

Follow Me

by John Emery

Then Jesus told his disciples, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life?” Matthew 16: 24-26 (See also Mark 10: 17-22 and Luke 9: 57-62!)

Someone once set out to discover the dominant themes of Jesus’ teaching. He discovered that on at least 87 occasions Jesus said, “Follow me.” Simple, but not easy. Jesus didn’t mince words when explaining what following Him would mean. Reflecting on this fact, Christian musician, Bryan Sirchio, wrote a song called “Follow Me (87 times),” the chorus of which goes:

Am I following Jesus, or just believing in Christ?
‘Cause I can believe and not change a thing,
But following will change my whole life.
He never said come, acknowledge my existence
Or believe in me I’m the 2nd person of the Trinity,
But 87 times he said...follow me.

Jesus still leads on and His call to us is still “Follow me.” He goes throughout the world. He goes where others won’t. He goes to those others consider of no account. He wants us to come along and to share the Good News with the broken by what we say and do in His name. Maybe it requires us to redefine some priorities or reevaluate what we mean by “success,” or “wealth,” or “comfort.” Maybe the call is as radical as pursuing a life in mission, maybe as simple as looking into the eyes of a homeless person and seeing the face of Christ. The call will be different for each of us, and Jesus never compels. He just says, “Follow me.”

Dear Lord, cut through the noise of daily life and open my ears to Your call to follow. Give me eyes to see the needs of those around us. Give me a heart eager to respond and also the courage to be willing to trust Your promise that You will be with me wherever I go to share the Gospel in word and deed. In Jesus’ name, AMEN.