

STAND ALONE



STORIES OF THE KINGDOM

STAND ALONE 1: "FOLLOW ME"

April 28, 2019

Pastor Keith Jenkins

BIBLICAL TEXT(S)

TEXT(S):

As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen.

"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people."

*At once they left their nets and followed him. Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him. **(Matthew 4:18-22)***

As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him.

While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

*On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." **(Matthew 9:9-13)***

Afterward Jesus appeared again to his disciples, by the Sea of Galilee. It happened this way: Simon Peter, Thomas (also known as Didymus), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples were together. "I'm going out to fish," Simon Peter told them, and they said, "We'll go with you." So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus.

He called out to them, "Friends, haven't you any fish?"

"No," they answered.

He said, "Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some." When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish.

*Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" As soon as Simon Peter heard him say, "It is the Lord," he wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken it off) and jumped into the water. **(John 21: 1-7)***

MESSAGE SUMMARY

Whether we've been a Christian 5 minutes or 50 years, we often ask the question, "what's next?". No matter where we are in our journey with God, the answer is always "Follow me." All God calls us to do is to take the next step, whether we understand the why behind it or not, whether we have all the details or not. We're simply to follow God where he leads us.

We don't need to get ourselves into shape first. No brokenness will disqualify you from following Jesus. It's actually a prerequisite to truly follow Jesus. Jesus tells his disciples that if they follow him, he will make them fishers of men, meaning men and women of course. The transformation of their lives (and ours) is not accomplished by humans, it's accomplished by God working through his Holy Spirit. We don't need to make it happen, we simply need to take the steps we know to take today to do what God is calling us to do.

"Maybe you have lots of questions. That's okay. But, there's really only one question you need an answer to: Is Jesus calling you to follow him?"

-Pastor Keith

We may make some mistakes along the way. Jesus' disciples did. From time to time, we may go back to things that God has called us away from. Even then God is always at work. He works even through our brokenness and our mistakes to make us more like himself. We simply need to follow him.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you lead your group through a progression of engagement with the Bible passage and the speaker's message, helping them understand and apply the teaching.

LEAN IN

These are icebreaker/warm up questions, mostly just to get the group talking and start the flow of conversation. Choose one question and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.

1. What's a significant change that you've made in your life lately?
2. Have you ever had a huge life transformation? What happened?
3. Who is your favorite person/personality/business that you "follow" online, on social media, or through other media outlets? Why do you like to follow them?
4. What is one thing that you're looking forward to this week? What's one that you are dreading?

LOOK DOWN

These are questions on the passage and observations about what's been read.

Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max

1. In Matthew 4, what does Jesus ask his future disciples to do? What does he say he will do for them? Does anything stand out to you about this exchange?
2. In Matthew 9, what does Jesus ask Matthew to do? What does Matthew do in response? Does anything stand out to you about this exchange?
3. In Matthew 9, who does Jesus eat with? Which group of people are upset about this? What is Jesus' response?
4. In John 21, what does Peter decide to do? Why do you think he decided to do that? Is he successful at it? Why do you think he got the results he did?
5. In John 21, what is Peter's response when he realizes it's Jesus he's been talking to? Why do you think Peter reacts in this way?

LOOK OUT

These questions help connect the world of the Bible to today.

Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max

1. In Matthew 4, when Jesus called his disciples to follow him he literally meant to follow him around. What do you think it looks like to follow Jesus today?
2. When Jesus calls a tax collector to be one of his disciples, it's probably a surprise to everyone (including Matthew the tax collector). What kinds of people do we write off in similar ways today as being beyond help or past all hope?
3. Read back over the Jesus' calls to follow him in Matthew 4 and Matthew 9. What things in the story are similar to how God calls us today? What things are different?
4. When Jesus calls his disciples, he doesn't give them a bunch of new rules to follow or expect them to be different immediately. He just wants them to follow him, knowing that they will be transformed as they do. What might this same process look like in our church, in your small group, or in your family?
5. In John 21, Peter and the disciples have faced disappointment. Things haven't turned out as they hoped, so they go back to fishing. How have you seen this same process work out in your own life or in the lives of those you know?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS, CONT.

LOOK IN

These are questions that help you consider personal application.

Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max

1. When Jesus calls his disciples, he simply expects them to follow him.
He is the one who will make them what they need to be (fishers of men).
Are there any ways that you've tried to force yourself to be like Jesus through behavior modification instead of letting him transform you?
2. Is there a person or group of people that you think are beyond help or beyond coming to God? Who is that group/person and why do you feel that way about them?
3. Is there any place in your life where you have gone back to "fishing" instead of doing what God has called you to do? What does that look like in your life?
4. Do you expect people to change 180 degrees after they come to know Jesus (which it doesn't appear that Jesus expected from this passage)? How could you change your attitudes and actions to allow more grace for your brothers and sisters in Christ, especially those that are new in the faith?
5. Is there a place in your life where you feel God is calling you to follow him in a new way? What do you think God is calling you to?

LIVE IT OUT

These action steps help apply this week's message to day to day life.

Choose one question and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.

1. How can your group pray for you this week as you work to have more grace for those who you feel are not living as they should (either within or outside the church)?
What's one thing you could do this week to show grace to someone you have a hard time loving/accepting?
2. Are you trying to earn your place in the kingdom of God, trying to change your behavior to match up to what you think God wants? How can your group pray for you as you seek to simply follow Jesus and let him transform you along the way? Is there something you need to do or stop doing that will help remind you that transformation is a gift of God's grace and not something you have to accomplish?
3. Are you afraid of something that you think God is calling you to follow him and do?
How can your group pray for and support you this week as you take the first steps to follow him in this new season?

