

Faithful Following

read

Matthew 4:18-22

think

I am amazed whenever I think about Jesus uttering the two words “Follow me” to the fishermen Simon, Andrew, James, and John while they were in the midst of their work as fishermen. What I find amazing is that as Matthew records these encounters, he tells us about the response of these four men as “immediately” leaving what they were doing to follow Jesus.

Just like these first disciples, Jesus calls us to “follow me.” These two words occur 22 times in the Gospels, and in the rest of the Bible there are many references to people finding ultimate meaning and purpose in life by following God and His Son, Jesus Christ.

The famous preacher, Dr. James Boice, tells us that these two words are important because they teach us important truths about being Christ’s disciple. Dr. Boice specifically mentions these five marks of those who follow Jesus.

First, there is **obedience**. The words “follow me” are a command. We are to hear and obey this call right at the start, and continue in obedience in every area of life for all of our lives.

Second, there is **repentance**. Christ’s followers must turn their backs on their sin and pursue righteousness.

Third, there is **submission**. We recognize that our lives are placed under the authority of Christ and His Word.

Fourth, there is **trust**. A disciple trusts Christ to lead him on the path He has chosen for us, even when it might not *feel* right and there’s temptation to trust in someone or something else.

Fifth, there is **perseverance**. Following Jesus is not a once-and-done endeavor. It is a lifetime commitment.

apply

- In today’s world, what are the distractions and stumbling blocks we are most likely to encounter that can derail our resolve to follow Jesus?
- As you have gotten older, what habits and strategies have you used to stay on track as a follower of Jesus? How does the Holy Spirit help us remain on the path of discipleship?
- How can we encourage each other to faithfully follow Jesus in the five ways mentioned by Dr. Boice?

pray

Almighty God, you have made us for yourself. The answer to our restlessness in life is only found in a relationship with you through your Son, Jesus Christ. Increase our faith in you and empower us to truly follow Jesus in every nook and cranny of our lives with obedience, repentance, submission, trust, and perseverance. In the name of our Leader, Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

by **Walt Mueller**

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