

## FOLLOWING THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS

The disciples of Jesus are to be imitators. In fact, the very word “disciple” carries the idea of being a follower in beliefs and practices. Often Jesus would tell His disciples to do as He has done. Let’s consider two examples.

In John 13, we can read of Jesus as He grabbed a towel after the Passover feast, poured water into a bowl, and “*began to wash the disciples’ feet*” (John 13.5). Peter was so taken back that his Lord and Master was washing his feet, he asked incredulously, “*Lord, are you washing my feet*” (John 13.6)? Jesus responded, “*For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you*” (John 13.15). Jesus set an example of humility. Though He was Lord and Master, He was not ashamed to stoop down in service (John 13.16). To be a disciple of Jesus means that our lives are to be characterized by service (Phil. 2.5ff).

Keep reading John 13, and you come to **VERSE 34**: “*A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.*” The love of Jesus can be characterized in two ways. First, His love is unconditional. We do not have to earn His love (cf. Rom. 5.8). Second, His love is sacrificial. He does not just love in word, but He showed His love by giving Himself (John 15.13). To be a disciple of Jesus means that we love our fellow man regardless of how they treat us. We do not place conditions on our love reserve our love only for those we believe are deserving. Instead we sacrifice what we have for the benefit of others (1 John 3.16-18)

A few verses later, Jesus is talks to Peter. He tells His impetuous disciple, “*Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow Me afterward*” (John 13.36). Peter believed that Jesus was going on a long journey, and he expressed a willingness and desire to go. Jesus was not referring to traveling from one city to another, but His being crucified and leaving this life.

In the next three chapters, Jesus prepares His disciples for that inevitable day. Peter wanted to follow Jesus, but He knew that Peter was not ready (John 13.37,38). However, Peter eventually would give his life for Jesus (John 21.18,19). To be a disciple of Jesus means that we are willing to give up even our lives for Him (John 9.23). Being a disciple is not easy, but the Bible documents His life that we might know how to follow Him. CLP

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“*Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature*”  
-Mark 16.15

**March 5, 2023**

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### MEETING TIMES:

**SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS : 9:00 AM**  
**SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP: 9:50 AM**  
**SUNDAY EVENING WORSHIP: 6:00 PM**  
**WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE CLASS 7:30 PM**

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## THE CHALLENGE OF EVANGELISM

Preaching the word of God is not easy. The message preached by Jeremiah landed him in prison with his hands and feet shackled to the wall (Jer. 20.2). It was such an unpopular message that when he proclaimed it to his people, he complained, “*everyone mocks me*” (Jer. 20.7). He lamented that “*the word of the Lord was made to me a reproach and a derision daily.*” (Jer. 20.8). Preaching made his life such a burden that he was ready to quit. While he had determined to “*not make mention of Him, nor speak anymore in His name*” he was overcome with a burning desire to preach the truth. Therefore he admitted, “*I was weary of holding it back, and I could not*” (Jer. 20.9).

There is so much joy and such a great reward in seeing someone excited about the gospel, interested in hearing the truth, and eager to obey God. There is also so much heartache and discouragement when we encounter vigorous opposition to the truth. But let us remember the words of the apostle Paul: “*Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season.*” (2 Tim. 4.2). The disciples in the first century preached the gospel whether it was popular or not. Paul commanded that Timothy preach the gospel whether it was popular or not. We need to spread the good news of Jesus Christ whether the world is receptive or not. CLP

## ARE YOU AFRAID OF GOD?

### MATTHEW 10:28

#### INTRODUCTION:

1. Of all the things that you might fear, what is at the top of your list? Spiders? Heights? Death? Being Alone?
2. More than anything or anyone, we ought to be afraid of God “*for our God is a consuming fire*” (Heb. 12.29).

#### I. EXPLANATION

- A. What does it mean to be afraid of God?
  1. **ROMANS 13.3:** “*Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good*”
  2. **ROMANS 13.4:** “*If you do evil, be afraid*”
  3. We ought not to be afraid of God Himself but of the consequences of our bad choices. (Heb. 10.27)
- B. Why should we be afraid of God?
  1. We serve a loving God. (1 John 4.16-18)
  2. Our fear of God comes from His ability to “*destroy both body and soul in hell*” (Matt. 10.16,17,21,28)

#### II. EXAMPLE

- A. The example of Adam and Eve.
  1. Adam and Eve were given a command. (Gen. 2.16,17)
  2. Adam and Eve broke God’s command. (Gen. 3.3,7)
  3. **GENESIS 3.9,10:** “*I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked*”
  4. Why were they afraid? They knew the consequences of their decision. (Gen. 3.11)
- B. The example of Moses and the Israelites.
  1. **HEBREWS 12.21:** “*I am exceedingly afraid*”
  2. Why did God make such an appearance. (Ex. 20.18-20)

#### III. EFFECT

- A. In Romans 11, a parable is given of two olive trees.
  1. The Gentiles were added by faith. (Rom. 11.16,17)
  2. Yet they boasted in their new relationship. (Rom. 11.18)
  3. **ROMANS 11.19-21:** “*Do not be haughty, but fear*”
- B. **ROMANS 11.22,23:** “*Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God.*” (cf. Rom. 2.4,5)

**CONCLUSION:** Through Jesus, we need not fear God’s wrath.

## FAITH: CAUSE AND EFFECT

His name is Thomas. We know him as “doubting Thomas.” He is so named because he refused to believe in the resurrection of Jesus without empirical evidence. Of interest, Thomas was not the first to doubt the resurrection of Christ (Luke 24.36-40). Nonetheless, Thomas received the title because of what we find written in John 20.24ff. When you study these verses, we can read about the cause and effect of faith.

**THE CAUSE:** What causes one to have faith? In John 20.24, Thomas was told that they had seen the resurrected Lord. Thomas replied, “*Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe*” (John 20.25). Thomas refused to believe unless he saw the evidence. This evidence was presented when Jesus appeared. Jesus told Thomas, “*Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing*” (John 20.27).

Today, we also believe in Jesus because of the evidence. We do not have the same evidence that was available to Thomas (John 20.29). However, we do have evidence in the eye-witness testimony of those who saw Jesus with their own eyes (1 Cor. 15.5-8; 1 John 1.1-3). John, himself, tells us that Jesus did many miracles “*in the presence of His disciples*” (John 20.30). Guided by the Holy Spirit, John recorded a handful of these miracles, “*that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God*” (John 20.31). We have faith because of the evidence of this written word (Rom. 10.17).

**THE EFFECT:** Thomas saw the evidence, and He believed. After seeing the nail marks in the hands of Jesus, Thomas declared, “*My Lord and My God!*” (John 20.28). We also see the evidence and believe. We read about Jesus in the Bible, and we accept as true what we read.

What is the result of our having faith? When we believe in Jesus, John tells that “*believing, you may have life in His name*” (John 20.31). I have the hope of eternal life because of my faith that moves me to obey the commands of God. Paul explained it like this: “*Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*” (Rom. 5.1). The faith that obeys (Rom. 6.17), is the faith that gives me access to the grace of God, and cleanses me with the blood of Jesus (Rom. 5.9).

I see the evidence written within the word of God. I believe in Jesus because of that evidence, and this faith moves me to obey the gospel. However, my faith does not end when I come out of the waters of baptism. I must continue to live every day of my life by faith (Heb. 10.38).