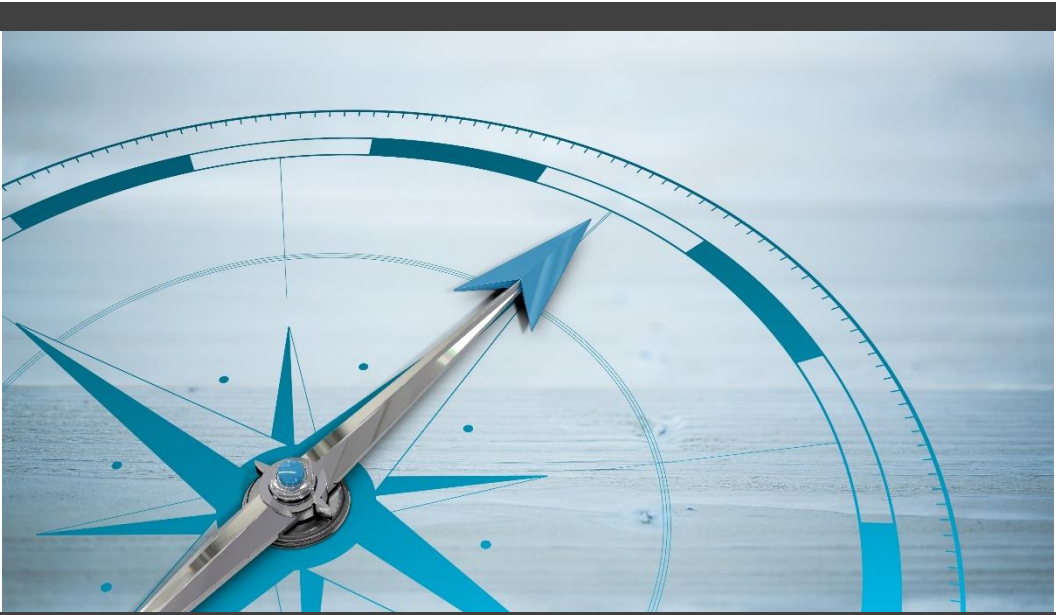


# Jesus Is The Way

## Lesson 2: Following Jesus



Discovering God's Word  
Bible Study Series

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**Discovering God's Word Bible Study Series**

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# Lesson 2: Following Jesus

## Introduction

A. Finding the real Jesus is not enough. Instead, the real Jesus prompts movement in a very certain direction. For, there is big difference between finding the path that leads to true meaning, fulfillment, joy, satisfaction, and eternal life in Heaven and walking on the path. Many people stand and look but few walk!

B. Jesus Christ is the way to everything that is truly meaningful and pleasurable. He is trying to lead you and give your life meaning (John 14:6).

C. When you have discovered the real Jesus and recognize He is the way, you must understand what it means to follow Him.

1. He wants you to count the cost (Luke 14:28-32). Just as a man considers the cost of building a tower and a king considers the cost of war, you must consider whether you will follow Jesus in the way He desires.

2. Jesus helps you recognize that following Him requires great commitment and involves enduring some physical hardships. But, He also assures you that following Him is worth it all!

D. Purpose: To learn what it really means to follow Jesus.

## 1. Really Knowing Jesus Involves Following Him

A. He wants you to be His disciple

1. Jesus does not just want people to mentally accept who He says He is. Instead, He wants disciples.

- After Peter was introduced to Jesus, Jesus told Peter to follow Him (Matthew 4:19). For, Jesus did not just want Peter to acknowledge who He was. Instead, He wanted to use Peter in His service, to mold Peter in His image, and to make Peter a disciple!

2. Matthew 7:21-23. Although many people say all you must do to be saved is believe Jesus is the Son of God who died for your sins, this is not what Jesus taught!

- There will be many people on Judgment Day who will claim Christ as Lord and say they have done many things in His name. Yet, Christ will still not be pleased with them – because they did not do everything in His name. Therefore, they break God’s laws and will be told to depart into the fires of Hell!
- A similar passage is found in Luke 6:46. Clearly, Jesus is not interested in people merely acknowledging who He is and professing Him as Lord. Instead, He wants real disciples!

3. 1 John 2:3-6. These people who actually believe who Jesus is, do what Jesus says, and live how Jesus lived are the ones called “disciples.” And, disciples are the ones who can truly be called “Christians” (Acts 11:26).

## B. Two things involved in discipleship

1. True discipleship involves a true commitment. It is not just a state of mind or a one-time decision. Instead, it involves two things.

2. First, discipleship involves learning from the Master. When you recognize who Jesus is, you should want to learn everything you can from Him. And, although you cannot literally sit at His feet, you can still learn from Him.

