

10232022 **Following Jesus is not for the faint of heart... If you want to follow Jesus your Faith has to be tough...we all have expectations of how Jesus an expectation is the picture we paint in our minds about how life's supposed to be... or picture what an experience, situation, or relationship outcome should like...this is what is commonly called an illusion**

- [An illusion is a false impression of reality and disillusionment is the revealing of that false impression by reality!.....](#)
- [and when that illusion is revealed as false, which causes us to be disappointed](#)
- [we often become hurt and Resentful and we sometimes blame God...because one of the illusionswe hold is that the way I picture life should role out...is the same way God desires that life to role out...](#)
- [But when my illusion or false impression of reality is met by reality...](#)

My faith has to be resilient...when Jesus allows reality to check our expectation...someone has got to change...and guess what it is not Jesus!  
**there is a time for public ministry ...and there is a time for private instruction...**...and there is a time when public ministry and instruction and correction collide...and that is what we see today...

Today it is James and John!! And like them we all get our turn...so lets see what we can learn today

Set the scene...Jesus and his disciples are up in Capernaum, at the North end of the sea of Galilee...after a time of teaching ...where he shares the basic principle of leadership to his disciples... [A Basic Law of Spiritual Leadership in the Kingdom of God help others succeed and you succeed](#)

**He gets ready to head south to Jerusalem...to his destiny... We pick up the narrative...**

*NLT Luke 9:51* *As the time drew near for him to ascend to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem.*

**Jesus knew well what was before him. It was to obey the will of God to die on the cross to save men from their sins.**

- **The betrayal, the unjust trial, the mockery, the scorn, the crown of thorns, the spitting, the nails and the agony on the cross might have spread before Jesus' mind's eye like a picture.**
- **Though he was committed...He flinched when he prayed in the Garden...yet did not shrink back from his destiny**
- **He was going to Jerusalem. But there is ministry to be done and disciples to be taught on the way**
- **And he chooses to go the way less traveled by the Jews...through Samaria...**

*9:52* *He sent messengers ahead to a Samaritan village to prepare for his arrival.*

- **This is something strange...instead of going down the west side of the lake toward Jerusalem...lots of friendly previously visited towns...**
- **Jesus sends messengers south west toward Samaria The Samaritans were particularly hated by the Jews in Jesus' day. They lived in an area south of Galilee and north of Judea, part of the old Northern Kingdom of Israel.**
- **In 721 BC Israel was conquered by Assyria, taking some 27thousand+ captives and resettled the area with captives and colonists from other parts of the Assyrian empire...these Jews**

intermarried by force and choice other peoples... Their descendants were looked upon as half-breeds and heretics by the Jews of Jerusalem.

- Though Samaritans believed in the Torah, they worshipped at Mt. Gerizim rather than Jerusalem. **At times, relations between the Jews and Samaritans had been civil, but in Jesus' day feelings were definitely hostile, since sometime 9 AD at midnight during Passover some Samaritans had deliberately scattered bones in the Jerusalem Temple in order to desecrate it.**
- The Jews were outraged! What remained now was disdain and hatred. But Jesus loved them also!!

*NLT Luke 9:53* *But the people of the village did not welcome Jesus because he was on his way to Jerusalem.* <sup>54</sup> **When James and John saw this, they said to Jesus, “Lord, should we call down fire from heaven to burn them up?”** <sup>55</sup> **But Jesus turned and rebuked them.** <sup>56</sup> *So they went on to another village.*

- **No coincidence the Brothers James and John were chosen to be the messengers...after all when Jesus choose them as Apostles ..he gave them a nickname...**

*NLT Mark 3:17* *James and John (the sons of Zebedee, but Jesus nicknamed them “Sons of Thunder”),*

**In other words, Jesus knew the brothers’ nature and called them on it...they are friendly enough but would drop lightning and bring thunder on you in a heartbeat if offended...**

- **The disciples are continuing to discover there is a Cost to Follow Jesus.... This This includes the cost of him following his instruction ...and at the same time he is following their**

actions... He intentionally set them up to have their character revealed... So he could address that !

- **They are way too thin skinned to be effective in carry out the mission Jesus sent them on!!**
- **Their anger at being rejected...which was really pride..., they were ready to burn down a whole village and its people.**
- **What kind of preparing a village to receive Jesus is that???**
- **No wonder Jesus took them up the mountain earlier...if he would have left them down with the other nine..they would have killed people!!!**
- **Jesus rebuked them... James and John felt rejected their pride hurt, and wanted to really hurt back!**
- **They assumed Jesus felt their same way...they wanted to save him the trouble and and call the destroying fire down themselves They liked revenge!**

**\*\*\*\*\*No matter what the reason may be, thin skinned ...people are not good leaders... for two reasons...**

**1) Good leaders do not to abandon the mission the big picture because of present hurt...**

- **These are Apostles!!! They will carry on the message after Jesus leaves...and if some people in a village rejecting them is enough to cause them to abandon the cause...they need much character work!!**
- **Lets look at this for a second...what would have happened if they did burn down that village? The Romans would be justified in killing them all...messing up Jesus cause...destroying their testimony...their lives ...their message!**
- **James and John...must have faced many critics in their lives...and they obviously were not afraid to fight when put**

down...and the religious leaders had been putting them all down regularly for months...and not in private face to face but in front of all the people following them.....

