

“Come Follow Me”

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**Following The
Glorified Christ**

by

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A Booklet that explains how we should now be following Jesus, by walking by the Spirit, no longer living for ourselves but for Him who died and rose again on our behalf.

Following The Glorified Christ

When Christ Jesus walked the earth, before He was crucified, resurrected and glorified, He said to His first disciples, “**Come Follow Me.**” (John 1:43)

John the Baptist, who was preparing the way for the Christ, saw Jesus and God opened his eyes to see that Jesus was sent from heaven. He said, “Look, there is the Lamb of God.” When the two disciples who were with him heard this they left John - the prophet - and went to **follow** Jesus - the Lord. Andrew, one of the first disciples went to find his brother Simon and said, “We have found the Christ.” Simon came and joined the followers. Jesus went another day to find Philip. Jesus said to Philip, “**Come follow Me.**” Philip went to call Nathanael and told him, “We have found the very person Moses and the prophets wrote about.” Nathanael met Jesus; he said, “Teacher you are the Son of God - the King of Israel.” (John 1:35-5). After Jesus had miraculously revealed his power to the sons of Zebedee, they left all they were doing, and **followed Him.** (Luke 5) According to Matthew Jesus said, to Andrew and Simon, “**Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.**” (Matthew 4:19) When Jesus called Matthew the tax collector, He said, “Follow Me.” (Matthew 9:9) We see that to them He was the “Teacher”, the “Christ”, the very person Moses

and the prophets spoke about in the scriptures, the “Son of God”, the “King” and the “Lord”.

Jesus called them to follow Him, and those who called others, called them to follow Jesus. No man was following another man; all were following only one man - Jesus Christ.

We notice that Jesus did not call them to a certain religious name, to a certain church organisation, to a certain anointed leader, to a certain church building or a certain religious group, nor to great miracles, nor to follow some good rules and principles; **He called all of them to Himself** - to follow **Him** - a living breathing active person. All of them gathered to Jesus, following Him in oneness of mind and united in thought and purpose, because they were all following Him. When Judas went into destruction, those who were following Jesus remained with Jesus, for they were not following one another but they were all following Jesus Christ.

However Christ Jesus made a demand from those who would follow Him, He said: “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself (turn from your self-ways) and take up his cross daily and follow Me.” (Luke 9:23)

When Jesus Christ made this demand from those who would follow Him, He already was doing great miracles.

He had already given His disciples instructions on how to live godly lives and the disciples had already left all they had to follow Jesus every day. The Lord then says to them, and to the crowds, “Deny yourself, take your cross and follow me.” (Mark 8:34)

How were they to take up their cross? What is their cross? Why were they required to take their cross?

The cross is often associated with dying. It was a manner in which criminals and law breakers were punished to death. (Luke 23:32) The Old Covenant considers a person who dies such a death as cursed by God, for the law says, “Anyone who is hung on a pole is under God’s curse.” (Deuteronomy 21:23) This is why Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, by becoming a curse for us. (See Galatians 3:13).

Jesus Christ never sinned. He came to earth, sent to do the Father’s will, forsaking His human nature and will and denying Himself to any rights to His own life. He took the cross, and suffered terrible things by the will of God. He went through shame, was beaten, ridiculed and humiliated, yet He did not retaliate. He died a criminal’s death although He Himself was righteous and holy and blameless. He died for the crimes that humanity did against God and took the curses upon Himself that were

released by the law. These are the curses that were due to us all because of sin.

We know we can never die for our own sins because naturally we are under sin. We know we cannot die to take away our own sins and the sins of others. What then does taking up our cross entail? It includes forsaking our self and our own will and our own ways and our own plans for God's will. This includes continuing in the sufferings of Christ while considering it pure joy. (James 1:2) It includes abiding in God's word, walking according to His will and guiding, even though it would mean we might become nothing, and even insignificant and unpopular before the eyes of the world. Christ said, "Not my will but Your will be done Father." (Luke 22:42) Again, Jesus said, "Behold I have come; in the scroll of the book it is written of me; I delight to do Your will, O my God." (Psalm 40:8)

God's will was for Christ to become the sacrificial lamb and to die on the cross. (Isaiah 53) However, after death is resurrection which brings life, and after resurrection is exaltation which brings down all spiritual blessings and Christ indwelling in His many brothers.

