

# SERMON TRANSCRIPT

DATE

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SPEAKER

Brian Frost

SERIES

Follow Me

PART

1

TITLE

I Will Lead You To Turn

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 4:17-22



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Well, it's great to see you, Providence. I hope that you have had a great week, that the Lord has been real, and He's been consequential in your life that you've seen and felt just the weightiness of who He is and His love for you this week, that you've seen some very practical ways that He has cared for you, how He has taught you, how He loves you. I hope you've had a great week. And if you're new with us, we are thrilled that you are here as well. It's always our honor for you to join us. And so, thank you so much. For our family of faith, maybe here in the mountains or the beach this weekend, welcome as well. We're glad that you have joined us on livestream. It's a great weekend. It's a great weekend because the Lord is so kind to you and to me.

You know, for many of us in the room here, you grew up in church like I did. You were around it a lot, you were in it a lot. Maybe you're a kid and you're like, "I'm right here right now. This is exactly what you're saying, is I'm actually growing up in it right now." It's interesting that my perspective as a child was that it felt like that what we were doing in terms of church, and walking with Jesus, and what faith ... it felt strangely like a game. I don't know if you've ever felt this, perhaps you had, but early on, that's what it felt like to me, is that God has invented this game, that there was certain rules and He wrote the rules down in a book, and we're supposed to keep the rules and know the rules in order to play the game really well.

It's interesting, as a child I looked, and there were some people that chose to play the game, and there were others that chose to ignore the game was even played at all, and some people would drive to church, and some people wouldn't, some people said Jesus Christ is Lord, and some people said that he is not. But what was interesting is that those that did choose to play it, I noticed that they had a tendency to want to keep score, how often I brought the rule book too church, and how often I read it throughout the week, and sometimes I'd even get stars in various things just to reward and compensate me for playing the game so well. It led me to believe that God kept score, that somehow up in heaven that He was looking, and like the judge for various contest, He was holding up numbers after each attempt, after every quiet time, after every prayer, after every act of service, after every day, after every conversation with my parents, and He'd hold up a number, and you'd see, you know ... I was either doing well or not, but He was scorekeeping. He had to be scorekeeping if all of these people that I knew were scorekeeping.

Every church that I grew up in, it seemed to have their own all-stars. They normally got a microphone and they taught everybody how to play the game really well. In fact, they actually taught it so well that the church gave them an office where they could meet with people and talk with people about how to play the game, where they could put their books, and their notes, and these sorts of things. And it's interesting as I bounced around in my own heart between sincerity and skepticism, and those are the words that I would use, I saw and recognized what I believe was valid truth, that it wasn't an empty faith, that they were truth claims, they were compelling, that explain some of the most absolutely important things that my mind was wanting answers to, things like origin, and purpose, and destiny, and why is there evil, and why is there injustice, and is there God and who is He.

I also saw life change where folks genuinely, their entire life, what they talked about, what they did, how they treated people changed, and I saw just genuine love. But I also saw what a lot of us see frequently, and that is the inconsistency even in our own life, and it led me to grow skeptical. In fact, while I was bouncing between sincerity and skepticism thinking that this is some sort of game, I don't quite get it, I was young, I was trying to understand it, it always confused me how some people who once claimed to absolutely love playing on the field, quit and walked off the field for good. I never saw them anymore. How could something, two months ago, that you stood up and you said, this is the most important thing in my life, it's so consequential and suddenly, now they're not? And I think, man, it's like, I love baseball and now I don't love baseball, I was a player and now I retired for good and I don't to even come to baseball games anymore.

This is what it felt like to young mind. I didn't understand what was taking place in front of me, and some of you may be able to empathize. Some of you are in church every single week, and some of you, maybe you gave come back, maybe you left the field 10 years ago, you came back for one last visit to say, let me just make sure this thing really is nothing. And what I want to ask is this, instead of looking at us and instead of listening to me, I want to ask you to do me an enormous favor and yourself a favor, and that is to go home, you may even have off tomorrow so you can do it in two days and read one of the Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, it's in the Bible. If you don't have a Bible, there's a Bible in the chair near you. Take that home as a gift.

