

Follow Me!

“As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen.¹⁷ “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will make you fishers of men.”¹⁸ At once they left their nets and followed him.” (Mark 1:16-18)

Follow me! That is the word that Jesus used to call Simon Peter. And that came true; Simon Peter followed Jesus at once, he left the net and move on following Christ. For three and half years Peter accompanied Christ, he lived with the Lord Jesus Christ, and he learned from Him, and he witnessed Christ doing lots of miracles, healing the sick, driving out demons, and raising people from the dead.

That three and half years was during the time that Christ was on earth, God appeared on flesh. For Christ came from heaven, God the Father sent Him. He came to save mankind from sin and death. Christ at the end of three and half years He was handed over to suffer and die on the hands of wicked people. Christ crucified and died on the cross, He was buried, and rose from the dead on the third day to give eternal life to those who believe in Him and follow His steps in their lives.

That is what had happened to Christ, and Peter had witnessed all these events, and somehow he was discouraged, by losing Christ, being with Him in flesh. That physical absence of Christ from the life of Simon caused some sort of doubt and discouragement and wavering of the faith. It caused him emotional trauma and drove him away from his call and from what Christ asked him to do and follow.

“Afterward Jesus appeared again to his disciples, by the Sea of Tiberias. It happened this way: Simon Peter, Thomas (called 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. The other disciples followed in the boat, towing the net full of fish, for they were not far from shore, about a hundred yards. When they landed, they saw a fire of burning coals there with fish on it, and some bread. Jesus said to them, “Bring some of the fish you have just caught.” Simon Peter climbed aboard and dragged the net ashore. It was full of large fish, 153, but even with so many the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, “Come and have breakfast.” None of the disciples dared ask him, “Who are you?” They knew it was the Lord. Jesus came, took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish.” (John 21:1-13) What we find here is this: Peter in his despair he went back to his previous job and profession. It was hard for him to accept the new set up, so he was backslidden and left his call. That event that had happened to Simon it might happen to you. Certain set up or situation or change in environment that Christ put you in you may not accept it, but that is God's will and you need to adopt for that. The Holy Spirit now is there to comfort you and to support you in your life and service to the Lord. It did not benefit Peter, and it was a futile attempt to go back to the old life and to the old style of living without genuine faith and full trust in the Lord.

For whole night Peter struggled but there was no catch of fish. There was no blessing in Peter's attempt to go back to the old life. And there will be no fruit for you if you discontinue walking with God, away from Christ and going back to the old style of living.

Christ was the one who told Peter and the one who told you, *“Follow me.”* He wants you back where He called you, anointed you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will last forever. He had called you as His friend and He entrusted you with a responsibility, a ministry and service to the saints. Gently the Lord is calling you back to lead and to care for His sheep. As He asked Simon Peter He is calling you back through His Word and the Holy Spirit. He is asking you, *“Do you truly love me more than these?”* And you will answer, *“Yes, you know that I love you.”* And please, don't be hurt if the Lord repeatedly asking you that. Are you taking care of His sheep? Are you feeding His lambs and His sheep? This is what it accounts to the Lord and that is what He wants you to do and the way to love Him.

Jesus said to Peter, *“I tell you the truth, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.” (John 21:18)* In your old life you go and come where you wanted to go and come. But after God had called you, you will go to certain places that you don't like to go. And that what had happened to Peter for we know he was crucified, *“Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, “Follow me!” (John 21:19)*

Following Christ and serving Him and caring for His sheep and ministry is not an easy thing. In addition not all the time it is an enjoyment. But there is a cost; there will be pain and suffering but you don't need to be discouraged, get upset and refuse to continue to follow Christ and serve Him and His people. He is saying to you right now, *“Follow me.”*

As we persevere to follow Christ, He will help us and sustain us. He will comfort us and heal our wounds and sooth our pain and heartaches. That should be clear to you: No ministry without pain. But as we respond to God's call there will be suffering as well as there will be joy comfort and reward.

In the same occasion after what the Lord Jesus Christ spoke, *“Peter turned and saw that the disciple whom Jesus loved was following them. (This was the one who had leaned back against Jesus at the supper and had said, “Lord, who is going to betray you?”) ²¹When Peter saw him, he asked, “Lord, what about him?” (John 21:20-21)* The same as Peter we, who follow Christ, may turn back to other people around us who are following Christ and compare ourselves with them and we may ask the Lord, what about those people as Simon Peter asked the Lord about the beloved disciple. That is not the calling that God had called you to fulfill and that is not your business; these things related to the Lord and not for you or me, even to ask Him. Christ answered Peter to His question, *“If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me.” (John 21:22)* Truly, “What is that to you, and what is that to me, we need to follow the Lord and not the people. We need to fix our eyes on Jesus as we agree to pray.

My prayer: *Father God I come before you on the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sin and rose from the dead to give me eternal life. Lord I repent from all my sins and disobedient to you. I commit myself to follow you and walk on your ways and taking the responsibility and bearing the pain of the ministry of feeding and caring for the sheep. Lord I commit myself not to look to others but I look unto you only and obey you and follow what you wants me to do, this all I ask and pray in Jesus name, Amen.*