

Introduction: Pastor Josh has been preaching a series on 'Walking with Jesus,' going through the Gospel of John. It has been like being on a front-row seat to BE WITH Jesus, to experience, learn, grow and to BECOME LIKE HIM. Really, the Goal of WALKING WITH JESUS is to have close relationship WITH HIM and to be conformed into His image. As disciples who walk with Jesus, we are being conformed into His image, then we can be used by God to advance the Kingdom of God the way Jesus did! Jesus said at the last supper (John 14:12) those who BELIEVE ON HIM will do the works HE DOES, and even GREATER WORKS!

Today, I want to continue the theme of 'Walking with Jesus' and to build on it with an added dimension. 'Walking with Jesus – **Together.**' This is a powerful dimension of Kingdom Life that every follower of Jesus is called to live and experience. Say it with me...TOGETHER

TOGETHER: Webster's – a unified or coherent structure, an integrated whole, considered as a whole or summed up together.

Story:

*God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are working **TOGETHER** to build the Kingdom of God/Family of God throughout the earth! It is vital for us to understand what it is that God wants to do IN us and THROUGH us in **Building His Kingdom TOGETHER.**

I pray that God will give **YOU - AND ALL OF US** today, a **REVELATION** about how He wants to work in us **TOGETHER** to build **KINGDOM COMMUNITY**

Text: Mark 3:13-19 NASB

Vs 13 "Jesus went up on a mountainside and **CALLED** to Him those He wanted, and **THEY** came to Him. 14 He appointed twelve that they might **BE WITH HIM** and that HE might **SEND** them out to **PREACH** 15 and to have **AUTHORITY** to drive out demons. 16 These are the **twelve He appointed:** Simon (to whom He gave the name Peter), 17 James son of Zebedee and His brother John, (to them He gave the name 'Sons of Thunder'), 18 Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot 19 and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him."

1 – Jesus calls ordinary people by name – to FOLLOW Him!

A- Each one of these Apostles was **individually called** and **chosen** to follow Jesus. (*It was going to be up to them if they were going to believe if Jesus was the actual Messiah*). We read the names of the 12 Apostles whom Jesus called to follow Him.

B – Each of the Apostles had a **new Identity** and a **new Destiny** as they Followed Jesus.

***To be 'named' by God.** This is what God does for those who follow Him. He gives them a new name, a new 'Identity.' All through the Bible, Old and New Testaments, we find God renaming people, giving them His identity.

***Abram** (*exalted Father*) becomes **Abraham** (*father of a multitude*).

***Jacob** (*the deceiver*) became '**Israel**,' (*prince with God*).

***Simon** (*a reed, vacillating in the wind*) – He gives the name, **Peter** – (*a Rock*).

***James & John** (*Sons of Thunder*) – Jesus affirmed their fiery passion for God.

God sees deeper into the spirit of man, than just the surface. **He calls those things that are not** (*in the natural*) **as though they are** (*in the spirit*). **He calls forth that which He has planted** deep in the heart of people. He speaks life into people. He doesn't just 'tell it like IT IS,' He calls it as it 'CAN BE.'

Jesus called these twelve men to follow Him. But this isn't just **what He did back then**, it is what **He always does** when He **calls people** to Himself. The Bible is not merely a historical record of God working, but shows us how He **relates to us TODAY** as well. Hebrews 13:8 "*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, yes and forever.*"

***What is the call of God like?** It is unmistakable. It is the voice of God calling you to Himself. At first you might not recognize the voice of the Lord. You might merely think it is just your conscience talking to you. **But, the still small voice of the Holy Spirit is unmistakable if you will listen.** He calls you to leave a self-centered, dead-end, sinful life of (going your own way and doing your own thing) and to follow Him into abundant eternal life!

Story:

*This is part of **what it means to follow Jesus. You respond to His voice and call to follow Him.** As you receive Him into your life, He gives you a new **IDENTITY** and a new **DESTINY** in Him!

2 – Jesus calls ordinary people to be WITH HIM!

A- Vs 14 "*He appointed twelve that they might **BE WITH HIM** and that **HE** might **SEND** them out to **PREACH.***"

Jesus didn't just call people to be His **followers at a distance**. He didn't want just 'supporters' or 'fans.' He didn't want merely Social Media Followers (fb, Twitter, Instagram 'followers.' He wanted to be **WITH people** and for **them to be WITH Him in Relationship, associated WITH Him!** Jesus actually likes to 'hang out' with people!