Matthew, Mark, Luke or John, read any one of them. What you're going to find here is this, is that this is about a relationship and not a game. And to the extent that we understand that it's a relationship, it will not feel like a game. And to the extent that we do not have a relationship, it will feel everything like a game. It's about a relationship with a person. And one of the phrases that Jesus used consistently when he was talking to real people and interacting with their lives, when he would invite them to be near him to have a relationship with him, the terms that would be used, the two words that were frequently used were the words "follow me". There cannot be a more personal invitation to be, not impress me, but follow me. It looks like this, right? To where for someone to follow someone, someone has to be already be in front. Someone has to say, "I'm walking down this pathway. And I'm going to turn around, I'm going to extend my hand, I'm going to say, walk with me, follow me." What that means is I'm already there. And so within the two little words, follow me, what you find is, there's a pathway, and there's a person who's already walking the path, and is inviting us to be with him.

So what we're going to do over the next two months, is we're going to look at eight different encounters. They're all very, very different. Some of them are very encouraging, and some of them are very convicting. It's stunning what Jesus says in the context when he's inviting people to follow him. And what we want to look at is this, is for those of us in the room who've never trusted Jesus Christ is, what does it mean when Christians say, hey, follow Jesus? What do they mean when they say that? And then for every single one of us who are following Jesus, what I hope is that this series is going to clarify in our own hearts exactly what it is, what does he mean when he says, follow me? What does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus Christ?

And so before we jump in, let me pray for us. Father in heaven, we need your help. And so would you move in each of our lives. I pray for those in the room right now who are very skeptical and who believe with all of their heart that this is some sort of game. I pray, Father, that you would help them, and the only way I know is for you to speak to their heart. Would you help them to hear your words even as maybe through my words or someone else's words? Would you captivate their attention within Matthew and Luke this morning. And I pray for each one of us who claim to be followers of Jesus Christ, would you use these passages over these next two months to clarify, to cleanse, to cleanse our own life in the areas to where clearly we're not following you in ways that you say is a part of that relationship. And so would you please, God, draw near to us so that we can draw near to you. Would you speak through weakness and glorify your son, Jesus. I pray in Christ's name, amen.

So if you have a Bible, or if you don't, there's one in the chair, if you want to turn with me to Matthew chapter four. If you're really good at multitasking, you're nimble with your fingers, you can also look at Luke Chapter five, because we're going to be there in just a moment as well. Two different accounts, or two different men, Matthew and Luke, but I believe that they're actually writing about one account, one episode in the lives of real people where Jesus called them to follow. And Matthew Chapter four, it's interesting, he begins in verse 12 and he says that at this point in time in Jesus' life and ministry, he left his hometown, Nazareth, and it says that he went to Galilee. This was a region. There was a big lake, so big they called it a sea, a sea of Galilee there, and he did a lot of ministry in that area. And he tells us exactly why.

Look what it says in verse 13, "And leaving Nazareth where he went and lived up in Capernaum, by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, so that," that's a purpose statement. This is why Jesus did this, "so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled. The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles, the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light. And for those dwelling in the region and the shadow of death, on them, a light has dawned. Now, from that time, Jesus began to preach, saying, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.' And while walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who was called Peter, and Andrew, his brother casting a net into the sea for they were fishermen. And he said to them, 'Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.' Immediately, they left their nets and followed him. And going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James, the son of Zebedee, and John, his brother. In the boat was Zebedee, their father, mending their nets, and he called them. Immediately, they left a boat and their father and followed him."

Now, when I was a kid, this was a great example of a passage that was absolutely interesting, but it was also very confusing to me. And so if this is confusing to you, and you think there must be more context to this story for this to actually take place, I just wish I knew more about it, then you are very similar to how I heard it when I was a kid. There's no doubt that there's this compelling nature to Jesus that drew me in to say, man, a man can walk up to people who are on the job and say, follow me, and there is something in this man that is so compelling, and so real, and so consequential that they would literally leave their job and their dad just to follow him. And I think, man, that is some kind of person. And then I think, I want to be that kind of person.

I remember as a kid, I was thinking, all right, so what does this mean? So I have to leave something and I have to do it immediately, but should I finish middle school or not? Is it now or is it later? And am I supposed to just leave my parents? Am I supposed to walk, or like ... How do we apply this kind of passage to our life? And is there more? I mean, doesn't it seem like there needs to be more? Let me ask you, this is, say, your job, right? A man comes up and says, "Leave it all and follow me," would you get up and leave and quit your job, [inaudible 00:12:52], all right, that's it? See, to me, I'm like, okay, maybe there's more. There must be more, otherwise, Jesus is just so magnetic to see when he was on the earth was to say, "I just have to follow, I just have to go." It's interesting though that God gave us four different gospels Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. And each of the Gospels, they give a different lens too many of these stories. And oftentimes, the lens they give is because they saw it different, and other times, it's because they're writing for a different purpose.

