

Catching His Wind: Follow Me

Our desire to follow Christ provides our passion to faithfully deny ourselves and pursue Him!

Is Your Faith Active?

In last week's message we were encouraged to abide in Christ, today we'll learn to follow Him. The only way we can be sure to accomplish both is to have an active faith in Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 2:8-9 New King James Version

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Seeing that we're saved by grace through faith we should be sure our faith is active! Is your faith active in the Son of God? How often do you study, hear, and commit to your heart what's written about Him?

His claim?

His life?

His words?

His crucifixion?

His resurrection?

His ascension?

His return?

Is your faith active in your union with Him both in His death, and resurrected life?

Have you picked up your cross and joined Him by faith in death so you may follow Him into eternal life?

When we live by faith, we're empowered with His grace to do what He commands. When we live by our feelings, we're blown down a path in the direct opposite of what He desires towards death and eternal separation.

To live by faith is to trust that if we obey his word, then we'll experience His joy, knowing that He is a promise keeper.

Prayer

Follow Me!

Matthew 16:13-28 New King James Version

13 When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" 14 So they said, "Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." 15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" 16 Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." 17 Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. 18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not [a]prevail against it. 19 And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth [b]will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." 20 Then He commanded His disciples that they should tell no one that He was Jesus the Christ. 21 From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day. 22 Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, [c]"Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!" 23 But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are [d]an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men." 24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. 25 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. 26 For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? 27 For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works. 28 Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."

- There is a version of yourself, if not nailed down by faith to the cross of Christ, will be taken away by the strong lust filled winds of this world. What does it mean to pick up your cross? What is it for?
- **Galatians 5:24-25 New Living Translation**
24 Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. 25 Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives.
- Without desire there is no fire/passion/consistency.
- Our desire has a gravitational pull that allows us to be close to the things we really want!
- If our desire to follow Christ is not greater than the passions and desires of our sinful nature, we will again be carried away by the winds of this world. What are the winds?
- **1 John 2:15-17 New King James Version**
15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. 17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.
- The world gets louder when you don't pay attention to it

Are We Following or Not?

James 4:7 New King James Version

7 Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

- Our desire to follow God is marked by our submission to His word.
- This is the key to victory in the spiritual warfare for our souls.

How will we know if we're really Christ followers? We're called to be disciples of Jesus Christ. Which means we have the same disciplines He did on earth. Jesus fasted, so we fast. Jesus prayed, so we pray. Jesus loved, so we love. Jesus denied Himself of the sinful pleasures of this world, we do the same!

What does denying ourselves look like? Jesus in the wilderness being tempted by Satan.

Matthew 4:1-11 New Living Translation

4 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted there by the devil. 2 For forty days and forty nights he fasted and became very hungry. 3 During that time the devil[a] came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become loaves of bread.” 4 But Jesus told him, “No! The Scriptures say, ‘People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’[b]”

- We live by catching and dwelling in His wind, word, and way!

5 Then the devil took him to the holy city, Jerusalem, to the highest point of the Temple, 6 and said, “If you are the Son of God, jump off! For the Scriptures say, ‘He will order his angels to protect you. And they will hold you up with their hands so you won’t even hurt your foot on a stone.’[c]” 7 Jesus responded, “The Scriptures also say, ‘You must not test the Lord your God.’[d]” 8 Next the devil took him to the peak of a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. 9 “I will give it all to you,” he said, “if you will kneel down and worship me.” 10 “Get out of here, Satan,” Jesus told him. “For the Scriptures say, ‘You must worship the Lord your God and serve only him.’[e]” 11 Then the devil went away, and angels came and took care of Jesus.

- **THE DEVIL WENT AWAY!!!**
- Do you deny yourself so well that Satan goes away?
- Self-denial is the defense of our souls. It is the active faith in God’s word that prevents the lust of this world from reinvigorating the crucified sinful nature.
- This self denial is active when love for God supersedes love for self.
- Which is evidenced by willingness and obedience to His teachings.
- Following Jesus and His teachings is the only way self-denial is active.
- So to say we’re following Jesus and not denying ourselves is a lie.
- Our light is our presentation of Christ!!!
- Only faith in Christ brings you to the end of yourself
- When I am weak, then I am strong