NOTE: On the following page you will find a set of sermon notes created by Charissa Burns, an artist who calls B4 home. We include them purely for your enjoyment and encouragement, courtesy of Charissa. You can follow her on the 'Gram @charissaburnsstudio

4-28-2019

Matthew 4:18-22 Matthew 10:37-39
Matthew 9:9-13 John 21:1-7

God what is my next step?
(not what is my whole life?)

- ① Make Jesus accessible
- ② We are more alike than we think.

Jesus will take care of the rest!

→ We are all asking
NOW WHAT? He answers

FOLLOW ME!

He wants us to follow him into relationship with him!

→ we frequently go into questions - to where, how, when, etc.

• He doesn't give us rules or steps to take before we follow... HE JUST SAYS FOLLOW!

TO JESUS NONE OF US ARE

- too broken, too far gone -
- too bad, too awful, too sinful -
- too dirty, too sick, etc. -

We say but I'm ^(insert sin struggle here)
And Jesus says...
I GOT THIS!

JESUS DOESN'T PUT US TO SHAME TO FOLLOW HIM! He deals with & redeems us as we follow him!

He loves us just where we are!

→ He came to make us new!

It is a transformational relationship - follow & be transformed!

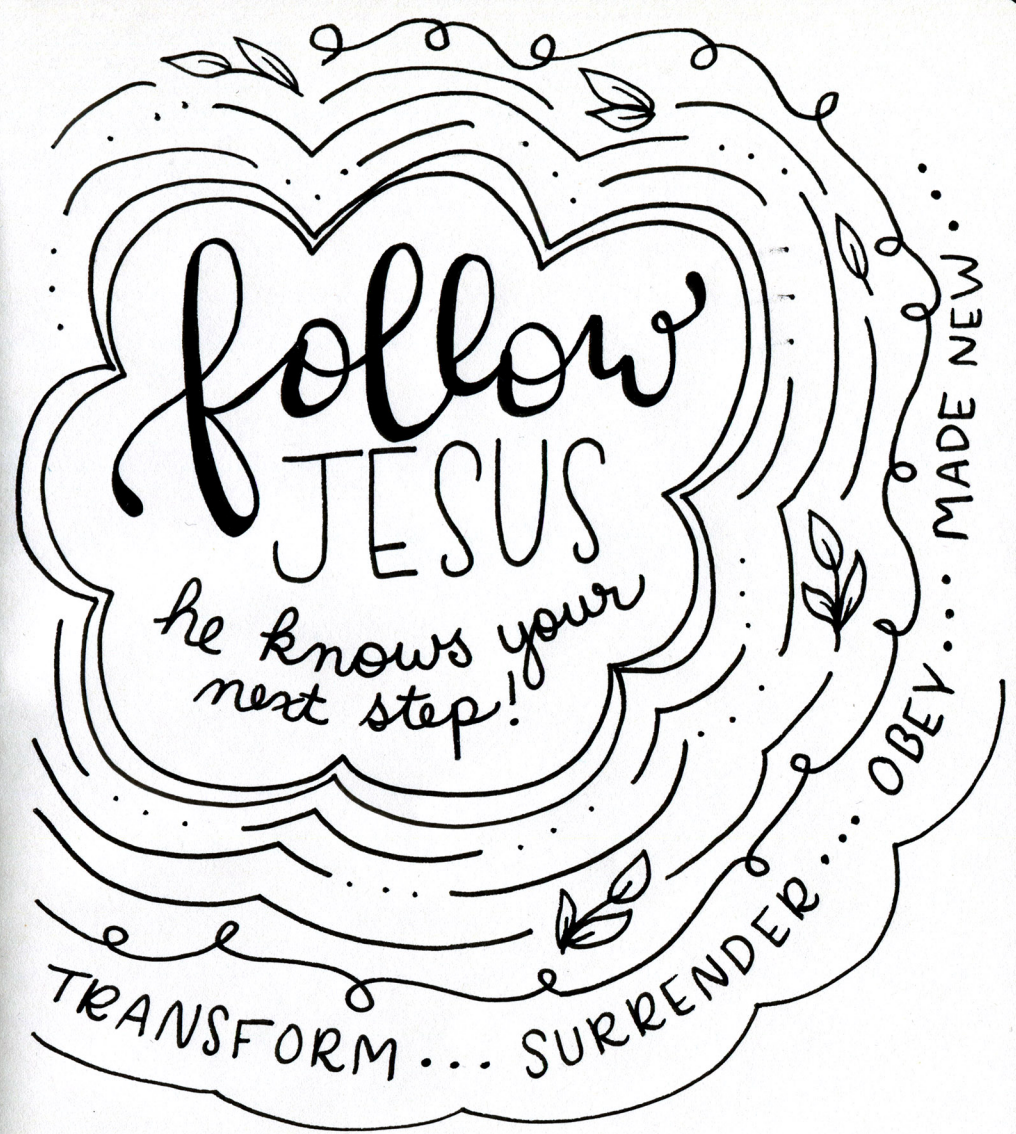
He makes it an internal transformation! → we aren't measured by others but we are measured to our perfect savior and he is bringing us closer everyday!

We are changed by Jesus and conformed to His way of thinking... NOT THE WORLD'S WAY

God will continually ask you to follow him into deeper levels of your calling and relationship with him!

One step at a time he will lead us to a better place for him! The place we are in might not be bad, but not the best... He will lead us to greater places of surrender.

SURRENDER to Jesus



→ It will not be easy, but...

NOT MY WILL... YOUR WILL, LORD!

my will doesn't always line up with his - when it does it's wonderful, but when it doesn't... It is still BEST!

Sometimes we go back, but we can't be profitable when we go back to what we did before.

Obedience to God is how our lives are sustained!
"You obey me & I'll take care of the rest!"