So let's talk about each of these, right? First of all, the lens is different. If I ask you, as a group right now, to take out a pen and paper and just write down and describe what you now see with your eyeballs, you would do so. And if we had your account and I said, "Okay, let me take that account," and I read it, you would probably all go, okay, I see what this person saw. Now, you may see it different because you have a different lens from over here than they do over here, but the fact is, is that you could understand where they were coming from because there was some continuity from your perspective and theirs. Well, the same thing is happening, different people were looking at the exact same thing, but they were all looking at a different angle, different things impressed upon their own hearts, and they wrote those specific things, but there was also a different purpose in writing.

You see, Matthew was a Jewish man and he was writing Jews, and his intent, the stated intent was to help the Jewish people see that all of the Old Testament prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus. And so he keeps saying, "As it was said, as it was written," just like he did in our text where he quotes Isaiah Chapter nine verses one and two. He's saying, as it was said, as it was written, right? But Luke had a different intent. Luke was a doctor, and Luke was writing Gentile, so he didn't have this history of all their forefathers, all these centuries, or what it was like to walk with God. And so there was a little bit more clarity that was added. But it's interesting that Luke, he gave his version of the same story of when he called Peter and Andrew, James and John. And what we find in Luke Chapter five is, it's a very different account. In fact, he doesn't even include Andrew, poor Andrew, he doesn't amaze us out, right? You're just out. We don't care about you, we care about these three. And so I'm going to talk about these three.

And so some people are looking at this and saying this isn't true, because this says there's four, this says they're three. Well, he didn't include Andrew. Some of the details in the story we're going to read, it's vastly different. And so some people are actually concluding, no, these are two different stories, and the fact is, is they may be. Here's my point, okay? It may be that what I'm about to read to you in Luke five where he calls and tells Peter, James and John to leave everything and follow him, it may be the exact same story from a different lens, or what we do know is it was so close in time, maybe the day before, there were two different stories back to back that Matthew didn't include one of them, that one surely influenced the other.

It gives a little more clarity what I'm trying to say to these people who just say, "Yeah, I think I will. Let me just leave everything, including my dad, and I'm just going to go follow you."

So let's read what he says in Luke five. He says, "On one ..." one time, one occasion, "while the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the Word of God, he was standing by the lake." This is the same lake, the Sea of Galilee, "And he saw two boats by the lake, but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, he asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down [inaudible 00:16:44] and he taught the people from the boat. And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, 'Put out into the deep, and let down your nets for a catch.' And Simon answered, 'Master, we toiled all night and took nothing, but at your word, I will let down the nets.' When they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish and their nets were breaking. And they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boat so that they began to sink.

But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, 'Depart from me, for I'm a sinful man, O Lord.' For he and all who were with and were astonished at the catch a fish that they had taken. And so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, 'Do not be afraid. From now on, you will be catching men.' And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him."

Now, this is pretty amazing. Jesus, he's there at sea of Galilee, and it says that he's teaching the people. And he comes upon these fishermen who had been shut out all night. They're exhausted, they're discouraged, they have nothing to sell at market because they didn't catch a single thing. And Jesus gets in Peter's boat. Now, one thing about Jesus you have to understand is he has this enormous comfort level to violate people's personal space, okay? Enormous. He just convinced that he owns it all because he does, okay? He's the creator, he has created rights, and so he can come in and go, "You know what, I want to get in your life. Period. I'm here." He doesn't ask. All of a sudden, he stands at the door, knocking, "Oh, sure, wish you'd let me in." No, this is not the authoritative Jesus that you find within scripture, it's not.

He comes to a man's boat and he gets in it, and he knows whose boat it is. He says, "Peter, I need a favor. There's so many people around here. I'm trying to teach them, there's no space. I want to go out into the water, and they can all be on the edge and I'll speak to them from there." Peter was like ... Man, he's tired fishermen, he's been up all night, caught nothing. He said, "All right, whatever." So they back up. He finishes his sermon, so Peter's probably just sitting in the boat, he's listening, he's like, okay, I get it. I get it, all right. It sounds good. And suddenly, he looks at him, he goes, "Peter, let's go fishing. Take the net and throw it out."

