

## Following Jesus (Part 2)

<sup>15</sup> When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?” “Yes, Lord,” he said, “you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Feed my lambs.”<sup>16</sup> Again Jesus said, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” He answered, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Take care of my sheep.”<sup>17</sup> The third time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, “Do you love me?” He said, “Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Feed my sheep.” (John 21:15-19)

To follow Jesus is to obey His word and His commands to you. To each and every one of us Jesus is giving certain instructions so that our life will be fruitful and our ministry will be effective and productive. The Lord already gave Peter a responsibility to be a fisher of men to win souls for God. But Peter went back to his old life and style of living forgetting what the Lord had instructed him to do. Therefore once again the Lord went back to Peter and challenged him if he truly love Him, and Peter confirmed to the Lord that he truly love Him, and Jesus answer to him that if he truly love the Lord he need to show that by his care to His sheep as the Lord told him, “Feed my lambs, Take care of my sheep, Feed my sheep.”

The Lord’s word meaning for Peter that he need to be a mature person by being responsible by having a caring attitude toward others. The same is for you, if you really love the Lord then you show that by your willingness to do the work and the task that he is asking you to do. The bible tells us the following: <sup>18</sup> Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.” (1John 3:18) Our love toward the Lord should be manifested in form of action and deed in accordance to what God had ordained to us to do, <sup>10</sup> For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” (Ephesians 2:10)

The Lord also told Peter the following: <sup>18</sup> Very truly I tell you, 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.”<sup>19</sup> Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, “Follow me!” (John 21:18-19) For Peter to be able to take care and feed the lamps and the sheep of Jesus he ought to be willing to crucify his own will, ambitions and plans and be willing to go even to the places that He is not willing to go. Otherwise he cannot do the task that the Lord had entrusted to Him. And then the Lord said to him “Follow me!” It means to be willing to suffer for Christ and offer your life willingly as a living sacrifice to Him. In the same way for you to serve God you need to be willing to suffer for God and willing to go where God had called you to go. Not according to your will and not according to your plan, desires and ambitions. To follow Christ it mean to be willing to put aside the old plans and dreams, “Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.” (Romans 12:1) Throw away the worldly style of living and take hold of what God had planned for you then you will truly enjoy life in Christ and His will for you: “Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.” (Romans 12:2)

<sup>20</sup> 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?”)<sup>21</sup> When Peter saw him, he asked, “Lord, what about him?”<sup>22</sup> Jesus answered, “If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me.” (John 21:20-22) Peter’s mind and thought was not focus on Jesus only but was divided toward others as well, and the Lord noticed that and discerned that such attitude is hindering Peter from going forward to serve Him. Therefore the Lord

rebuked Peter when He asked Him, “What is that to you?” And then told Peter, “You must follow me.” Focusing on other people will not only make you turned away from the Lord and lost your focus, but you will lose your affectivity and productivity. God had given you a task and a responsibility to do, this you need to do faithfully and wholeheartedly. Don’t compare yourself with others and don’t mind other people work and business. You follow Jesus by doing perfectly what Jesus had asked you to achieve.

Peter was really benefited from that rebuke of Jesus, and that was an effective way in calling Peter back and fully to get involve in serving God. In the same way God may be is rebuking you through this message because you had turned away from Him and had put your eyes on people. You will be more effective in service if you compare yourself with God’s word and follow the good example, “Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do.” (Philippians 3:17)

Peter did very well after that meeting with the Lord and did what was required of him. And the Lord was so faithful to help Peter and to save him from various troubles. <sup>1</sup> It was about this time that King Herod arrested some who belonged to the church, intending to persecute them. <sup>2</sup> He had James, the brother of John, put to death with the sword. <sup>3</sup> When he saw that this met with approval among the Jews, he proceeded to seize Peter also. This happened during the Festival of Unleavened Bread. <sup>4</sup> After arresting him, he put him in prison, handing him over to be guarded by four squads of four soldiers each. Herod intended to bring him out for public trial after the Passover. <sup>5</sup> So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him.” (Acts 12:1-5) The Lord worked out to deliver Peter from the above trouble in this way, <sup>6</sup> The night before Herod was to bring him to trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries stood guard at the entrance. <sup>7</sup> Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. “Quick, get up!” he said, and the chains fell off Peter’s wrists. <sup>8</sup> Then the angel said to him, “Put on your clothes and sandals.” And Peter did so. “Wrap your cloak around you and follow me,” the angel told him.” The angel said to Peter Jesus’ word, “Follow me,” (Acts 12:6-8) and truly <sup>9</sup> Peter followed him out of the prison, but he had no idea that what the angel was doing was really happening; he thought he was seeing a vision. <sup>10</sup> They passed the first and second guards and came to the iron gate leading to the city. It opened for them by itself, and they went through it. When they had walked the length of one street, suddenly the angel left him.” (Acts 12:9-10) As Peter followed the Lord he was delivered from the big problem that he was in and himself realized that, <sup>11</sup> Then Peter came to himself and said, “Now I know without a doubt that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from Herod’s clutches and from everything the Jewish people were hoping would happen.” (Acts 12:11) To follow Jesus will secure to you the future and give you deliverance from troubles and will be able to escape from the hands of wicked people.

My dear and beloved: “The name of the Lord is a fortified tower; the righteous run to it and are safe.” (Proverbs 18:10) As you obey the Lord and respond to His call, He is able to save you and deliver you from all kinds of trouble as you agree to obey Jesus and willing to pray. My prayer: Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins and rose again from the dead to give me eternal life. Lord I commit myself to focus my eyes on you and to serve you wholeheartedly. Lord I entrust to you all my enemies and those who are persecuting me. Lord you are able to deal with them and deliver me out from their hands. This is my prayer in Jesus name, Amen.