- You learn from Jesus through the Bible. His life, death, burial, and resurrection are described in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Then, all the books of the New Testament were written by the apostles and prophets and contain the teachings of Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit (John 16:12-14; 1 Corinthians 14:37).
- You must spend time learning from Jesus by studying the Scriptures. Learn who He is, how He lived on earth, what He taught as right and wrong, etc. Have such adoration for the Master you want to learn everything you can from Him!

3. Second, discipleship involves following the Master by imitating Him. We cannot stop by merely knowing what He taught. Instead, discipleship requires action.

- James 1:22; James 2:24. Just mentally accepting who Jesus is and what He has taught is not enough to be His disciple. You must obey!
- 1 Corinthians 11:1. Imitation seeks to replicate (make an exact copy of) the person or thing being imitated. If you really know who Jesus is, you will want to become like Him – living how He lived, teaching how He taught, being compassionate like He was, loving as He loved, overcoming temptation as He did, serving as He served, etc.

### C. What Jesus leads to

1. As you recognize Christ requires discipleship and discipleship requires commitment, you need to consider why you should commit yourself to following Him in this way (John 14:6). Consider a brief overview of what we'll consider throughout this series.

- Jesus is the way to truth. In a world full of confusion and false information, Jesus will perfectly lead to what is true.
- Jesus is the way to victory over sin and death. Jesus offers an opportunity to be forgiven of sin and assures of the resurrection from the dead.
- Jesus is the way to God. Through Jesus, you can be reconciled to God and gain access to all the spiritual blessings through Him so you can then glorify God in your life.
- Jesus is the way to Heaven. Jesus provides the only way for you to be saved from eternal punishment in Hell and to experience the eternal joys of Heaven.
- Jesus is the way to a better life. When you follow Jesus, your life and relationships will be positively impacted in many ways by following His instructions.
- Jesus is the way to a joyful life. Following Jesus results in being more joyful than you have ever been before with a joy that will not fade away.
- Jesus is the way out of religious confusion. When you follow Jesus, you will only follow Him and will overcome all the religious division and confusion in this world.

2. Jesus is the way (and the only way) to all of these things! Although Satan will try to distract you and get you off course, you must always choose to follow Jesus!

## 2. What Jesus Requires Of His Disciples

### A. Complete commitment

1. Luke 9:57-62 teaches some powerful lessons about true discipleship.

2. V. 57. Here was a man (identified as a scribe in Matthew 8:19) who expressed some desire to follow Jesus wherever Jesus would go. We do not know his motivation for doing so.

3. V. 58. Jesus wanted Him to know what was involved – that it was not a glamorous earthly life. For, Jesus was without a home on the earth He created (with no place to lay His head). In these ways, Jesus had less than the foxes and birds.

- Jesus was not trying to scare this man out of following Him – just to make sure He really understood that the benefits of following Jesus are not focused on this earthly life!
- We don't know whether this man decided to follow Jesus or not.

4. V. 59. Here is an individual being called into true discipleship. But, before he would follow Jesus, he wanted to do something else (bury his father). The indication seems to be that he would follow Jesus when he was done. But, Jesus saw a problem.

5. V. 60. While Jesus was not forbidding people to attend funerals, He was teaching what commitment really looks like. No physical thing (even important things) should ever be put before following Jesus!

- I believe the issue was that this man wanted to “first” go and bury his father before he followed Jesus. But, this is the wrong order! For those who are willing to put something or someone else before Jesus, something will always seem to come first!

6. V. 61. Another man now agrees to follow Jesus, but he also had his priorities wrong. Like the previous man, the problem wasn't what he wanted to do. The problem was the order he wanted to do them in.

- Jesus knew that such mixed-up priorities would never result in true service. Instead, the service of this individual would always be divided.

7. V. 62. Jesus saw the real problem for what it was. He knew these people kept looking back and were not fully committed to following Him. They wanted to do other things first – like someone trying to plow a field while looking back. Such is foolish and will not work!

- Just as plowing a field takes commitment and focus on the work, anyone who tries to follow Jesus in a half-hearted way is unfit for the kingdom of God.
- Consider how Peter, Andrew, James, and John responded to Jesus's call to follow Him (Luke 5:11). Whenever they were absolutely convinced Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, they did not hesitate to follow Him – leaving their possessions, livelihood, and everything. Rather than being what they were, they became Jesus's followers!

## B. Put Him first

1. Luke 14:25-33 teaches about counting the cost of discipleship. Earlier, we considered vv. 28-32. Now, we want to consider what Jesus teaches as the cost of following Him.

2. Vv. 25-26. Although Jesus could have given the crowd an easier teaching to gain a greater number of followers, He was focused on finding true followers who would put Him first. Here, Jesus says you cannot be His disciple without hating your family. While Jesus wants you to love everyone, He is presenting a choice of priority – to put Him before your family. And, you must put Him before your own earthly life!

3. V. 27. Jesus's followers will be mistreated, suffer injuries, be burdened, and possibly be killed. Yet, you must follow Jesus first – even when things get difficult. You must bear through the burdens and struggles of life and serve Him if you want to be His disciple.

