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Daily Devotional, Wednesday, November 14, 2018 - What It Means to Follow Jesus

NOVEMBER 14TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional, Wednesday, November 14, 2018 - What It Means to Follow Jesus

Matthew 4:18-22

WEDNESDAY

14

We often refer to ourselves as followers of Christ, but what does that really mean? When Jesus called Peter, Andrew, James, and John to follow Him, they physically left what they were doing to be with Him. The disciples had tangible evidence: They could see His direction with their eyes and hear His words with their ears. But how do we follow Jesus today? As we examine today's passage, we'll see four essential elements that show us how to be followers of Christ.

1. The disciples heard Jesus' voice. Today Christ speaks to us through His Word, giving instruction and guidance through direct commands and prohibitions, spiritual principles, and biblical examples. And within us, we have the Holy Spirit, who directs our path and corrects us when we go astray.

2. They obeyed without delay. Once the disciples heard the Lord's command, they immediately complied. Following Jesus requires that we not only do what He says, but also when and how He says to do it.

3. They left something behind. To follow Jesus, the disciples abandoned the comforts of home and the security of a regular salary. Other believers might be called to give up something

completely different.

4. They pursued the higher purpose Christ offered them. Instead of simply making a living, Christ promised them a life with eternal purpose—becoming fishers of men for the kingdom of God.

Being a Christ follower is not merely an identification with Him; it's a commitment of obedience that demands leaving behind anything that gets in the way of living fully for Him.

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Daily Devotional, Tuesday, November 12, 2018 - the Consequences of Impatience

NOVEMBER 13TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Luke 15:11-21

TUESDAY

13

How serious is a lack of patience? We generally write it off as inconsequential. It's often seen as a weakness rather than a sin—after all, it's not as bad as adultery, theft, or murder. But have you ever considered what your impatience reveals about your attitude toward God?

When we demonstrate an inability to tolerate delay, we are telling the Lord, "I don't trust Your timing; mine is better." Can you see the seriousness of this attitude? Impatience is a display of pride because we are elevating our understanding above that of our all-knowing God.

The prodigal son's journey toward disaster began with impatience. He wanted his inheritance immediately and was unwilling to wait. After taking matters into his own hands, he faced the following consequences:

He brought sorrow on his family. Likewise, our impatience hurts those we love.

He left the security of home. When we run ahead of God, we often leave behind the voices of reason and wisdom in our life.

He found himself in ruin. God's blessing accompanies our obedience, so we stand to lose a great deal when we ignore His timing.

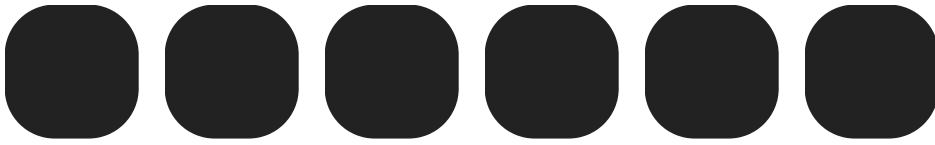
He felt unworthy. We don't experience fellowship with the Lord when impatience keeps us outside of His will.

Although the prodigal son was welcomed home, he could never regain the inheritance he'd lost. We, too, must often live with painful consequences as a result of jumping ahead of God. Let's remember it's better to wait patiently until the Lord moves us forward.

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Daily Devotional - Monday, November 12, 2018 - Patience - A Powerful Attribute

NOVEMBER 12TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Monday, November 12, 2018 - Patience - A Powerful Attribute

Colossians 3:12-17

MONDAY

12

Patience, or a lack of it, spills over into every aspect of our life. For example, when you're waiting for an elevator that doesn't come quickly, do you repeatedly push the button? Or if you're stuck in a grocery line that's not moving, do you wait calmly or inwardly grumble about how poorly managed the store is?

Although to some degree our temperaments may determine our ability to wait, the kind of patience God wants Christians to have is that which is produced by the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23). Apart from Him, we will naturally become impatient when people frustrate us or circumstances aren't to our liking.

The spiritual fruit of patience allows us to say, *I'm willing to let go of immediate gratification and wait for the Lord to supply.* It's an inner quietness and trust that comes from God alone.

This doesn't mean we'll never feel pressure or stress, but when we release our expectations to the Lord, He will calm our heart and mind.

David understood this. While waiting to become king, he had several opportunities to kill Saul, the nation's current ruler. By refusing to take advantage of the situation, David demonstrated patience and faith in God's timing (1 Samuel 24:10-11; 1 Samuel 26:10-11).

Patience is a matter of trust in God. Are you willing to release your expectations for both the small and large events in your life? Can you acknowledge that the Lord's timing is more trustworthy than your own? If so, you're on your way to being a truly patient person.

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Daily Devotional - Wednesday, November 7, 2018 - Saved by Grace

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Ephesians 1:3-14

WEDNESDAY

07

In Christian circles, we often hear people talk about grace, but do we understand what it means? Scripture uses this word in reference to God's goodness and kindness, which is freely extended to those who are utterly undeserving—and that includes all of us.

God's grace is the means of our salvation through Christ and the basis by which He sees us. By grace, we are ...

Declared righteous. All of our guilt and shame have been removed, and Christ's righteousness is credited to us as our own (2 Corinthians 5:21). Now we can live boldly for Jesus no matter who we once were.

Part of God's family. A spiritual adoption has taken place so that we might become children of God and call Him Father (Eph. 1:5). Although the world may see us as insignificant, we should remember we're children of the King.

Made co-heirs with Christ. Our inheritance is guaranteed and kept for us in heaven (1 Peter 1:4). We've been set free from the lure of materialism because we're rich in the only way that matters (2 Corinthians 8:9).

Given new life. When we trust in the Savior, we are born again and receive a fresh start (2 Corinthians 5:17). The seal of this new life is the indwelling presence of God's Holy Spirit, who transforms us into the image of Christ and guarantees our future resurrection (Eph. 1:13-14).

Freed from the power of sin, Satan, and self. Grace teaches us to deny ungodliness and live righteously in obedience to God (Titus 2:11-12).

From the beginning of salvation to our eternal future in heaven, we are covered by God's unending grace.

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Daily Devotional - Tuesday, November 6, 2018 - The Power to Change

NOVEMBER 06TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional - Tuesday, November 6, 2018 - The Power to Change

Ephesians 2:1-10

TUESDAY

06

Why do many of us who have trusted Jesus Christ as Savior still feel defeated and struggle with sin? One reason may be that we have never grasped exactly what took place on the cross. Instead of living in our new identity in Christ, we're still seeing ourselves as hopeless sinners with no power to change.

To understand what a drastic transformation took place at salvation, let's see what God says about who we once were without Christ.

Spiritually Dead. We weren't simply the "walking wounded"; we were actually *dead* in our sins and powerless to make ourselves alive or able to relate to God.

Deserving His Wrath and Judgment. Our sins not only put a barrier between us and God but also made us enemies destined for His righteous condemnation.

Helpless and Hopeless. Nothing we could do would make us acceptable to God. We couldn't even turn to Him in repentance without His Spirit's intervention.

But God loved us! What an amazing thought—that the perfect, holy God would show rebellious sinners love and mercy. He sent His Son to rescue us by bearing our sins and suffering the divine wrath we deserved. Now all of us who believe in Christ and accept His saving work on our behalf are raised from spiritual death to eternal life.

The barriers that once kept us alienated from God have been removed in Christ. We no longer have to live defeated by sin, because we have the Spirit's power to live in accordance with our new identity in Christ. God's grace is sufficient—not only to save us but also to transform our lives.

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