Now, there's two reasons why Peter probably had a hard time with this. One is, he just finished cleaning it. This was a long process. You take the net out, you take all the seaweed, and all the cans, and all the bottles, and all the trash that was thrown in, you have to take it all out. You clean it, you dry it, you'd fold it to be ready for the next night. It was already, and now, all of a sudden, Jesus says, "Let's get it wet again so that you can do that all over again." It was also now the daytime. He was a professional fisherman and he knew that on this lake, you fish at night. And the reason is because when the sun warms up the top, the fish go down. He's net fishing, so he's fishing on the top. And so all these fish, and like, Jesus, the fish are way down there now. We're professional fishermen, you don't understand that. We know we're doing here, but if you say so.

Then suddenly, Jesus orchestrates this miracle and he says, "All right, fish, everybody in the net," right? So many fish that Peter, and I believe Andrew, looks over their buddies, James, John, and he says, "You guys got to help us," fills up both boats to where it starts to sink. And suddenly, Peter here remember somebody's in his boats, it's Jesus. Without saying a word to Peter, Peter looks right at him and he goes, "I need you to leave because I'm not a good person." And Jesus says to him, "I'm not going to go anywhere, I'm asking you to follow me. Let's do this together."

What we're going to look over the next several weeks is this different accounts of what it means to follow him. But what I want to do, is in these two texts, I want to show you four different things that you're going to see in every other texts we're going to look at. It's four categories. What does it actually mean to follow Jesus? How does it begin? What does it include? What are we agreeing to when we're saying, I'm going to follow this man named Jesus? It was the same then as it is today. The first thing is this, is that following Jesus, it begins with listening to him. It must start this way because to follow someone means he's ahead of us, he's in front of us, he's already walking down the path, and he turns around, and now he must speak to us for us to follow.

This is where the text it begins. You notice that Matthew's texts it begins and he says, "Look, Jesus was living in Nazareth." He went to Galilee. Why? Because there were people there who were living in absolute darkness of all the fundamental questions of life, all the realities. They had no answers to things they wanted to know the most, where did I come from? Who is God? The problem of evil, why is there injustice in the world? Why is there a shared concept in all of us of things like beauty, and love, and justice? Where did those things come from? How do I do marriage and family? How do I raise my kids? What are the reasons for hope after my mom or dad just died? These are the questions that we all want answers to. And it says that the people in Galilee they were living in darkness.

And so Jesus left Nazareth and he went to Galilee because he was the light. And he says he did this because Isaiah, who lived 800 years before this, said he would. Isaiah nine, verses one and two, he says, "The light is going to come. He's going to leave Nazareth, he's going to go to Galilee, and he's going to give light to people who are living in darkness." And it's interesting, there's a lot of people who were like, "Well, what was that light, exactly?" Well, four verses later, he actually writes, this is the Prophet, 800 years before, he goes, "For unto us a child is born, and unto us a son is given."

And so what we know is that this light is actually a person, it's going to be a person who's born. And then he starts giving his names, he's going to be called, "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." So this is what he's doing. He's saying there are people who are living in darkness. They are not following God because they can't, it has to start with God. And so God's going to send, He's gonna send a light, who's actually a person. He's not just any person because his name is God. It's God.

And so this light shows up in Galilee, he starts teaching and these fishermen began to hear. They begin to hear lucid explanations about their origin, and purpose, and destiny, the problem of evil, the importance of relationships, how to treat people, and they become so convinced. You see, it must happen this way. We have to hear before we can follow. Romans 10:17, what did he say? He says, so faith comes from hearing and hearing through the word of Christ. You know, this happens in every one of our lives. This is so important. Some of you here right now, you feel like, you know what? I feel far away, I need to do something. Listen, if you feel far away, there's not something you must do, there's someone you must draw near. It's a relationship, or it's nothing. This is not a game, this is not about fundamentals. This is about a person, this is about coming to a person. This is why Isaiah play God, played through Isaiah, and he says, "If you return, return to me, not the system, not the religion, not the activity, to me, the person, God."

