

Followers Of The Way

Message Notes

Sermon intro

- Went into a cave in Missouri, got to the bottom of the cave, and they turned out the lights. Endless possibilities, all in the dark, and only one way out.
- Until this point we've talked about true conversion, Spirit baptism, Unstoppable Love, Boldness, The Word going out..
- This week we're going to talk about being a true disciple - **FOLLOWERS OF THE WAY**
- They were known as Followers of the Way.
 1. People were looking for language for them because they were this new group of people. The best description of what they did and practiced was that they were followers of the way.
 2. I wonder what people would call us if they watched us now?

Passage:

Acts 9:1–2 (NLT) — 1 Meanwhile, Saul was uttering threats with every breath and was eager to kill **the Lord's followers**. So he went to the high priest. 2 He requested letters addressed to the synagogues in Damascus, asking for their cooperation in the arrest of any **followers of the Way** he found there. He wanted to bring them—both men and women—back to Jerusalem in chains.

Acts 24:14 (NLT) — 14 “But **I admit that I follow the Way**, which they call a cult. I worship the God of our ancestors, and I firmly believe the Jewish law and everything written in the prophets.

Body:

1. The PERSON of the way

- John 14:5–6 (NLT) — 5 “No, we don't know, Lord,” Thomas said. “We have no idea where you are going, so how can we know the way?” 6 Jesus told him, “**I am the way**, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.
- Rafiki - Follow Ol' Rafiki, He knows the way
- To follow the Way is to follow Jesus. Nothing more, nothing less.
- In Jewish culture, a disciple's job was to walk so closely behind their rabbi that they would be “covered in his dust.” This is not about performance. It's about posture:
- **Proximity** – At all times, in this life, we are to remain close to Jesus. We falter when we drift away from him.
- **Relationship** – The power is in staying close.

- Philippians 3:8 (NLT) — 8 Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could gain Christ.
- Christianity is about staying in constant relationship with Jesus Christ.
- **Staying** – Before they were sent, they stayed. The job wasn't to do something big, but to stay with Someone great.

Our only job is to follow—not to impress, not to perform—just to stay near Jesus.

2. The PRICE of the way

Jesus didn't say "follow Me" to wander aimlessly—He had destinations in mind. Each invitation was directional.

When I was in that cave, there were certain things I held onto, guideposts. These are the guide posts of the way.

- **Price 1: Others Matthew 4:19–20 (NLT)** — 19 Jesus called out to them, "Come, **follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people!**" 20 And they left their nets at once and followed him.
- **Price 2: Dependency Luke 5:27–28 (NLT)** — 27 Later, as Jesus left the town, he saw a tax collector named Levi sitting at his tax collector's booth. "**Follow me and be my disciple,**" Jesus said to him. 28 So Levi got up, left everything, and followed him.
- **Price 3: Sacrifice John 21:18–19 (NLT)** — 18 "I tell you the truth, when you were young, you were able to do as you liked; you dressed yourself and went wherever you wanted to go. But when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and others will dress you and take you where you don't want to go." 19 Jesus said this to let him know **by what kind of death he would glorify God. Then Jesus told him, "Follow me."** A surrendered life is one that no longer calls its own shots.
- When the Titanic sink wealthy people were going to get their gold and some of the stories record that people were sinking in the water with their gold.
- Lifeguards know that when somebody is struggling to hold onto life, they could be a danger to the lifeguard, so they wait until they are finished struggling before they help them.
- **Reward: Glory**

John 14:3–4 (NLT) — 3 When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. 4 And you know the way to where I am going."

Following Jesus may cost you something, but not following Him will cost you far more.

3. The PATTERN of the way

Not only a direction, but a daily pattern of life. The early church embodied the rhythm of Jesus.

- **Jesus' Lifestyle:**

- He seemed to be pretty normal
- Worked with his dad.
- Passionate about the Father
- Loved the banquet
- Loved being with people.
- **Early Church Pattern (Acts 2:42–47; Acts 4:32–35):**
 - One of devotion
 1. Devoted to teaching – They fed on the Word.
 2. Devoted to prayer – They sought God constantly.
 - One of fellowship – They shared life, food, and burdens.
 - One of faith
 1. Faith & hope – They abandoned everything because they believed something better was coming.
 2. Miracle-minded – Their faith expected God to show up daily.

Closing Thought:

It's a great tension to evaluate your discipleship. We must live in this constant tension of making sure we are following the way. The way is a person, it's a destination, it's a lifestyle.

- Are you right on the heels of Christ right now? Are you watching Him? Are you learning from Him? Are you imitating Him?
- Are you understanding where He's wanting to lead you right now? He's wanting to lead you to a place of others, dependency, surrender, glory
- Do you see the pattern of the followers of the way? They are devoted, they are in fellowship, and they are filled with faith about the future.

This is discipleship