



# Follow Me As I Follow Christ

**Being Imitators Of Jesus Christ**

by

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When Jesus walked the earth He said,  
“Come Follow Me.” He is still saying the  
same today. But are we truly following  
Him or following men?

## **Follow Me As I Follow Christ**

*"Imitate God, therefore, in everything you do, because you are His children. Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered Himself as a sacrifice for us, a pleasing aroma to God." (Ephesians 5:1.2)*

This is God's purpose, that all God's children may mature to the fulness of the stature of Christ; each one hearing the Holy Spirit for themselves and living in the reality of the glorified Christ; walking in all spiritual blessings as the church functions together in unity and love, each member doing its own special work; Christ verily being Lord of each individual believer and Head of the whole church, not only in word but in deed.

The Holy Spirit is Lord of the harvest and Leader of the church. It is God's will that all of His children be able to hear His voice for themselves. Each son and daughter of the heavenly Father should be led by the Holy Spirit. The church rightly fit together and joined to Christ the head, and working corporately in love as each member does its own special work.

Since the time of Diotrefes, who loved to be the leader of God's people, and Ignatius, who, in the first and second century was used by the spirits of the antichrist

to teach that men should take the place of the Holy Spirit and rule over the church, the body of Christ has not functioned correctly. Some men have come into the church and have distorted the truth and made disciples after themselves. Paul gave warning of this when he said, “Even some men from your own group will rise up and distort the truth in order to draw a following.” (Acts 20.30)

These sons of Satan love the world, so they teach others to love the world. They are themselves like Satan who promised to give Jesus the kingdoms of the world and their glory, if Jesus would kneel down and worship him. (cf Matthew 4:8.9)

Demanding submission from others, they say, “God cannot take you where he has not taken your leader,” placing themselves in that position. And because men are gullible they submit to their teachings and their authority. Although they appear to be nice faithful and God fearing Christians, their hearts in reality being filled with the lust of the world, wanting everything their eyes see. Hence men unknowingly worship the devil, who promises the kingdoms of the world and their glories.

Some boldly testify of the god of pastor ‘so and so’ making him their model in place of Christ. Let those who

are of the light, walk in the light, for there is only one God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and he has adopted us as His sons because of the precious sacrifice of His Son Jesus Christ. If there be another god, he is certainly a demon masquerading as an angel of light.

These evil workers preach a gospel that does not demand the hearers to forsake all yet we cannot be true disciples if we don't forsake all, including our own selves. (Luke 14:33) Indeed, God gave His all on the cross, thus He demands our all on the very same cross.

We ought to realize by now that in God there cannot be life without first there being death. There cannot be receiving without forsaking, and there cannot be glory without suffering. It is a principle - "a life for a life." (Deuteronomy 19:21)

God gave Christ Jesus' life for our life, and now we should give our life for Christ's life. God sent His Son to die in our place, and we should give up our life to receive the life of Christ and give up our lives for Christ's sake. First we give up our lives for our benefit, to receive the life of God, and then we give up our lives for His benefit, so that He can live His life through us.

When the Master was commissioning His twelve apostles for a short mission, He told them, “If you cling to your life, you will lose it, but if you give up your life for me, you will find it.” (Matthew 10:39)

When the Son of man was about to give His life for the sake of the world and for God’s will to be done, He spoke to His disciples making them aware that it was God’s will for Him to suffer many terrible things and die. He turned to them and told them the same, “If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it.” (Matthew 16:25)

If we are born again of the Spirit of God we are all sheep of Jesus Christ, we are all sons of God, we are all the temple of God, we are all royal priests, we are all vessels of God, and together we are the church and God lives in each one of us. We should all be followers of one Leader, Christ Jesus.