Some of you feel like it's a game because you don't have a relationship. It will never not feel like a game if you don't know the person who's saying, "Follow me." And following always begins with Him speaking and us listening to what He's saying. This is exactly what took place in my life. I grew up in the church. And one of the reasons I grew up in the church was because my dad was a pastor. And I saw in him and my mom, two people who were absolutely sincere and who did very little scorekeeping. I say frequently, I have no excuses in life, God blessed me with two amazing parents. But I was able to see the underbelly of the church, and it was not always pretty, just as it's not always pretty today. You say, what's the underbelly of the church? Well, think about you, multiply you times everybody here. All of our junk, it's all there right? It's a hospital, not a museum. Did you hear that? This is a hospital, we're all here to be fixed, not a museum, so people [inaudible 00:26:11] outside go, "Let me see what one really looks like in its perfected form." You'll find that here, you'll find that here, Jesus.

I knew all about the gospel, but I didn't know Christ. When I was 16 years old, I was absolutely devastated with just a lack of hope. And my lack of hope actually multiplied because I was successful for a 16 year old. In terms of the things that I put my hands to, whether it's sports, or school, or friendships, or popularity, you would have said, "Okay, his life is pretty decent," and yet I would go home empty. And I remember one night, I was 16 years old, it was in April, and I pulled up my Bible and I said, "God, if this is true, I have to have it." And I just began reading, and I said, "This is what you say." And for whatever reason, I don't know why that night it was so different, but I felt like Christ Himself was in the room through the Bible, and he was just speaking to me saying, "I'm real, would you follow me?" And suddenly, at that very moment, I trusted Christ and it ceased to be a game and it became a relationship.



Three years later, it was an interesting thing, many of you heard this story, I grew up with a speech impediment that lasted all the way into college. When I was in college, I felt like the Lord called me to go on a mission trip to do something hard, and I was just like, "How am I going to do this?" It was six weeks, Zimbabwe. Because my dad was a pastor, I was selected because he's a Frost, he has to be decent, right? And so it was just paper, let's pick him, right? So I got selected to go. The very first team meeting, David Myers, the team leader, he says, "All the men here, we're going to be there six weeks, all the men here have to preach at least one time." And I said, "Well, I'm not going." And it wasn't out of anger, it was out of sympathy towards people who, if this is the only shot they get to hear the gospel, there is someone else who can do this and should do this. This is clearly not what God is calling me to do, but I loved the Bible and that was the only thing I had on my hand.

So I just began to read where I left off that morning, which was Exodus one, and it doesn't take any time to get the exodus three where there's another man named Moses. And God says to Moses, "I got a test for you. I want you to go and do this." This is going to require talking, I don't talk. I have a speech impediment, I have a problem, I can't do this. And I remember, I was a three year old believer, okay? I was saved in 16, now I'm 19. I remember sitting in that room, it was a glass room, holding that Bible and thinking, "Is this how this works? Like, the story right here in the Bible, am I supposed to do what? Is this how the Christian life works, where I read something in the Bible? Because I've read Noah a bunch of times, but I've never been compelled to build an ark. So is this how this works? Can I take the promise? Like when I read the Bible and God says, "Moses, who is it that made your mouth? Was it not I, the Lord? Now, go and speak, and I'll show you what to say and I will help you say it."

I remember thinking, is this a test of faith? Is this like Jesus saying, "Peter, I want to get in your boat." So I said, "No, I can't be, I'm not going, right? So I keep reading. [inaudible 00:29:28]. You know what, Moses? He goes, "No, this isn't your will. And it says that the anger of the Lord burned against Moses. And I thought, all right, I'll go, I'll go if that's what it takes, you know. Ultimately, this is on you if it's terrible. You could have picked someone else. I'm just ... So I get there, and you've heard this story many times, but it's still transformational to me. It was a Saturday and I was keenly aware the next day was Sunday, but I was terrified, so I was hiding in the bags just like Saul. And that missionary, of all those 16 people, who were all standing around, and he looks at me and he goes, "Hey, you back in the bags, what's your name?" Brian. "I want you to preach tomorrow." Of course, you do. Of course, you do.

And so that night, I went back to that same text and I said, "God, I'm here because I chose to follow you because I heard you say something. I don't know how you're going to do it, but I need your help." And for the first time that I can remember in a long, long time, I stood up on that morning and words just started flying out of my mouth. And you know that pattern has happened consistently, whether it's in marriage, or decisions, or relationships where you come ... and this is. it's not a game, it's relationships where there is the man who's spoken to us and he says to us, "Go and make disciples."

