

Living a Life Worth Following

Follow the leader – ever play that game as a kid? Someone is chosen to be the leader. Everyone follows him or her wherever they go, doing whatever they do until they get tired of the game or everyone else gets tired of following.

I did an informal survey among people I know asking them, would you rather be the follower or the leader. The response was not really what I expected. Some said, I'd rather do my own thing. Others said it depends on who I'm with. A small number said they would rather lead.

Leading

I find this interesting because even though I sometimes don't want to lead, I usually find myself in that spot. I prefer making decisions to everyone standing around and no one deciding.

I'm intrigued by those who admitted they would rather do their own thing. These are perhaps the boldest of all. They don't care what others want to do. They are loners.

The followers follow because either it's easier or they trust the leader. They don't have to make decisions, they just follow the Leader. This group may be the most spiritual of all.

Follow Me

Jesus hand-chose the disciples by saying, "Follow Me" (see Mark 1:17 and Matt. 9:9, NKJV). They followed without question. They left everything and just followed Him.

Their simple, spur-of-the-moment decisions changed their lives forever simply because they were willing to follow. Yet, many of them were leaders, businessmen, wealthy men and burly, working guys.

They followed without question. I have to ask myself why. Why did they follow this unknown rabbi? Why did they leave their families and walk away from their jobs?

Think about it for a minute. Even though they didn't know who He really was, they knew that He spoke with an authority they had never encountered before. The moment He spoke, their heads raised to meet His eyes and their hearts were knitted with His forever.

Take Up Your Cross

Fast forward in the story a bit and Jesus sends out these same men telling them not to take money, bags, extra clothes or belongings. He gives them power to heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead and cast out demons (see Matt. 10:8-10, NKJV).

In His advance pep talk before they go out, He adds. "And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me" (Matt. 10:38, NKJV).

This is a whole new level of following the leader. They would know that He meant for them to be willing to give up their lives for Him (see Matt. 16:21-23, NKJV). And yet they continued doing what He told them to do even though at times it seemed crazy.

He reinforced the statement later saying, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it" (Matt. 16:24 NKJV).

He certainly does not paint a pretty picture of what it means to follow Him. He promised nothing and yet He gave them everything.

Follow Me?

He's still doing that. He asks us to invite others to do the same. Paul even had the audacity to tell the Corinthians, "Follow me as I follow Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1, MEV).

I have always read that with fear to think others would be following my interpretation of what it means to follow Christ.

I knew there were huge areas of my life that were not under obedience to Christ when I was using food as my main emotional crutch. I didn't want anyone to follow me. I could teach them about the Bible, but don't do what I do. Don't eat your way to super, morbid obesity.

Mentoring

Now that I have surrendered the specific foods holding me back, I realize I have an obligation to mentor others. Don't get me wrong. I'm not perfect. I have faults like everyone else. I've learned the value of following a mentor I trust. I still have mentors who speak into my life and have my permission to call me on mistakes. I wouldn't have it any other way.

Now I am a mentor or coach helping others on their journeys. It is one of my greatest privileges and joys to be able to see another catch hold of truth, incorporate it into their lives and run with it.

Our journeys here on earth are to be ones of leading others to the resurrection, life-giving power of Jesus Christ. That's the message of the empty tomb. Where there once was death, there is now only life.

New Beginnings

If we belong to Christ, each of us has gone through a death of an old life. "The old life is gone. The new has begun" (2 Corinthians 5:17, NLT).

Each day, though, can be a new beginning. The day I

surrendered sugar and flour was definitely a new day for me. Each day I release more emotional baggage and spiritual misbeliefs. Each day I am set free in more areas.

I love it so much, I can't help but share the new life I'm living. It is for freedom I was set free (see Galatians 5:1, TPT). I just follow the Leader.

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