Now how would the disciples succeed in denying themselves when the human nature itself is in sin? Was it possible for them to take their cross which signified their

condition of sin and condemnation from God, and would they die for themselves? 'No' and 'Never'! This was something impossible for them or for any other person except Jesus Christ to achieve.

Their death and our death is included in Christ Jesus and their sins and ours sins are counted in Christ. Their condemnation and ours fall upon Christ. The whole sinful human nature comes to an end by death in Christ Jesus on the cross. Their crosses and ours were carried by Christ.

After death is the resurrection of Christ bringing our new nature which is in the image of God in purity, righteousness and holiness. After resurrection is our new life; "Anyone who is in Christ is a new person, the old has passed away and the new has come." (2 Corinthians 5:17)

After Christ was raised from the dead He was glorified. He was exalted to the highest place in heaven sending down upon us and in us the Holy Spirit who brings us all spiritual blessings, the experience and reality of our new life in Christ. "Now Christ is exalted to the place of highest honour in heaven, at God's right hand, and the Father, as He has promised, gave Him the Holy Spirit to pour out upon us." (Acts 2:33)

However, still the Lord Jesus commanded, “Turn from your self-ways, take your cross daily and follow Me,” although by our own effort this is something impossible, especially the aspect of dying to self, to sin and to the law.

But we are already dead to sin and to the law in Christ (Romans 7:4.6) And because we were raised with Christ, receiving the new life of Christ in us, and the Holy Spirit upon us, we are dead to self because we also died with Him. Self is the old life which was crucified with Jesus Christ and Christ is new life to us.

Then what are we to take the cross to do? It is to continually and consciously choose to live by the new life of Christ and to walk by the Spirit. To continue to learn to fear God and choose to obey His instructions and His leading. To continue to forsake our will and clever ways every-day and let God’s will for us be done. To continue to walk in the sufferings of Christ, which prove the genuineness of our faith which is more precious than gold. (See 1 Peter 1:7)

The old nature of sin and rebellion is dealt with in Christ and the spiritual blessing of the new nature which is Christ - righteousness and peace and joy and love in the Holy Spirit - is given as a free gift. However we must choose to walk in it every-day.

Therefore the call of Christ to His disciples has not changed. It is still, "Come follow Me." How soon do we follow people and clever human teachings and new programs and miracles and anointed leaders and forsake Christ Jesus - the Lord, the Saviour, the Teacher, the Son of God, the King, the indwelling Moses, Elijah, Isaac, Samuel, new Adam, David and so forth? How soon do we forsake Christ Jesus our Mediator, Prophet, King, Lord, Saviour, Judge, Priest, Head and Leader, and begin to follow many other things?

God has given us Himself through the indwelling Christ as a gift to us and He has called us to follow Him, to deny ourselves and take up our cross daily as we follow Him. This is taking up the cross daily and following Christ: "Therefore as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him (continue to follow Him), rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith." (Colossians 2:6)

"Walk by the Spirit - let the Holy Spirit guide your lives." (Galatians 5:16)

"Since we live by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives." (Galatians 5:25)

"Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires. (Romans 13:14)

Leave the old dirty deeds; they are gone with the old man; they were crucified with you in Christ on the cross and as many as you were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Therefore do not go to the cross every-day to die, you were crucified with Christ once for all time, you died with Him and rose to new life with Him and He is glorified and has made His dwelling in you, therefore walk in Christ.

