

Life In The Spirit: Following Jesus Wherever He Goes

25 Now large crowds were going along with Him; and He turned and said to them, 26 “If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. 27 Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. 28 For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it? 29 Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who observe it begin to ridicule him, 30 saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish.’ Luke 14:25-30

The cost of following Jesus is everything.

The reason many people fail is not for lack of vision but for lack of resolve and resolve is born out of counting the cost. ~Robert H. Goddard

Jesus isn't desiring discipleship dropouts. He is demanding committed co-laborers.

44 “The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid again; and from joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. 45 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls, 46 and upon finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it. Matthew 13:44-46

The man and the merchant sold all they had before obtaining their treasures. The treasure is being with Jesus and being with Him means following Him wherever he goes. Jesus is worthy of being followed.

This is NOT purchasing our own salvation. Jesus purchased our salvation with His blood. Although our salvation is given to us freely, it cost Jesus His life. In return, He bids us to serve Him.

If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him. John 12:26

“[Grace] is costly because it cost God the life of His Son: 'Ye were bought at a price', and what has cost God much cannot be cheap for us.” ~ Deitrich Bonhoeffer

18 Now when Jesus saw a crowd around Him, He gave orders to depart to the other side *of the sea*. **19** Then a scribe came and said to Him, “Teacher, I will follow You wherever You go.” **20** Jesus *said to him, “The foxes have holes and the birds of the air *have* nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.” Matthew 8:18-20

It's true that there's no place like home. Home is where we find security and comfort. Following Jesus means making our home in the arms of Jesus.

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21 Another of the disciples said to Him, "Lord, permit me first to go and bury my father."
22 But Jesus *said to him, "Follow Me, and allow the dead to bury their own dead."
Matthew 8:21-22

No obligation is of higher importance than responding to the call of Jesus. Following Jesus means making Him our first priority.

23 When He got into the boat, His disciples followed Him. Matthew 8:23

When we follow Jesus, there is no turning back. There is no contingency plan. We must be all in.

24 And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being covered with the waves; but Jesus Himself was asleep. **25** And they came to *Him* and woke Him, saying, "Save *us*, Lord; we are perishing!" **26** He said to them, "Why are you afraid, you men of little faith?" Then He got up and rebuked the winds and the sea, and it became perfectly calm. **27** The men were amazed, and said, "What kind of a man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?" Matthew 8:24-27

It is in the storms where we learn to call out to Jesus to save us. In His amazing response, our faith is built!

Will you follow Jesus, even into a storm?

28 When He came to the other side into the country of the Gadarenes, two men who were demon-possessed met Him as they were coming out of the tombs. *They were so extremely violent that no one could pass by that way.* **29** And they cried out, saying, "What business do we have with each other, Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?" **30** Now there was a herd of many swine feeding at a distance from them. **31** The demons *began* to entreat Him, saying, "If You *are going to* cast us out, send us into the herd of swine." **32** And He said to them, "Go!" And they came out and went into the swine, and the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and perished in the waters. **33** The herdsmen ran away, and went to the city and reported everything, including what had happened to the demoniacs. **34** And behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus; and when they saw Him, they implored Him to leave their region.

The Enemy will do everything in his power to stop the power of Jesus from pushing back darkness. If we are following Jesus, we will face opposition. We may even follow Jesus to a place where we are face to face with darkness.

Satan's greatest trick is convincing us he doesn't exist. If that doesn't work, he will try to convince us that darkness doesn't exist. If that doesn't work, he will try to convince us that demons/evil spirits don't exist. If that doesn't work, he will try to convince us that we are not at war with them.

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It is in these times that we run into the arms of Jesus for security and comfort. In these times, we will have to lean into the authority of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit.

If Jesus leads us face to face with evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, with mighty powers in the dark world, and against evil spirits in heavenly places, He isn't doing it so we will fall to their devices. He is doing it so that by His authority we can stand firm and have victory over all the strategies of the Devil - that the light of Jesus will drive back spiritual darkness.

Following Jesus isn't always easy path and the cost will be steep but worth it. You nor I can do it with our own power. The same power that raised Jesus from death lives in you.

Sweetly, Lord, have we heard Thee calling,
Come, follow Me!
And we see where Thy footprints falling
Lead us to Thee.

Though they lead o'er the cold, dark mountains,
Seeking His sheep;
Or along by Siloam's fountains,
Helping the weak.

If they lead through the temple holy,
Preaching the Word;
Or in homes of the poor and lowly,
Serving the Lord.

Footprints of Jesus,
That make the pathway glow;
We will follow the steps of Jesus
Where'er they go.

Then at last when on high He sees us,
Our journey done,
We will rest where the steps of Jesus
End at His throne.