

Follow, Walk, and Abide

In my daily scripture reading today, I read the account in the book of John where Jesus initially called two of His disciples. They were actually seeking the Messiah and Jesus invited them not simply to follow him but to stay with Him. The account reads this way; ***Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!" The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, "What do you seek?" They said to Him, "Rabbi" (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), "where are You staying?" He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where He was staying, and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour).*** (John 1:35-39 NKJV)

And like the earlier followers of Jesus, I too have been drawn not only to follow Him, but to abide with Him. Personally I am grateful for this opportunity because recently my life has been slightly difficult to navigate. Being a Christian means more than making a decision, it means following through with a lifetime commitment. Listen to author Bob Utely's commentary on this passage of scripture;

The term disciple can mean (1) learner and/or (2) follower. This was an early name for believers in Jesus Christ as the promised Jewish Messiah. It is important to note that the NT calls for disciples, not mere decisions (cf. Matt. 13). Christianity is an initial decision (repentance and faith) followed by an ongoing decision of obedience and perseverance. Christianity is not a fire insurance policy or a ticket to heaven, but a daily servant/friend relationship with Jesus.¹

While some might consider this commitment an infringement on their personal freedom I am truly blessed to have Jesus as an ever present guide through the difficulties of life. Were Jesus to speak to me personally at the beginning of this day He might put it this way: "WHEN THINGS SEEM to be going all wrong, stop and affirm your trust in Me. Calmly bring these matters to Me, and leave them in My capable hands. Then, simply do the next thing. Stay in touch with Me through thankful, trusting prayers, resting in My sovereign control. Rejoice in Me— exult in the God of your salvation! As you trust in Me, I make your feet like the feet of a deer. I enable you to walk and make progress upon your high places of trouble, suffering, or responsibility."

(Young, Sarah (2012-10-09). Jesus Calling: Enjoy Peace in His Presence (p. 229). Thomas Nelson. Kindle Edition.)

¹ Utley, R. J. (1999). *The Beloved Disciple's Memoirs and Letters: The Gospel of John, I, II, and III John*. Study Guide Commentary Series (Vol. Volume 4, p. 19). Marshall, Texas: Bible Lessons International.

“It is God who arms me with strength, And makes my way perfect. He makes my feet like the feet of deer, And sets me on my high places. (Psalms 18:32-33 NKJV)

So as I walk through this day with its decisions and challenges I choose not to walk alone, but as the early disciples did, to walk with Jesus and abide in His presence. Since Jesus no longer has a physical body I can only accomplish this by walking in the Spirit.

“This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh” (Gal. 5:16).

As we walk in the Spirit, worship in the Spirit, and pray in the Spirit, we shall come to know, not the Spirit, but the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus explicitly said, **“He (the Comforter) shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you”** (John 16:14, 15)

“What is it to ‘walk in the Spirit’ (Gal. 5:16)? It is to walk in communion with the Father, in dependence upon the Spirit, having the Lord Jesus as my one object. What held the attention of Stephen, ‘full of faith and of the Holy Spirit’ (Acts 6:5)? Two things: the Word of God on earth, and the Christ of God in heaven (Acts 7:55).”

“To walk in the Spirit is not self-occupation, nor even occupation with the Spirit. Walking according to the Spirit is occupation with the Lord Jesus. When the believer looks to the Lord Jesus, depends upon Him, draws all he needs from Him—if the Lord Jesus is his all, then the believer walks in the Spirit.”²

Stanford, M. J. (2002). Complete Works of Miles J. Stanford. Galaxie Software.

Jim Freed

² Stanford, M. J. (2002). *Complete Works of Miles J. Stanford*. Galaxie Software.