This is to take your cross, to choose God's will each day and to walk according to the leading of the Holy Spirit each day and not according to your own wisdom. Put to death the evil things lurking within you by choosing to obey the leading of the Spirit daily. Be renewed as you learn to know Christ and let His peace rule in your heart. "Walk by the Spirit and you will not carry out the desires of the flesh." (Galatians 5:16)

When the Lord brought the children of Israel into Canaan, the land of rest, He did not immediately kill the enemies of Israel. He left some to teach the new generation of Israel warfare and to also see if they would learn to fear and obey Him. (Judges 3:2.4). Sadly Israel soon disobeyed God and followed the ways of the pagans around them.

The old nature, which is pagan-like, is no more and God's nature is in us. Christ is new life to us. As we look back at

Israel, it is therefore a lesson for us, that although we are maturing spiritual creatures we have not yet experienced all the spiritual blessings that are for us in Christ; let us not intermingle with the old nature and mix the old with the new, the dead with the living. Let us obey our Father who has given us His Spirit and walk in Him that we may all, and together, quickly grow, measuring up to the stature of Christ. Let us not intermingle hate and love, pride and humility, un-forgiveness and forgiveness, bitterness and joy, righteousness and filth and all the pleasures of the flesh. Let us follow the Holy Spirit as He shows us which enemy of Christ or member of the self-nature is yet to come out of our hearts. The old nature is already dead and nothing of it is to remain hidden in us.

When the Israelites failed to chase the enemy they forced the enemy to work as slaves, yet God's intention was for Israel to chase all the enemies from the land! (Judges 1:19.36) God had promised that He Himself would chase the enemy away on the condition that Israel would follow His commands. (Exodus 23:20.32) Let us remember therefore, it is by relying on the Holy Spirit and walking according to His leading that He will chase the enemies of Christ from our hearts. Not by our own effort, or else, like Israel, we will fail and live by the dictates of the flesh whilst being in Christ at the same time! (1 Corinthians 3:3) Let us be assured, "Those who belong to Christ

Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passion and desires.” (Galatians 5:24) It is done. Our lot is to know and reckon ourselves crucified with Christ and having received new life in the glorified Christ, rely on the Holy Spirit to bring us the reality.

Again the Lord commanded the Israelites not to copy the practices and standards and ways of the pagans around them. (Exodus 23:20.23). How soon is the church, the body of Christ, copying the practices and the models of the world, worshiping mammon and being self-led? Some following this leader, others following that leader; some saying I belong to this denomination or that non denomination. Paul asked isn't this division proof of being controlled by the sinful nature and living as the world? (1 Corinthians 3:4) After all, who is prophet so and so and what is pastor so and so? Were any of them crucified for your sins? Or were you baptized in their name? Yet to the true Church following Christ in oneness of heart, united in mind and purpose the Holy Spirit repeats the same instruction as He did to Israel, “Don't follow the patterns and customs of the present age but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” (Romans 12:2)

Having put off the sin that easily traps us and having been separated from self and unto God, put on the new man - created to be like God in true righteousness and

holiness and renewed in the knowledge in the image of our creator. (Ephesians 4:24, Colossians 3:10).

Walking by the Spirit

“You have received the Holy Spirit, and He lives in you, so you need no one to teach you what is true. For the Spirit teaches you everything you need to know, and what He teaches is true - it is not a lie. So just as He has taught you, remain in fellowship with Christ.” (1 John 2:27)

The Holy Spirit dwells within every believer, young and old. The very Spirit that is in the one who teaches, is in the one who is a new believer. This means if the Spirit is in all and He is teacher, then young and old are able to hear and learn from the Holy Spirit. There is a teacher – student relationship among the children of God, the less mature believers look to the more mature believers for understanding. But they must not see this teacher as replacing the Teacher, the Holy Spirit.

If we allow men to take the place of the Holy Spirit in our lives it is not a doing of the Spirit of the Lord but a Nicolaitan spirit which works to keep the body of Christ from maturing. When more mature rule the laity - the less mature - for the rest of their spiritual life these believers never grow to maturity in Christ, never hearing and

learning from the Lord themselves. Instead they rely on the more mature for the rest of their spiritual life and all remain as babes.