To be **WITH someone** is a powerful thing. Its called the **power of Association**.

Webster's: Associate – *To join as a partner, friend or companion; to bring together in relationship; to combine or join together...*

The Disciples were **WITH Jesus**. The Disciples were spending time **with Jesus in everyday life**. They saw how He **prayed**, how **He healed**, how **He taught** and how **He preached**. How **He served**. How **He loved** on ordinary people. How **He rebuked religious bullies**. How **He patiently corrected** disciples. **He began to 'rub off' on them!**

The power of Association is stronger than we may realize. **We BECOME like those who we 'hang out' with!**
A powerful Kingdom Truth: You are going to become like those you hang out with the most!

Later on in the book of Acts when the Apostles were used in the healing of a crippled man. They were 'on trial' for bringing healing. The Religious leaders (Pharisees & Sadducees) noted that Peter and John had '**Been with Jesus.**'

Acts 4:13 "*Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed and began to **recognize them as having been WITH Jesus.***"

*** The Power of Association also works in the Negative – You have to be intentional about your relationships!**
1 Corinthians 15:33 "*Be not deceived, bad company corrupts good morals.*"

That being said, Jesus was strategic and purposeful in whom He interacted with. He wasn't afraid to '**hang out**' with **sinners for a redemptive purpose!** Jesus applied the **POWER OF ASSOCIATION** to **influence people** for the Kingdom of God, not so He would compromise to their level of behavior!

***There is only one perfectly adjusted personality (Holy One) in the Universe. That person is God!** (Father, Son and Holy Spirit). He is perfect and righteous in all of His ways. God is the only personality in the Universe who doesn't have flaws and personality 'issues.'

The only way for our lives to be **conformed to His**, is to **spend time with Him in His presence** and with God's people who have His Spirit. How do we practically do that?

How do WE spend time WITH JESUS? *Be purposeful – Make Undistracted Appointments with God (Put away Social Media & Distractions- Give Him undivided attention) - Walk with Him Daily

In prayer and worship – He is present! (I used to spend hours WITH GOD, after working hours on the ship).

Time in His Word – He is present. (*The Bible is the only book, where the author is present to those who read it*)

Through the person of the Holy Spirit, we can have a very **close relationship** with Jesus! We talk with Him, and He talks with us!

The Good News: He has **NOT left us as Orphans** (John 14:18) *"I will not leave you as Orphans, I will come to you."*

Story:

Jesus calls people to FOLLOW Him and He calls us to BE WITH Him!

Because of the gift of the Holy Spirit, we can walk with Jesus 24/7!

3 – Jesus calls ordinary people to be TOGETHER WITH Him - for Kingdom Mission!

*The **TOGETHER** part of following Jesus is the **HARDEST!** But also has the **Most potential for GOOD!**
Jesus doesn't just call people to Himself. He calls many people to Himself to be **TOGETHER** with Him!

Christianity is NOT just about YOU & JESUS! Its about Us TOGETHER/the Kingdom of God/the Family of God

An old saying: "To dwell above with Saints we love, that will be grace and glory, to dwell below with Saints we know, now that is another story!"

A- **Vs 13 "...and THEY came to Him. 14 He appointed twelve that THEY might BE WITH HIM and that HE might SEND THEM out to preach."**

Jesus calls people **INDIVIDUALLY** for a New Identity & Destiny- to follow Him!

Jesus calls people to be **WITH HIM – to Associate** and have life-changing Relationship!

Jesus calls people **TOGETHER** for **KINGDOM MISSION!** What Mission? To restore the human family back to the Father's House!

***Our Heavenly Father has an end-goal. Its to become ONE - TOGETHER in the Kingdom of God**

John 14:1-3 "Do not let your hearts be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many dwelling places (mansions); if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also."

When you look at the people Jesus called to Himself to be **TOGETHER** on **Kingdom Mission**, its astounding what He accomplished through them when you consider their background.

Peter – A blue collar, rough cut fisherman! Uneducated and untrained!

James & John – Blue collar fisherman with an angry ax to grind with ‘heathens & compromisers.’

Matthew – A corrupt government worker (tax collector). A despised occupation of the day.