Varieties of ministries are given according to God’s call on our lives and these ministries differ according to God’s will. We recognize among us that there will be those brothers who are given the responsibility of leading others. There will be the new believers, there will be those less mature believers, there will be the worldly Christians and therefore there are more mature

brothers who are gifts, given the responsibility to lead others to Christ or in the way of Christ. The new believer, although directly taught by the Holy Spirit will also be taught through other mature believers who speak and teach that which is of God.

There will be those needing special care and attention so there are those who are more mature who will from time to time help the less mature in love and humility, always pointing others to Christ Jesus the Lord, and encouraging others to hear the Holy Spirit for themselves. Those leading are to make sure that the whole body is growing and participating in the life of Christ and walking according to God's will. During meetings there will be those mature brothers who make sure the devil is not given room to mislead, and that Christ is Lord of the meetings as the church gathers.

Looking at the life Paul lived it is certainly evident that He lived a different life than the modern so called 'men of God'. Paul's life is undesirable because it stands against everything that the modern so called 'men of God' exalt. Learning from Paul's life we can certainly agree that no prosperity gospel preacher should dare say, "Follow me as I follow Christ", for these men are misrepresentations of Paul's words.

Paul was able to say the most daring thing ever; of all the apostles He said, “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.” (1 Corinthians 11:1)

Some men who love to be leaders, those who love money and who desire to make disciples after themselves, have dared to say these same words of Paul. Yet Paul was exhorting the Corinthians who were walking astray to actually follow His teachings and His examples **as He followed Christ**. Paul had received His revelations directly from Christ and He had laboured much in poverty and suffering and was exhorting the Corinthians to follow His example. In the same letter of 1 Corinthians, when the church was divided and some were saying I am a follower of Paul, others Apollos, and others, Cephas, he reminded them that he was a mere servant accountable to Christ. He said to them, “Look at me and Apollos and Cephas as mere servants of Christ who are put in charge of explaining God’s mysteries.” (1 Corinthians 4:1)

A servant is a servant and not a leader, although he might be given the responsibility to oversee others He is still a worker and not the owner. As one brother put it, the lead sheep leads but it isn’t the leader. Christ is the Shepherd and we are all His sheep. Others are given

the responsibility of leading others but under the direction of Christ. They are still sheep, along with all.

Paul said, “I urge you to imitate me,” (1 Corinthians 4:16) speaking of his role in Christ.

The life of a child ought to reflect his father’s teachings; the life of a disciple ought to reflect that of His master. Our lives and attitudes ought to reflect Christ who lives in us. Especially if we lead others to Christ, the Christ we preach must be seen in us. For the Son is the exact representation of the Father, expressing the very character of God, being the imprint of the Father’s nature. (cf Hebrews 1:3) If the Son is indeed in us, His love, care, mercy, humility, selfless nature, and His attitude ought to be found in us. If we love the world and are after the things of the world, and are ruled by the lust of the eye and the dictates of the flesh, we show who rules our lives!

I dare not say, “Imitate me”, but how we should all be able to say, “Imitate me as I imitate Christ.” Our lives and attitude should be something that others can imitate. After Paul had explained his struggles and his attitude towards his persecutors, and after showing the Corinthians how they were not reflecting Christ, Paul was able to say, “Imitate me”. Paul was speaking of the



fact that He was living for Christ and Christ was living in Him.

“Remember those leading you. Those who spoke to you the word of God, consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.” (Hebrews 13:7-8) This is the correct translation, saying “those leading you” not “leaders”. Jesus said, “Call no man leader.” (Matthew 23:10)

After the writer of Hebrews exhorted them to not love money but to rather be content with what they have, he tells them to remember the servants of Christ, considering the outcome of their lives.

Peter was imprisoned; Paul was imprisoned and beaten many times and James had died because of His faith in Christ. (Acts 12:2) The apostles were led by Christ, the writer of Hebrews reminds His readers to consider the way of life of the apostles and to imitate their faith, faith which was more precious than gold.