And we have to make a decision, am I going to follow what I just heard or not? And the level to which we hear what he is saying, and then walk in response to what he is saying, will this whole thing feel real to your heart? Let me tell you something. Every Sunday afternoon, I drive home, I'm convinced another miracle just took place, and I pray and it becomes very real that this is a relationship. Is this a game to you? Do you hear what he's saying to you?

Well, the second thing we see here is it begins with listening, and then it requires turning from sin. This following Jesus requires turning from sin. You see, when Jesus died and rose again, he says, "This is the requirement. I need you to believe on my accomplishments for you. John 3:16, here's what it says, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes," that's our part, that's what we do, whoever believes. But part of belief, we find here, is repentance. And the word repentance is a big word, it simply means turn. It means we're going in this direction and we turn, we go in a different direction. And the reason this is attached to belief so closely is because we cannot turn to Jesus and sin at the same time as if they had the same home. It's like this road, you're driving down, to follow Jesus is to leave sin. That's just how he does it. That's how it is.

You cannot stay in known rebellion and follow Jesus today at the same time, you can't do it. And this is why Jesus' first sermon was, repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. What are we to repent of? Well, when we began at conversion, the only one sin that we all have in common at that moment it has to be repented of, is our belief that we can save ourselves. And we have to say, "God, I can't save, your son can. I believe in him." But then that begins a relationship with God through Jesus Christ, who's the light of the world, he's constantly going into dark places in our heart, all the closets, our tongue, our money, our relationships, our thoughts, every part of our life he goes, "Let's add a little light to this closet." And every time he reveals something that's out of step with who he is, or what he said in his word, he says, "I want you to turn. This is not a game where I'm going to keep score. No, I'm going to help you do it. I'm going to give you the strength to actually turn, and I'm going to be with you. I am one step ahead of you." He's saying, "Take my hand. Come on, you can leave this."

We have to repent. And what Peter's response to Jesus in the boat shows is that this repentance is a pretty rocky thing for us as people. He says, "Depart from me for I'm a sinful man." You know what that means? It means our first impulse is to rid ourselves of the conviction as opposed to confess our sin to God. It's always our first impulse, ooh, that feels terrible, you need to leave, not that feels terrible, I need to change, I need to turn, I need to confess my sin. And so following Jesus, it begins with listening. We have to hear his voice and all of a sudden, he veers this way, sin veers this way, and he goes, "I'm better than sin. Come on over here." We have to repent of sin.

The third thing is it includes an agreement to be reshaped. This is so hard for us, right? Every single rabbi at this time. A rabbi was simply an Old Testament teacher. If you were a student, you want to learn about the Bible, there was rabbis that you could listen to. And some really eager students, they would ask to be followers of a certain rabbi, "Hey, can I follow you around?" He's like, "Sure, you can follow me around." And what this is so different, though, is that Jesus is the one who's doing the choosing. And he's not going to professional students, he's going to fisherman and he's saying, "I want you to leave everything that you're doing, I know you have plans, and I want you to follow me." You see, these individuals were responsible business fishermen, they were on the job. Jesus entered their space and he says, "Follow me and I will make you. I will reshape you. I will reshape your plans. I will refashion you." This is like an iron Smith, where he puts the iron into the fire, heats it up and then slams down on it to reshape it to do something different than it once could do on its own.

Listen to me, I realize that it's hard. You're going to see this every single text for the next two months, is that when Jesus says, follow me, the people who do so, take their first step, recognizing, acknowledging, to do this means I am going to change. All of these people had plans and they were working their plans out. They all had a career, they all had ideas and Jesus says, "I'm going to change all this and I'm going to refashion your life."

You see, Providence, we cannot follow Jesus and be left unchanged. And I'm not just talking for those who have never trusted Jesus and now you will. I'm saying this, for the believer in the room who has known Jesus for 30 years, if you want to follow him tomorrow, you're going to change tomorrow. It never ends. It's for all of us. It's part of who he is. Isn't Jesus' timing the most amazing in all this? Think about this for a second. Jesus comes up on them when they've had a terrible night. That's the time to say, "Let's leave all this, let's do something better." Instead, what he does, is he orchestrates the greatest fishing day in the history of their lives. And then he says, "Now, leave it all." Why would he do this? Why would he even give these men the best day of their career, and they say, "All right, leave it all and follow me." I believe because he wants to highlight not only the cost, but the reward of following him. We will give up much, and we will receive so much more.

