

Purpose of this Group

- What is the purpose of this group?
 - That we become devoted followers of Christ

Review

- Why can we believe that Jesus is who He says He is?

Because of the resurrection!! Balance a fork and a spoon on a glass with a toothpick. The perfect balance point for the Christian faith is the resurrection!

Tonight we are transitioning into the overall theme we will pursuing together, which is illustrated beautifully in these clips from The Chosen. It is what Jesus asks of his followers.



Follow Me! Peter first and then Matthew as depicted in The Chosen

Jesus calls us to believe and follow!! The NT word for believe in the Greek does not mean to acknowledge. It means to commit your trust, place your confidence in, surrender to. It is not just saying a prayer, it is following Jesus!

James 2:19-20 You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe – and shudder!... Faith apart from works is useless!

These verses point out there is a big difference between an acknowledgement and a saving faith.

Follow

- How did people follow Jesus when He was on this earth?
- How do we follow Jesus today?

When Jesus was on this earth, following Him meant you literally left your life and followed Jesus from town to town.

How do we follow Jesus today when there is no physical Jesus to follow?

Follow

- The Bible
- Prayer
- Community

HOLY SPIRIT

Even though Jesus is not here physically with us, He did leave us the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit works through the Bible, prayer, and community to guide and direct us.

Let's look at each one of these in the context of being a follower of Jesus

Follow

- The Bible

- 2 Timothy 3:16 “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness.”

Inspired – The words themselves come from God, not just the concepts or the ideas. It has the supernatural ability to change us and make us complete. They are inerrant and authoritative. These are the actual Words of God!! The Bible is the primary way that God has chosen to reveal truth to us. And it is infallible, without error! All Scripture!!

The reality is that most of us read the Bible like we are eating lemonade. We read a verse here and verse there and we spend most of our time in the New Testament. We don't understand context and we miss out on much of what God wants to teach us. This is a powerful analogy of how we need to read the Bible. Chapters (A.D 1227) and verses (1448 OT 1555 NT) were not part of the original books of the Bible and are not inspired. A good follower obeys, and the Bible is where we find out what to obey.

Follow

- Prayer

- Let the things that bring you joy bring me joy. Let the things that break your heart break my heart. Give me the courage to respond accordingly.

The primary purpose of prayer is to align our will with God's will. It is about surrendering our will to His will. Live a "Thy will be done" life. This is so necessary in order to be able to follow.

Follow

- Community

God knows we need others to encourage us, help us, hold us accountable, motivate us, keep us focused. We must be around like minded people who want to be devoted followers of Christ. That is what this group is all about.

It is similar to having the determination and focus of a high level athlete in training. We need others to push us, help us, correct us, motivate us, challenge us, and encourage us.

Follow

- Holy Spirit

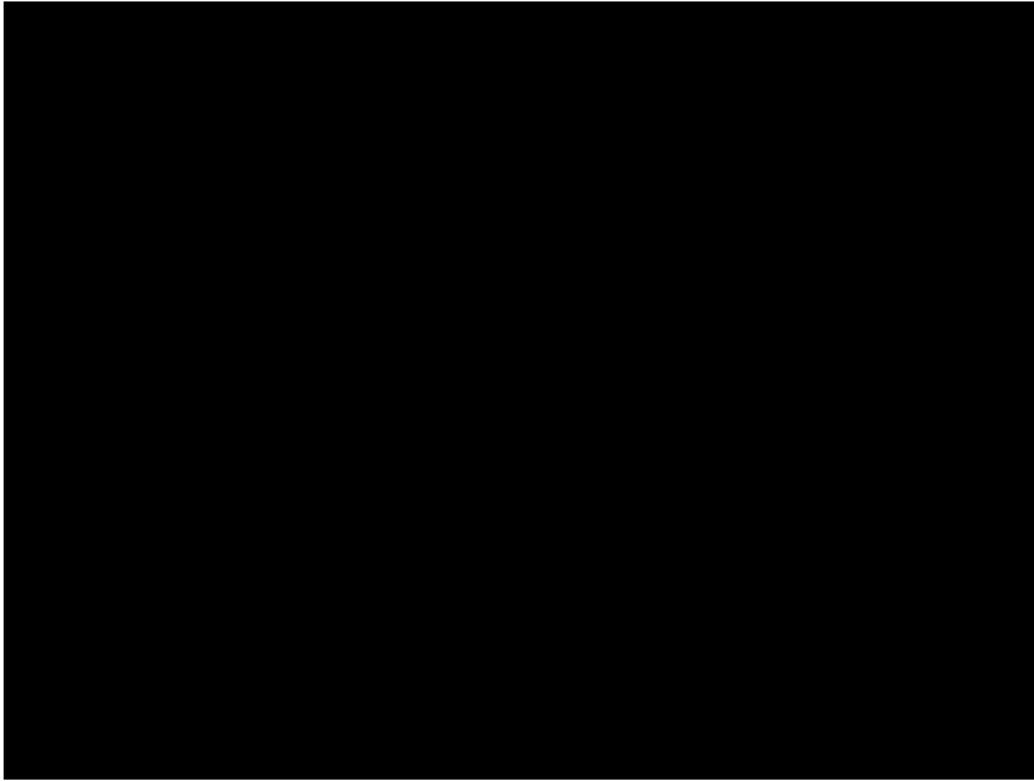
- John 16:7 “Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you”

Can you imagine how confused the disciples were when they heard this? But, it is true. The Holy Spirit is everywhere. The physical Jesus that was on this earth was not everywhere.

As we sum up our lesson, think for a moment about Proverbs 3:5-6 Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make your paths straight.

In order to follow Jesus, we must not lean on our own understanding. We must acknowledge God in all of our ways by studying and knowing Scripture, by praying, by not forsaking community with like-minded believers. All of these should make us sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit

Let's end by watching a clip from Apollo 13 that emphasizes our need for guidance in life.



This is a true story. You may need to explain how the algae was able to produce the light to guide the plane to the aircraft carrier.

We all need guidance. The question is where are you going to get your guidance from? God is the only One who is worthy to guide us and He will guide us through the Bible, through prayer and through community all with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Those that do the best job of following Jesus today are those who know and study the Bible, those who consistently surrender their will to God through prayer, those that have a vibrant community of fellow believers around them, and those who are sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit.