prosperity and a life free from discomfort. This self-serving religion sets Christ up as just one more commodity in life that will enhance and empower our dreams and ambitions.

Unfortunately, when it comes to the life choices that matter most, we resist yielding control. We do not want to appear weak, uncertain, or unable to figure out life for ourselves.

In the face of our resistance, Christ calls us to come after him. He calls us to count ourselves wholly and without compromise fully devoted followers of him – not as a part-time expression of our Christianity. But as the all-consuming center of our existence.

Followership is not about rules and regulations. Following Christ is about a relationship that drives and defines who we are and all that we do.

If Christianity is dull and boring, then we have most likely turned it into a religion, not a relationship; a system, not a Savior.

Followership is not a religious thing. It is not rules, or rituals, or a philosophy.

With every choice in life, every response, devoted followers move closer and closer towards an intimacy with Christ.

Sadly, many Christians resist making Christ the true center of their lives. They are satisfied to relate to him, to accept his salvation for themselves, and to find comfort and peace in him. But fewer are truly committed to following him unconditionally.

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