- And now your sending us to Samaritans??? We don't like them and they certainly don't like us...they say one negative thing.....

**2. \*\*\*\*\*Two...these disciples had assumed that the authority to proclaim the Gospel gave them the right to dispense Judgment.**

- Jesus rebuked them...Judgment is the prerogative of God alone. For They did not know it yet but they were going back there in the future...

*NLT Acts 1:6* So when the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, “Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore our kingdom?”

- They had expectations...soon and very soon

<sup>7</sup> He replied, “The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know. <sup>8</sup> But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, **in Samaria**, and to the ends of the earth.”

- Woah!!! the timing is none of their business ...what is there business is a lot of work to be done through the power of the Holy Spirit! .....be about what your business is!!
- And that would take a great more developing of Character! Though Jesus will be gone...the Holy Spirit will now take over!

- **consider this: Your skill leaves the first impression, but your character leaves the lasting impression.**
- **So what are you doing today to develop your character? Because whatever you are in right now...much character work will be needed for your to be successful!!!**

After all, that will ultimately be your legacy. And it's the one thing that truly determines what part of your potential gets reached.

**Humility is key...** Your skill leaves the first impression, but your character leaves the lasting impression.

- 1) When you are humble you identify with others ...where they are at...its not like any of us have never rejected someone?
  - **You are learn to not be defensive...**when you hurt others you take full responsibility and make it right...
  - **Blaming others for your actions** ...you own your response and actions...
  - People who blame others for their actions....**have this in common...they have strained and difficult relationships... you know like the sons of thunder!**
  - What is cool is that Jesus even with the apostles continued failure to understand and apply his teaching did not give into discouragement...yet persistently modeled for his disciples the meaning of a servant leader, giving it its ultimate definition through his own suffering and death... ...none the less leaves the ultimate example...

**They need to go back and relearn a lesson.. we often need to also...**

*NLT Luke 6:27 "But to you who are willing to listen, I say, love your enemies! Do good to those who hate you. <sup>28</sup> Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who hurt you.*

**31** *Do to others as you would like them to do to you.* <sup>32</sup> *“If you love only those who love you, why should you get credit for that? Even sinners love those who love them!”* <sup>33</sup> *And if you do good only to those who do good to you, why should you get credit? Even sinners do that much!*

<sup>35</sup> *“Love your enemies! Do good to them. .... then your reward from heaven will be very great, and you will truly be acting as children of the Most High, for he is kind to those who are unthankful and wicked.”* <sup>36</sup> *You must be compassionate, just as your Father is compassionate.*

<sup>37</sup> *“Do not judge others, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn others, or it will all come back against you. Forgive others, and you will be forgiven.”*

**This is How we make spiritual progress...finding Jesus...Losing Jesus.... Finding Jesus....Re-thinking Jesus. This is how we make spiritual progress. This is the *only way* we make spiritual progress!**

**We all think we know Jesus ...we found him...We all think we've got Jesus figured out to some degree....**

- We think we know the crowd where Jesus can be found.
- We think we know how God will act, we think He is reasonable all the time maybe even predictable....
- Then in one day we lose him..... he is not reasonable... nor predictable, he seems to have abandoned us, he's not there!
- And we have to go searching for him. “Seek and you shall find.” But when we find Jesus after losing him, we find he is different than we thought...

- That's when the rethinking (repenting) starts. and then we become different... It's the only way we make spiritual progress.

**Losing the Jesus we thought we knew and finding the Jesus who is....This is how we grow. We follow him and then he follows us!!**

**Without these difficult experiences, we simply stay the same, not even realizing that Jesus is no longer traveling in our company as we thought he was....**

**But if we can have enough spiritual sensitivity to notice when we've lost Jesus, we can seek him anew, find him again, and in the process be transformed...**

- What is required is Thick Skin!! And a soft heart ...So you can stay on mission!

**End**

**A Basic Law of Spiritual Leadership in the Kingdom of God help others succeed and you succeed ...Jesus didn't operate a formal school, but his disciples took quite a course. He discipled them over a three year period, not only establishing the course subject matter, but setting the pattern by which future disciples should walk. His curriculum is difficult to institutionalize because of its**

rigorous standards. Institutions have sought to define it, replicate it, and make programs out of it. But few have succeeded for it is taught as a walked out process...

