

Love Does: Follow Me

Matthew 4:18-22

6.30.2019

Series Intro: Conclusion of “Love Does” series ... consider reading the book. As we wrap up, we’re going to consider Jesus’ invitation to “Follow Me.”

<ILL: Julie moving to CA> I figured that she was pretty serious because she was willing change her plans. When Jesus makes His request of us, He is asking us to love Him! This takes us to our text. We’re going to see the amazing way Jesus’ first disciples loved Him and the way He loved them.

18 As Jesus was walking along the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter), and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. 19 “Follow Me,” He told them, “and I will make you fish for people.” 20 Immediately they left their nets and followed Him. Matthew 4:18-20

Notice, this happens while Jesus is walking along the Sea of Galilee.

<PICS: Sea of Galilee> 13 miles x 8 miles and it is actually a freshwater lake.

<Video> This is where Jesus probably called His first disciples. And it’s interesting to see how He calls people to follow Him. We expect calls from God to come with some amazing sign. <ILL: Should we take this call?> I realized that God was my loving father. If I was making a mistake, He would help me get back on track.

Notice, when Jesus calls His disciples, it is so simple! These guys are in the middle of their day and all it takes is two simple words: “Follow Me.” If you are looking for the big sign, you might miss the simple invitation.

NB: God’s plans are not fragile! <ILL: Surprise party details> God isn’t as interested in what decision is made, but that we trust Him no matter what the decision! Just in case we didn’t understand the simplicity the first time, Jesus does the same thing again!

21 Going on from there, He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and his brother John. They were in a boat with Zebedee their father, preparing their nets, and He called them. 22 Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed Him. Matthew 4:21-22

Jesus calls two groups of guys in very ordinary ways two times in a row. And those two simple invitations change the world! Here’s what you MUST know: Jesus has called you to follow Him because He loves you. I want to talk about what it takes to follow Jesus.

Following Jesus

1. Following Jesus will involve sacrifice To follow Jesus, there will be some sacrifice! The people who follow Jesus first leave their jobs and even their families. James and John, verse 22 says, even leave their father. Two important things to note about sacrifice...

- [Sacrifice doesn't earn you anything](#). You don't sacrifice so that you can follow Jesus. Your sacrifice does not earn you Jesus' love. Jesus' sacrifice earns God's love for us. It is complete! **I urge you, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God ...” Romans 12:1 NIV** Jesus doesn't desire sacrifice from us because He is the sacrifice for us. What He wants from us is mercy toward others.
- [Sacrifice can serve as a test for everything](#). When we sacrifice, it reveals what we love. You will sacrifice for who and what you love! <PIC: Mission Trip adults> What you won't give up for Jesus says something about what you love more than Jesus. “When Ball becomes Baal.” God asks us to sacrifice different things...
 - o Abraham and his son
 - o The widow and her food
 - o The rich man and his money

Following Jesus is about putting Jesus first. Are you putting Jesus first in your life?

2. Following Jesus happens best in community When Jesus calls us to follow Him, He is calling us to be in relationship with others. The Church is a community. When Jesus calls these disciples, He calls them in pairs: Simon and Andrew, James and John. When He sends them out, He also sends them out in pairs:

He summoned the Twelve and began to send them out in pairs... Mark 12:7

Here's why this is so important...

- [Weight Watchers](#) in the Journal of the American Medical Association: Weight Watchers participants lost more than three times the pounds of the self-help group the first year. On average, the Weight Watchers group lost almost 10 pounds compared to three pounds in the self-help group. By the end of the second year, both groups had regained weight. But while the self-help group returned to their starting weight, the average Weight Watchers participant kept off more than six pounds. <<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/196342>>
- [Working out](#) in the Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology: having participants perform a series of planks both alone and with a partner (whose performance was manipulated to always be better than the participants). What they found was that working with a partner produced a motivation gain that allowed the participants to hold their planks for a longer period of time. In fact, those who exercised with a more-capable partner increased their plank time by 24 percent. <<https://tinyurl.com/y64wdrlz>> **Life is better when we work together!**

⁹Two are better than one because they have a good reward for their efforts. ¹⁰For if either falls, his companion can lift him up; but pity the one who falls without another to lift him up. ¹¹Also, if two lie down together, they can keep warm; but how can one person alone keep warm? ¹²And if someone overpowers one person, two can resist him. A cord of three strands is not easily broken. Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

We're weaker by ourselves.

3. Following Jesus gives us purpose Jesus doesn't just call people to follow Him because He is awesome (although He is), but because He has a purpose – to reach others!

19 “Follow me,” He told Simon and Andrew, “and I will make you fish for people.” Matthew 4:19

We follow Jesus so that when others see us following Jesus, they too will follow Jesus.

<ILL: NPS Score> Jesus wants others to follow Him not because He has a product to sell, but because He came to show the world God’s love. God’s love comes with amazing gifts!

Telling others about Jesus doesn’t have to be weird!

18 As Jesus was walking along... Matthew 4:18 In fact, in the Great Commission, Jesus says it like this.

19 Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. Matthew 28:19-20

We can invite people the same way Jesus has invited us: “As we are walking along!”

Remember, it doesn’t have to be weird. Where will you be walking this week?

- Grocery Store
- Restaurant
- Morning Coffee

34 “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. 35 By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another.” John 13:34, 35

What does that look like?

- When a mistake is made, do you forgive?
- When things get slow, are you patient?

You may be the only example of REAL love they will experience... People will often follow you before they follow Jesus.

Jubilee Sunday Invitation