4. V. 33. Earthly things often prevent people from following Jesus (i.e. jobs, property, retirements, cars, hobbies, houses, etc.). Although disciples can have these things, they must renounce (give up) all of them by considering them as belonging to Jesus. Any earthly thing you accumulate is seen as a blessing to be used in Christ's service, to His honor and glory.

5. All this teaching can be summarized by Matthew 6:33. You must focus on serving Jesus Christ first in your life. Everything must be viewed from the perspective of a whole-hearted disciple of Christ.

### C. Crucify self

1. Your life as a disciple is about Christ, not yourself. While we have already seen the commitment required, let's consider how much of yourself can remain (Luke 9:23-26).

- Notice the condition that prefaces the instructions ("If" anyone wants to follow Christ). If so, here is what Jesus says your discipleship must look like.

2. You must deny yourself, take up your cross daily, and follow Jesus. This is complete commitment to Christ.

- Deny yourself of what may please your physical body to do what Jesus wants. Endure the hardships involved in living for Jesus every day. And, follow wherever Jesus leads.

3. Then, you must lose your life for Christ. You cannot save your earthly life for yourself. It must be given entirely to Jesus Christ (your time, your money, your health, your possessions, your energy, etc. to Jesus). Let Him use your entire life and everything you have in whatever way pleases Him as you follow the instructions He has given you.

- If you do this, you will gain eternal life in Heaven! So, while following Jesus costs you everything, it is worth the price! However, if you save your life for yourself, you will lose your spiritual life by being sentenced to Hell. And, there is nothing and no one in the world worth such a sacrifice (Matthew 16:26). Therefore, consider yourself to be crucified with Christ (Galatians 2:20).

### 3. How To Follow Jesus

#### A. How to begin following Jesus

1. You must hear His word (Matthew 17:5; Romans 10:17). Although you do not have to know everything the Bible teaches before you can be His disciple, you do need to learn some basics (i.e. about sin, what God has done to save you, what God requires).

2. You must believe Jesus is the Son of God (John 8:24). Although it is essential to be mentally convinced that Jesus is the Son of God, this is not all that God requires (James 2:24).



3. You must repent of your sins (Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30). To repent is to hate the past sins you have committed and determine that you will live for Jesus in the future.

4. You must confess Jesus Christ (Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10). In making this confession of the Lord Jesus as the Son of God, you are acknowledging your belief in Jesus, confessing Him as Lord (Master) of your life, and that you are giving your life to Him.

5. You must be baptized (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:37-38). The Bible pictures baptism as the point at which you are forgiven of your sins and become a disciple of Jesus. Furthermore, the Bible requires immersion in water for baptism (Romans 6:3-4).

#### B. How to continue following Jesus

1. Although you become a disciple of Jesus Christ when you do these things, your discipleship does not end there. Instead, it is only the beginning! What follows should be a life that is fully committed to following Christ (as we have been discussing).

2. You are not “once saved, always saved.” For example, Jesus taught that His disciples who would not produce fruit in His service and do not remain in Him will be removed and thrown into the fire (John 15:2, 6). So, it is possible to fall from grace (Galatians 5:4).

- Whenever you sin after becoming a Christian, you must repent, confess your sin to God, and ask Him for forgiveness (Acts 8:22; 1 John 1:9).

3. To please Jesus as His disciple, you must remain faithful to Him (Revelation 2:10). This requires keeping His commandments in the New Testament!

### **Conclusion**

A. If you will follow Jesus, He will lead you to wonderful blessings. Hopefully, now you understand what it really means to follow Jesus and how you must follow Him.

B. If you have never become a disciple of Jesus, you should obey Him today. If you have once been a disciple and went back into sin, you should come back to Him while you have the opportunity! Whatever point you are at in your life, follow Jesus!

## **Study Questions**

Why did Jesus want people to count the cost of following Him?

### **1. Really Knowing Jesus Involves Following Him**

How does just believing in Jesus fail to please Him?

Explain how the following two things are involved in discipleship.

1. Learning from the Master –

2. Following the Master by imitating Him –

What does Jesus lead you to?

### **2. What Jesus Requires Of His Disciples**

How do Luke 9:57-62 and Luke 5:11 teach you what it means to make a complete commitment to Jesus Christ?

How do Luke 14:25-27, 33 and Matthew 6:33 teach you what it means to put Jesus first?

How do Luke 9:23-26 and Galatians 2:20 teach you what it means to crucify yourself?

### **3. How To Follow Jesus**

Explain how each of the following are necessary to begin following Jesus.

1. Hear God's word –
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Believe Jesus is the Son of God –
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Repent of your sins –
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Confess Jesus Christ –
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Be baptized –

Why is it necessary to continue following Jesus and how do you remain faithful to Him?

