

Follow Your Heart

“To thine own heart be TRUE,” the old saying goes. It remains a timely and relevant life lesson that all of us would do well to remember. When we veer off the course that our heart is advising us to follow, we can make our lives very difficult. Putting aside our own convictions and following what others think we should do will lead to an unfulfilled and empty existence.

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What do you want out of life? What do you believe God’s will is for you? Some people spend so much time meeting what they think their obligations are that they don’t even know what *they* want. They never ask themselves because they’ve already decided it is out of their reach. I am not talking about selfish desires; I am talking about something deep in your heart put there by God. Everyone is called and equipped to do something.

It takes boldness to follow your heart instead of the crowd. When God called me to teach His Word, it was not popular at all for women to do that. I lost friends, and even some family members rejected me as a deceived and misguided rebel. I didn’t have a very good reputation among the people in our community. It still amazes me that I found the courage to follow God rather than those around me.

I think I had become so weary of “life as usual” that I was willing to do whatever it took for me to feel satisfied deep down on the inside. I learned that being excessively concerned about what others think leads only to torment. Although all of us enjoy being well thought of, it is not possible to be liked by everyone all the time.

I experienced rejection at first when I decided to live to please God, but after a while He gave me new friends who were pursuing the same things I was, and together we stand against

the fear of what people think. In God's economy, we usually have to be willing to lose something we have in order to gain what we really want in life.

People who are real friends will help you be all God wants you to be. They won't use you and then discard you when you no longer please them. When you spend time and energy trying to please others, you take a great risk in losing yourself. God must be No. 1 in your life. Even if everyone else walks away from you, He promises to never leave you or forsake you. I hope you understand that "never" means *never*.

The Bible says we should cast all our cares upon God for He cares for us (see 1 Pet. 5:7), and that includes the care of what people think. I can only live my life to please God, and if that troubles some people, they need to take it up with Him.

Life gets too complicated, confusing and frustrating when we try to please both God and people. We must be free to be ourselves. The years I struggled to be someone other than myself taught me that it is much easier to just be me and follow my own heart.

You don't have to compare yourself to or compete with anyone (see 2 Cor. 10:12). Jesus came to set people free in many ways, and this is one of them.

All God expects is that we try to be the absolute best we can be. He wants us to follow the desire He placed in each of us. Since I started doing that, I have grown by leaps and bounds. I believe the same thing will happen to you when you let God be God in your life.

Following your heart can simplify your life. There is nothing simple about ignoring the dreams and visions that God has given you and trying to force yourself to enjoy doing something you actually hate. You may think following your heart will be complicated, but the truth is, it is absolutely

necessary if you ever intend to enjoy a simple life of obedience to God.

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