The fourth thing we find is the following Jesus includes helping others follow him. You see, how specifically is he going to reshape my life? I suppose there's a lot of ways that the Bible answers that. Obviously, we're going to become more like him. But the one thing that he tells us in this text is he's going to give us a new mission for our life. He says, "I will make you fishers of men." You see, Jesus is on a mission, and to follow Jesus means you join his mission. And this changes all of life, you see. This changes your prayers when you recognize that Jesus is reshaping my entire life in order to be about the mission of helping people to understand that they can be forgiven in him. Don't you realize that changes even what you pray about? We pray more about our neighbors than we do about our ailments. Don't you see how it would change your time, and your dreams, and your vocation, and your level of control of your life? All of these things he says, "I'm going to reshape your life to become a fisher of men."

You see, it's very clear that God does not call every follower to leave their vocation, but he does call every follower to leverage their vocation. Every person rescued by Jesus is added to the rescue team. And what this means is it's going to change your whole life. Some of us think it's possible to follow him and not help others follow him. And Jesus says, "I promise you if you follow me, I'm going to heat that metal up and I'm going to pound it a few times until you see that this is for you, too." To follow Jesus means to walk down the paths that Jesus is walking. And what he's doing right now is he's seeking to save the lost, people who are far from him, and so, we cannot escape this calling in our life.

And so, two applications for us. The first is this, this week, let's take our next step in following Jesus. For some of us, this is maybe the first time you've ever heard the Bible read or taught. You think, I don't even know what to do with this, okay? Your next that would be just come back, okay? Just come back, listen one more time, maybe read a gospel, go to a life group today and just hear more about what Jesus has said, okay? It's just it's just a little bit more. For some of us, it may be more like when Jesus got in his boat and he says, "I want you to do something right now. You're going to have to lose a little bit of control. It may mean that you do something that you know that he's telling you to do, and yet you don't even believe in him as your savior, you're just, "Okay, I'm going to give up control and I'm going to do that. I'm going to just take one little step closer. For some of us in the room, it literally means, right now, today, you need to trust Jesus Christ with your soul by admitting your sin, believing on Him and saying, "God, I confess you as Lord of my life."

And for many other in the room who've already trusted Jesus Christ, what it means is that the very thing that you know, all of us know, you know what God's telling you. You've thought about something for a long time. There's this noble aspiration in your heart, you thought, you know, one day I want to do that. I want to do that. And God keeps planning that over, and over, and over, and over, and this is the week you say, "You know what, I have to move. He keeps telling me, I have to get rid of that. I have to do this. I have to let go of this net. I have to follow him." And so whatever it is in your life, I encourage you to follow him.

The second thing is this, is let's try to share his story once this week. You may have a friend that you talk to several times, but you've never told them the most significant thing about your life, and that's Jesus Christ. And this could be the week that you tell them. Be intentional. Say, "You know we've talked about so many different things. What I want you to know, though, is really, something has changed my life and you just have to know. This is what he did." And tell your story that points to his story.

You know, we want to give you various tools and there's a new tool that we made for you. It's at next steps, it's called, grow in God. And this tool, it's five simple lessons and you can do it by yourself. You can hand it to somebody who's maybe even thinking about following Jesus, or in particular, if you have talked to someone about Jesus Christ, and they've trusted him, now you have this amazing privilege to continue to walk with them, to disciple them, to prepare them to make disciples as well.

And this guide is intended to help you sit down with other people who are considering Jesus, or who have said, “Yes, I want to follow Jesus,” and help them in their initial steps of growth. You can pick those up at next steps, it’s called, grow in God.

I want to encourage you, though, he is so worth it, and I pray if there’s really one thing that I hope you leave is this, is that Jesus Christ desires a relationship with you this week. So let’s pray together. Father in heaven, we thank you for your love for us and we acknowledge, God, that apart from your work in our life, we will never follow you for you first must speak to us, and so we thank you that you have. I pray God for us as a people, would you draw near to us so that we can draw near to you. For those who are afraid right now knowing what that means, God, would you, just like you did with Peter, would you remind them you are there, you are with us. For those who have never trusted Christ, God, would you place upon their heart a longing, a longing to have a relationship with you, would you do that this morning. God we care about your mission, so we want to sing to you. We also want to give and we pray God that these gifts would be specifically leveraged to helping this amazing gospel, the good news about Jesus Christ to get to the corners of the earth. And so we give to you out of a full heart, out of our resources, as well as in our singing. We pray this in Jesus’ name. Amen.



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