When the disciples were called by the Lord, they recognized Him as Teacher and they all followed Him. Christ promised to give, “The Advocate who will never leave you, who will lead you into all truth,” the Holy Spirit. (John 14:16.17)

Christ is glorified, He is lifted to the place of honour, therefore as He has promised the Holy Spirit has come. Jesus said, “It is best for you if I go away, because if I don’t go the Advocate won’t come.” (John 16:7) What is the basis of the Holy Spirit coming upon us? It is because Jesus Christ has gone away to the Father. What is the proof that the Holy Spirit has come in us and upon us? It is the very same fact that Jesus Christ was taken away to the Father. He said, “If I go away I will send the Holy Spirit to you.” (John 16:7b) The book of Acts opens with a testimony of Jesus being taken away to the Father; “He was taken up into the cloud while they were watching, and they could no longer see Him.” (Acts 1:9) In the next chapter we see the Holy Spirit coming upon all the believers - “And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 2:4)

What was the basis of them having received the Holy Spirit? It is the same fact that Christ Jesus was taken away into the cloud. (See Acts 1:9). Peter explains, "Now Christ Jesus is exalted to the place of highest honour in heaven, at God's right hand. And the Father as He promised, gave Christ Jesus the Holy Spirit to pour upon us, just as you see and hear today." (Acts 2:33)

They received the Holy Spirit because Jesus was taken up. Men look for evidence that they had received the Holy Spirit yet still do not walk by the Spirit. They look to the the manifestation of the tongues of fire, rather than the fact that Jesus was taken away to the Father to be glorified and He now has come in them. Peter explained the tongues of fire as something that Joel prophesied about. "He said what you see today is what Joel predicted long ago." (Acts 2:17 and Joel 2:28.32). Joel didn't speak about tongues of fire coming down as a sign of the Holy Spirit, he spoke about people seeing dreams and visions, yet when the Holy Spirit came down Peter and the apostles didn't see dreams and visions at that instant. They saw tongues of fire, as God said in those days, "I will do wonders." (Joel 2:30)

In like manner we need to experience the reality that the Holy Spirit lives in each and every one of us. Let us look upon Him to fill us and look to Him for guidance, for

leading, for teaching and for the reality of Jesus Christ's life in each of us

Pentecost

At Pentecost the church began, the body of Christ began to be manifest. At the first Pentecost the Holy Spirit was received by the disciples. Peter then stood up to testify. Some today still maintain this was the pattern for one man to stand up each day to give testimony or a sermon. However at Pentecost the church came forth, and the church was led by the Holy Spirit not by men. Led by the Holy Spirit the other disciples began to give testimony as well. Some went here and some went there as they were led by the Holy Spirit. The work didn't rely on Peter but on the Holy Spirit.

When the church, the body of Christ, meets, it is not a one man show demonstrating a teacher-student relationship. When the church meets, "One will sing, another will teach, another will tell a special revelation, one will speak in tongues, and another will interpret what is being said. But everything that is done must strengthen all." (1 Corinthians 14:28)

Now the Holy Spirit is upon all and all should hear from the Spirit and all be led by the Spirit, the Spirit being in charge of God's household, not men.

First the more mature brothers, which are the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers may need to equip God's people to do His work." (Ephesians 4:11) Every member should be growing in Christ, who is the Head of the church. It is He who makes the whole body grow perfectly together as each part does its own special work, helping the other parts grow; so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love. (Ephesians 4:16)

We have been robbed long enough. We have reached a day beyond Pentecost. This is the day and time for the whole body to grow together to a unity of faith and knowledge of God's Son, all maturing in the Lord and the body measuring up to the full and complete measure and standard of Christ, each and every member of the body hearing and learning from the Lord themselves and each part led by the Holy Spirit taking part in the life of Christ. For there is no spectator in Christ and the anointing is not for a selected few, but He is for all and in all.

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