As Jesus is beginning to move toward his destiny with the cross and the resurrection...he is concerned with the state of His disciples preparedness for his departure and the ministry they would continue after ward... there is much work to be done...As His teaching is a walked out process... there is a time for public ministry ...and there is a time for private instruction...and there is a time when public ministry and instruction and correction collide...and that is what we see today...

The disciples are discovering there is a great **Cost to Follow Jesus....**

*JN 12: 24 I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. 25 The man who loves his **life** will **lose** it, while the man who hates his **life** in this world will keep it for eternal **life**. 26 Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.*

- There is a saying that is true...**methods vary principles don't...**
- The principle is Old ways have to die for new ways to be begin...
- Or said another way...the old life must die/ be left behind for the new life to come forth... a baby must leave the womb for the new life to begin...

The disciples are discovering there is a **Cost to Follow Jesus.... This includes the cost of him following in our footsteps.** Many of the

people we encounter along life's path may never get to meet Jesus, if they are not first attracted by our example. Our lifestyle, values and beliefs must be in accord with Jesus' message. And when they don't he corrects!!

- Life should progressively look different for all of us who are in Christ...He changes us and reshapes us and redirects us!...we realize our lives have been planned by God with a purpose in our generation...and it will fit us!!
- But we also must fit it!!

What is God calling you to approach with the spirit of a lamb...when surrounded by wolves...I will tell you this...

If you go God will show a new world to you.

If you go God will build great character in you.

If you go God will show changed lives because of you

If you go God will produce miracles to sustain you.

If you go God will show a New You, you never thought existed...!  
(put the blanket around your shoulders) were like the blankets on the wall behind me...

He say to us today come and ride on my shoulders and face your incredible destiny...and we balk...yet that is what some do...but today we witnessed seventy two who did not...and as they were sent out by Jesus embarked on the incredible life changing journey of their lives...

*End*

*end*

- Life should progressively look different for all of us who are in Christ...He changes us and reshapes us and redirects us!...we realize our lives have been planned by God with a purpose in our generation...and it will fit us!!
- **The master has a plan for the masterpiece on this earth.....which the masterpiece has been formed to fit...**
- **yet only the master gets to call the shots...**

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As he gets closer and closer to his destiny Jesus is continuing to teach his disciples...we left off last week with Jesus giving the principle of **The Road to Spiritual Progress...**

<sup>57</sup> As they were walking along, someone said to Jesus, "I will follow you wherever you go." <sup>58</sup> But Jesus replied, "Foxes have dens to live in, and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place even to lay his head."

- The biggest enemy to calling is security
- What is required LOYALTY...to the person Jesus...not leaning on our own understanding of setting boundaries on that following part...

<sup>59</sup> He said to another person, "Come, follow me." The man agreed, but he said, "Lord, first let me return home and bury my father." <sup>60</sup> But Jesus told him, "Let the spiritually dead bury their own dead!▯ Your duty is to go and preach about the Kingdom of God."

- What is required Obedience...What is required Commitment to the Cause

<sup>61</sup> Another said, "Yes, Lord, I will follow you, but first let me say good-bye to my family."

<sup>62</sup> But Jesus told him, "Anyone who puts a hand to the plow and then looks back is not fit for the Kingdom of God."

- What is required Perserverance

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*LK 9:51* As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem. <sup>52</sup> And he sent messengers on ahead, who went into a Samaritan village to get things ready for him; <sup>53</sup> but the people there did not welcome him, because he was heading for Jerusalem. <sup>54</sup> *When the disciples James and John saw this, they asked, "Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them?"* <sup>55</sup> But Jesus turned and *rebuked them*, <sup>56</sup> and they went to another **They are missing the point...but they will get it as John would write some 50 years later**

*1JN 3:16* This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. <sup>17</sup> If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? <sup>18</sup> Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. <sup>19</sup> This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence

John turns to the great example of Love Jesus Christ...this is the way to do it...leadership is about serving based in love...not power , position or prestige...

- True love or agape love is the kind of love that is self sacrificing. It cost us to serve...not the ones were serving...
- Our natural love is self preservation...from the root self serve...
- Verse 16 **Self sacrificing love is by choice it is not martyrdom! It is not a power play...It is not taken it is given willingly**
- The first law of physical life is self preservation...save yourself, build yourself, protect yourself
- **The first law of spiritual life is self sacrifice**...one lays down their life for the greater increase of life...
- It is the sacrifice that produces much for others and increases our life...
- John immediately gives us the example of those who possess material possessions and witnesses a brother in need ...do we serve willingly?
- To love with just words is no love at all
- Christian love is personal and active...
- The test of Christian love is not found in professions about loving the whole church, but is found in quietly helping a brother in need.
- If we are unwilling to help a brother it is certain we would not lay down our lives for the brethren!
- Indifference is akin to murder
- To love with words or tongue only is insincere love

- To love in truth means to love a person genuinely ...to love a person genuinely means we will act constructively on their behalf.
- To serve others who can't help us is not easy. It requires humbleness. It requires us becoming the least and dying to our self-ambition.
- But ...Loving others is how we know we are in the truth...we get it...
- If Christ is in us we will act upon that in ways that bless others...period
- People will be attracted to Christ by that love, so that we can know and rest in his presence.

*Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. <sup>19</sup> This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence*

What is cool is that Jesus even with the apostles continued failure to understand and apply his teaching did not give into discouragement...yet persistently modeled for his disciples the meaning of a servant leader, giving it its ultimate definition through his own suffering and death... ..none the less leaves the ultimate example...

<sup>1</sup>JN 3:16 *This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us.*

The only corrective against the corruption of Power ...is to give the power away...becoming a servant...

*MK 9:35 ...., "If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all."*

Self-righteous service, he says comes through human effort, but true service comes from a relationship with Jesus.

Self-righteous service is impressed with the big deal, but true service doesn't distinguish between small and large service.

Self-righteous service requires external rewards, but true service is contented with hiddenness.

Self-righteous service is highly concerned with results, but true service is free of the need to calculate results. It just serves and doesn't worry about tallying up the score.

Self-righteous service picks and chooses whom to serve, but true service is indiscriminate in its ministry, serving anyone and everyone.

Self-righteous service is affected by moods and whims. If it is a bad day, it forgets about serving. In contrast, true service ministers because there is a need, not out of how one feels.

Self-righteous service is temporary, but true service is a lifestyle.

Self-righteous service insists on meetings needs even when to do so would be unhelpful – because deep down, it really isn't about the one with the need. True service, on the other hand, can withhold service as freely as perform it if necessary.

Self-righteous service fractures community, while true service always builds community.

As followers of Jesus, this is our challenge. To live for others. To be servants.

The only corrective against the corruption of Power ...is to give the power away...becoming a servant...

LK 9:59 He said to another man, "Follow me."  
But the man replied, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father."

LK 9:60 Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God."

LK 9:61 Still another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say good-bye to my family."

LK 9:62 Jesus replied, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."

### Look at verse 51.

- **As he traveled toward Jerusalem, Jesus sent his messengers on ahead to a Samaritan village, a Gentile territory, to get a place to stay. But the Samaritans did not welcome him because of their hatred toward the Jews and because they thought Jesus was going up to Jerusalem to have a meeting with dignitary Jews.**
- **James and John felt that their pride was hurt and asked, "Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them?"**
- **They were angry at their rejection, like roaring thunder, and the expression of their anger was imperious.**
- **In their self-righteous anger, they were ready to burn down a whole village and its people. No matter what the reason may be, angry people are not good leaders.**
- **Fourth, the cost of following Jesus (57-62). In order to follow Jesus we must commit our security problem to God. Look at verse 57. "As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, 'I will follow you wherever you go.'"**
  - **The man wanted to follow Jesus at heart and become a great man of God. How did Jesus reply?**
  - **Look at verse 58. "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."**

- In light of Jesus' words, this man wanted to establish his future security first, and then do the work of God.
- Such people look ideal, but in the end they become like tax collectors.
- When we want to follow Jesus, we must first decide to commit our future security problem to God's hand by believing his promise. **Matthew 6:33 says, "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."**

### **In order to follow Jesus, we must give first priority to Jesus.**

Look at verse 59. "He said to another man, 'Follow me.' But the man replied, 'Lord, first let me go and bury my father.'" He wanted to finish his family responsibilities first, and then obey Jesus' calling.

- We are not even sure that his father was then dead. But this man seems to have been one of Confucius' disciples who had learned that a funeral service was gravely important.
- His priority was on his family affairs. Suppose by the time he buried his father, he would have many children to send to college and support until they could graduate with honors.
- For him, there were so many important things in the world which demanded first priority.

### **If we want to follow Jesus, we must give first priority to God.**

• In order to follow Jesus we must make a decision of faith. Look at verse 61. "Still another said, 'I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say good-bye to my family.'"

He was a person who wanted to follow Jesus and Nick at the same time. His problem was that he had never made a decision of faith. In order to follow Jesus we must make a decision of faith and renew it every day.

Look at verse 62. "Jesus replied, 'No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.'"

**Here, Jesus does not acquiesce to our indecisiveness. The privilege and seriousness of following Christ are of such tremendous magnitude that there is no room for indecisive people.**

May God help us accept the humbleness of Jesus and be a truly great man in the kingdom of God.