

FOLLOW ME

Week of November 8

Following Jesus sounds good in theory, but it is hard in practice. To follow Christ goes against everything my flesh craves—to be first, to be served, to be noticed, to be acclaimed. I want to be a fully devoted follower of Christ, and yet following Christ with full devotion is impossible in my own strength. “And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do what is right, but I can’t” (Romans 7:18). It seems self always gets in the way of following Christ full-on, for the flesh is constantly crying out: be “fully devoted” to number one.

Of course we must tend to our personal needs. But Jesus calls us to something higher and greater than self-absorption. He will help us move beyond ourselves, and begin loving others if we ask Him. He said: “If any of you wants to be my follower, you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross daily, and follow me. If you try to hang on to your life you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it” (Luke 9:23-24). Following Jesus is hard. But it can be done if we’re willing to strip off the robe of entitlement and instead, grab a towel and wash basin.

Read Luke 22: 24-27 and John 13:1-7

This is not the first time the disciples argued over about who is the greatest (Luke 22:24). There is another occasion recorded in Luke 9:46 when Jesus brings a little child to His side. He declares: “Anyone who welcomes a little child like this on my behalf welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me also welcomes my Father who sent me. Whoever is the least among you is the greatest” (Luke 9:48).

1. Read Matthew 25:34-46, and study the words of Jesus in this passage along with Jesus’ words in Luke 9:48. Draw a comparison between the two passages (in particular the phrases: “the least among you” and “the least of these”). Recall a time you have been one of “the least of these.” Who selflessly served you?

Think of a time you served “the least” in the name of Christ. How have you found it to be both difficult and rewarding to serve “the least?” (please speak from your own personal experience)

As we selflessly love and serve “the least of these” we are in actuality loving and serving those considered “greatest” in heaven’s eyes. Children of all ages matter to God, and so children of all ages should matter to us. We influence so many people around us. It is no wonder Jesus warns us to be mindful of those watching us, and never lead astray those who are young or young-in-the-faith (see Mark 9:42), “For the Kingdom of God belongs to those who are like these children” (Mark 10:14b).

2. The Plain Truth states: “People do what people see and people become what people practice.” Look carefully at both parts of this statement. Why do people do what they see?

Why do people become what they have practiced—when and how has this rang true for you?

Servant leaders are motivated by love to serve others. They are secure in themselves and confident in their calling. Notice “Jesus knew that the Father had given Him authority over everything and that He had come from God and would return to God. So He got up from the table, took off His robe, wrapped a towel around His waist, and poured water into a basin. Then He began to wash the disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel He had around Him” (John 13:3-5).

3. God humbled Himself when He became man, when He left the glories of Heaven. He humbled Himself when He called disciples to learn from Him. He humbled Himself when He associated with sinners, and He humbled Himself when He washed dirty feet. In what ways are you “practicing” humility these days?

When we serve people we lead people. How are you serving those you are leading? Are they learning to emulate your example, your servanthood?

Servanthood gets rid of titles and positions and servanthood dies to self daily. There’s no way around it if we want to be a fully devoted follower of Christ. After washing the disciples’ feet, Jesus asked: “Do you understand what I was doing? You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and you are right, because that’s what I am. And since I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other’s feet. I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you” (John 13:12b-15). It’s hard to lay down our flesh and die to self on a daily basis. But if you truly want to follow Christ, why not ask the Lord to help you begin loving and serving others?

4. Write a simple prayer in the space below and give the Lord permission to do a new work in your heart. Confess your sin if you have had resistance toward serving. Ask Him to show you how you can begin practicing humility, perhaps one way this week (taking baby steps). Ask Him to open your eyes to the joys and rewards of serving precious souls in His name.

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Text: John 13:1-7

The Plain Truth:

People _____ what people _____ and
people _____ what they _____.

1. Servant Leaders are motivated by _____ to serve others.
2. Servant leaders possess a _____ that allows them to serve others.
3. Servant leaders possess a _____ that allows them to be served.
4. Servant leaders teach servanthood by their _____.

Jesus Says...

If I want to...

_____ my life

Be _____ up

Be _____

Be _____

I must...

_____ my life

Be _____

Be _____

Be _____

One Year Bible Reading

Nov. 8: Ezekiel 18:1-19:14, Hebrews 9:1-10, Psalm 106:32-48, Proverbs 27:10
Nov. 9: Ezekiel 20:1-49, Hebrews 9:11-28, Psalm 107:1-43, Proverbs 27:11
Nov. 10: Ezekiel 21:1-22:31, Hebrews 10:1-17, Psalm 108:1-13, Proverbs 27:12
Nov. 11: Ezekiel 23:1-49, Hebrews 10:18-39, Psalm 109:1-31, Proverbs 27:13
Nov. 12: Ezekiel 24:1-26:21, Hebrews 11:1-16, Psalm 110:1-7, Proverbs 27:14
Nov. 13: Ezekiel 27:1-28:26, Hebrews 11:17-31, Psalm 111:1-10, Prov. 27:15-16
Nov. 14: Ezekiel 29:1-30:26, Hebrews 11:32-12:13, Psalm 112:1-10, Prov. 27:17

November 7 & 8, 2015