

That The World May Know: In the Dust of the Rabbi - Session 2: When the Rabbi Says “Go”

How Do You Follow God?

Paul followed God. The Zealots followed God. The Pharisees and Rabbis followed God. We have learned some of what it meant to be a rabbi, an honored teacher whose life revolved around following God, knowing the Holy Scriptures, and making disciples. Now, we will focus more attention on the disciples – the motivation, commitment, and training of the young men who devoted themselves to walking in the footsteps of the rabbi so that they might learn to follow God.

1. The kingdom of heaven concept originated when God delivered the Hebrews from the Egyptians. Even the Egyptians recognized God’s power at work in the plagues. What kind of kingdom did God say they would be if they obeyed Him? What did the people agree to do? What were they accepting and affirming by agreeing to obey?
Exodus 8:19
Exodus 19:3 – 8
2. What did the Hebrews do after they crossed the Red Sea and saw the Egyptian army swept away? What conclusion had they reached about God’s power? How did they acclaim His rule?
Exodus 14:29 – 15:18
3. It is one thing to see God’s power and acclaim His rule. It is another to accept His rule in one’s own life. In what ways were the Hebrews to obey God and thereby make God’s kingdom a reality on earth?
Deuteronomy 6:1 – 12
4. How do we know that allegiance to the kingdom of heaven was very much on the minds of religious Jews in Jesus’ day?
Deuteronomy 6:4 – 5
Mark 12:28 – 34

Follow the Rabbi To Become Like the Rabbi

The relationship between a first-century rabbi and his disciples was unique. It was very intense and personal — like a dynamic father/son relationship. As a disciple followed his rabbi, he would get to know him as well or better than his own family. In time, the walk of the disciple would become like the walk of his rabbi.

1. What did Jesus expect His “disciples-in-training” to do and be?
Mark 3:13 – 19
Mark 8:34 – 35
Matthew 19:21 – 30
2. People responded to Jesus in different ways. Many were unwilling to follow Him. What obstacles prevented some people from following Jesus? How do these obstacles still trip up potential disciples today?
Luke 9:57 – 62
3. The point of following Jesus is to obey and learn to walk as Jesus walked — to become like Him. What did the disciples experience when Jesus sent them out in His name?
Luke 9:1 – 6
Luke 10:1 – 20

What happened to Jesus’ followers after they went out to do what He had prepared and trained them to do?

How were they becoming like Jesus?

How did Jesus respond to their faithfulness and success?

How might Jesus respond whenever a disciple follows, obeys, and becomes more like Him?

Walk In Obedience

God gives us salvation by grace alone; no amount of obedience can ever earn it for us. But that does not mean obedience is not necessary for those who love God and call themselves His disciples. A walk (lifestyle) without God is a tragedy.

1. We have discussed 1 John 2:3 – 6 in past sessions. Do you see any way that obedience and walking as Jesus walked can be thought of as optional for a disciple of Jesus?

What is the identifying mark of a person who truly follows Jesus?

2. Jesus not only taught obedience to God, he also lived it. What did Jesus say regarding His own obedience in action and in words?
John 8:26 – 31

What did Jesus do and say? What was the result in His relationship with God?

What did Jesus teach those who believed in Him about the obedience to His teachings?

What can you expect when you obey His teachings and please the Father in all things?

3. We tend to underestimate the importance of obedience in the life of a follower of Jesus. What question does Jesus ask, and in what tone do you think He asks it?
Luke 6:46 – 49
4. Who does Jesus say loves Him? What relationships exist among Jesus, the Father, obedience, and love?
John 14:15 – 24

What Was Peter Thinking?

You do not have to know much about the disciples to know the story of Peter's nighttime walk with Jesus on the Sea of Galilee. Look at this story through the eyes of a *talmid* who is completely devoted to becoming like his Rabbi and has a consuming passion to follow Him wherever He goes.

1. That walk occurred immediately after Jesus fed the five thousand.
Mark 6:456 – 50
John 6:18 – 19

What would have been the mood of the disciples as they started out toward Bethsaida?

What might they have been thinking about Jesus and why He was not with them?

How might their frame of mind changed during the night?

What is the only recorded activity that Jesus did without His disciples?

What does this reveal about the Rabbi's commitment to His *talmidim* and the need for time alone with God?

If you had been in that boat, what would you have been thinking about following the Rabbi at that moment?

2. Keep in mind that the disciples were probably not at their best when Jesus showed up. Within a few hours they had seen Jesus perform an amazing miracle, spent hours rowing in heavy seas, faced grave danger in the storm, and thought they had seen a ghost. They must have been physically, mentally, and emotionally exhausted.
Matthew 14:26 – 33

How much did Peter think about what he was going to do before he did it?

What motivated Peter to take the action he did?

Earlier in the day, would Peter have thought he could walk on water?

Peter started to doubt. In what did he lose confidence?

How did this event affect their walk with God?

Preparing Talmidim to Make Talmidim

Rabbinical wisdom was that we should not live without a rabbi or die without a disciple.

1. As Jesus commissioned His disciples to make disciples, what impact did the setting in Galilee have on them?
Matthew 28:16 – 20

What might they have remembered of their training experiences in the area?

How might that setting have encouraged them in the future ministry?

Where did Jesus tell His talmidim to go?

What four things did Jesus command the disciples to do?

2. Paul was not one of the disciples who walked with Jesus through Galilee. But, Paul was certainly a talmid. Here are some examples.
1 Corinthians 4:14 – 17
1 Corinthians 11: 1 -2
Philippians 3:15 – 21
1 Thessalonians 1:4 – 10

References

Genesis 37	Exodus 8
Exodus 14	Exodus 15
Exodus 19	Deuteronomy 6
Jeremiah 9	Matthew 4
Matthew 5	Matthew 6
Matthew 7	Matthew 9
Matthew 11	Matthew 14
Matthew 19	Matthew 21
Matthew 22	Matthew 28
Mark 3	Mark 6
Mark 8	Mark 12
Luke 2	Luke 5
Luke 6	Luke 9
Luke 10	Luke 11
Luke 22	John 1
John 6	John 8
John 12	John 14
John 15	John 21
Acts 4	Acts 5
Acts 6	Acts 9
Acts 14	Acts 21
Acts 22	1 Corinthians 1
1 Corinthians 4	1 Corinthians 11
Galatians 1	Philippians 3
1 Thessalonians 1	James 2
1 John 2	