The apostles were not materially wealthy; they did not seek to be wealthy chasing after the things of this world. They had died with Christ and Christ was their new life and their life on earth didn't matter to them. If they died

it was gain to their lives, if they continued to live here on earth it was for Christ.

They rejoiced whenever they suffered for Christ because it was a worthy thing. (cf Acts 5:41) They certainly did not preach a message of material prosperity and encouraging people to be millionaires and to follow their ambitions and dreams. They taught all people to submit to God and to be led by the Holy Spirit. They encouraged others to work with their hands, so that they would be able to provide for their families, relatives and help other needy brothers.

Peter says to the elders, those who are more mature, those who are given the responsibility of leading others, “I appeal as a fellow elder and a witness of Christ’s suffering, who also will share in the glory to be revealed. Be shepherds of God’s flock that is in your care, watching over them, not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.” (1 Peter 5:1.3)

In the true church each member submits to Christ directly and not through men. However, we are to “acknowledge the one’s labouring among us and taking

the lead of us in the Lord and admonishing us.” (cf 1 Thessalonians 5:12) We should listen to such and respect them, that we should not make their work hard. (cf Hebrews 13:17) But they are not to lord or rule over us, or start teaching their rules and experiences, to cause us to fear and submit and follow them. They are not to become leaders and masters over us and begin to make us their servants and slaves. They are not to call the assemblies their own or call the disciples their own. They should not exercise authority over any and take decisions for the churches and start to make others walk in ‘their’ vision for the churches. Everyone who does such a thing, is a false prophet and false teacher and should not be allowed to gather with the church, unless he repents of his deceptions. (2 John 1:10, Titus 3:9.10).

If we can’t chase them out because it is ‘their’ church that they started and over which they have full control, then we should prayerfully leave and continue to entrust our lives to Christ. We can be sure that the man who has taken the place of Christ, has become lord and head of that church.

There cannot be fellowship between darkness and light, antichrist and Christ. We cannot follow Christ while at the same time being led by false brethren. We should

leave such an assembly because the church is the body of Christ and it belongs to no man, and everyone who is born again is a member of Christ. We should repent and renounce our union with such men and such churches, for it means we ourselves have been part of what is false. Then we must allow the Holy Spirit to take the falsehood out of us!

Jesus called His disciples together and said, “You know that the rulers of the gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant.” (Matthew 20:26)

Many false teachers threaten that when believers leave ‘their’ churches, they will no longer be under any spiritual covering and they will die. A man who utters such a thing is working under the power of the spirit of antichrist. If we are in Christ we don’t need man to cover us, we are baptised into Christ’s body and if we are in Christ’s body He is our covering.

Demas, who loved the world, left Paul and went to Thessalonica. (cf 2 Timothy 4:10) Paul did not threaten death to Demas! It is evident that like Demas, many in the church love the world and have forsaken Christ, if ever they truly followed Him. What then should those

that love the Lord do? Come out from among them, and be separate in Christ! The denominations and their leaders have certainly left the path and example of Paul, even preaching a different message! Indeed these churches are like Demas, and Demas proved Himself to be a tare among wheat. The time of the separation of tares from wheat has already begun, and will continue until Christ comes because the time of the great harvest is near. (Matthew 13:30)

It is evident that many still in the denominations are unsatisfied, knowing something is wrong yet they move from church building to church building and church group to church group. Some remain where they are because they don't want to grow cold but they seemingly feel as though they are dying every day, because there is no true life in the churches only that which is led by man. They don't realise that what they might be seeking for is actually the reality of Christ within their lives. He knocks at the door but seemingly no one is hearing Him just as it was in the Laodicea church. They think He is in their midst when in fact He stands outside the door.

The true church will yet walk in truth and life. They will be free from all bondage and will humble themselves and seek God's face and God will again visit His

people, and the reality of God in the church will no longer be something of the past, and no longer will they say, "As it was in the days of the early church." For God Himself will be leader, and all will walk in the life and power of Christ who indwells them. Amen!

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