Simon the Zealot – A Jewish Patriot (his hat, ‘Make Israel great again.’)

Thomas – The pragmatic thinker (must see to believe)

Mary Magdalene – Woman who had been come out of a rough lifestyle having been formerly demonized

Joanna – The wife of King Herod’s business manager

14 He appointed twelve that they might BE WITH HIM and that HE might SEND them out to PREACH.”

4 – Jesus calls ordinary people to build Kingdom Community - TOGETHER

*These **twelve were TOGETHER** for 3 ½ years, learning, growing, adjusting, repenting, changing...

*They learned about **KINGDOM DNA** – Its NOT about the big “I” and the little “u” – Its about **US TOGETHER**

The very DNA of GOD and HIS KINGDOM is about KINGDOM COMMUNITY

When God (Elohim- Father, Son & Holy Spirit) created the first man, Adam, He did a perfect job in all of creation and in creating Adam. Adam was perfect and walked with God. **Yet he was alone**. God called everything He created ‘good’ and ‘very good.’ Yet when it came to Adam being by himself, God said...

Genesis 2:18 “...it is not good for the man to be alone.”

*Walking with Jesus is **NOT** an **INDIVIDUALISTIC** Lifestyle! Isolation kills. It is **NOT GOOD** for man to be alone.

*After the Resurrection Jesus Commands the Disciples to **WALK WITH HIM (through the Holy Spirit) TOGETHER!**

Acts 1:4 “Gathering them together, He commanded THEM not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised... vs 13 When THEY had entered the city, THEY went up to the upper room where THEY were staying; That is, Peter, and John and James and Andrew...” vs 14 THESE all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus and with His brothers.”

In Acts Chapter 1, Luke records the disciples in plural form 30 times!

Acts 2:1-4 “When the Day of Pentecost had come, THEY were ALL TOGETHER in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where THEY were sitting. And there appeared to THEM tongues as of fire distributing themselves and THEY rested on each of THEM. And THEY were ALL filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.”

In Acts Chapter 2, Luke records the disciples in plural form 33 times!

The Disciples obeyed the Commands of Jesus. They gathered to together in the Upper Room. The Holy Spirit fell on all of them and **baptized them with fire and power from on high!**

When the Holy Spirit builds ‘Kingdom Community’ – This is what it looks like!

Acts 2:41-44, 46, 47

41 “So then, those who received His word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls. 42 They continually devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43 Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles. 44 And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common...46 Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple and breaking bread from house to house they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.”

WALKING WITH JESUS TOGETHER – Is called ‘Kingdom Community’

Kingdom Community has - 5 Elements:

Apostles Doctrine - (Bible teaching, Old and New Testament)

Fellowship – Koinonia, Deep Bonding and Sharing

Breaking of Bread (Sharing Communion Together)

Meals Together – (*Many Tacos*)

Prayer – (Praying Together)

What is Kingdom Community? What does it look and feel like?

- *Where **Jesus the King** has preeminence! **He is the focus.**
- *Where **His presence in welcomed** and **manifest.**
- *Where **His Word** and **will are carried out.**
- *Where **He is present** to save, heal, restore, bless and empower.
- *Where **Disciples of Jesus do Life Together** with Him at the center!

The Disciples learned that **WALKING WITH JESUS** is **NOT** about an **INDIVIDUALISTIC** lifestyle. Its about **KINGDOM COMMUNITY**. Paul said we are all **‘Baptized into His Body**, the Church (*Ecclesia*) of God. **1 Cor 12:12-14**

Its about the Father and His house – Remember the Lord’s Prayer?

Matthew 6:9-13

OUR Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed by **Your Name**, May **Your kingdom** come, may **Your will** be done on earth as it is in heaven, Give **us** this day **our** daily bread, Forgive **us** our debts as **we** forgive **our** debtors
And Lead **us** not into temptation, but deliver **us** from evil, For **Yours is the Kingdom** and the **Power** and the **Glory** forever. Amen!

Conclusion:

- 1- He calls us **Individually to FOLLOW Him** (*A new identity and a new destiny*)
- 2- He calls us to be **WITH Him** (*In intimate fellowship and relationship*)
- 3- He calls us to be **TOGETHER with Him** (*Do life together*)
- 4- He calls us to build **KINGDOM COMMUNITY** – (*The Church & greater Body of Christ*)