

What are Followers to be Like

6/12/2016

**What are followers,
as opposed to those who have
clearly identified roles of leadership in the church,
what are followers supposed to be like?**

**We have spent a gargantuan amount of time
trying to understand,
as we submit names to the current elders,
of what elders and deacons and evangelists
are supposed to do and be like,
and last week we look at
what “followers” are supposed to do,
and we finish out the whole study with today’s sermon...
(aren’t you glad?) with-
what are “followers” supposed to be like?**

**I think all of those sermons were necessary,
but so is this one, as a helpful reminder.**

**If we went to those lists for elders and deacons,
there were a few characteristics
that were somewhat specific
to those functions in the church.**

**But there is a whole bunch of overlap
between what leaders are supposed to be like,
and what WE as followers are supposed to be like.
(Go figure, right?)**

And not only that,
but there should not be a whole lot of difference
between what leaders and followers look like,
and what Jesus looked like.

Jesus said in Matt. 10:24-25

“A student is not above his teacher,
nor a servant above his master.
²⁵ It is enough for the student to be like his teacher,
and the servant like his master.

The Holy Spirit is doing HIS job to make that happen-

II Cor. 3:17-18

Now the Lord is the Spirit,
and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

¹⁸ And we,
who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory,
are being transformed into his likeness
with ever-increasing glory,
which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

So leaders are to look like Jesus,
and followers are to look like Jesus,
and if we are all looking like Jesus,
acting like Jesus, thinking like Jesus,
serving and caring like Jesus,
we all are going to look alike, too.

But that raises an interesting question-

HOW do we know what Jesus looked like-
not physically, but behaviorally?

**How do we learn to act like Jesus,
and think like Jesus and serve and care like Jesus?**

**It seems kind of obvious to me
that we would go to God's Word,
which is living and active
(more about that in a minute),
and we would go to the gospels in particular,
and we would let the Word of God
draw us in as disciples of Jesus,
and we would sit at the feet of Jesus
along with the other disciples,
the ones living in the 1st Century,
and we would ask them to scooch over just a little bit
to make room for us, so we can hear and observe, too...**

**And we would listen to Jesus
as he teaches on the mountain top,
because it's not that we are watching
from over a 2,000 year distance.**

**Because we have the eye witness accounts
of Matthew and John, we are right there,
or at least we are hearing the stories read,
like those 1st Century Christians
would hear the stories read,**

**Only "one person removed" from sitting there
and listening to Jesus ourselves,
and watching Jesus for ourselves.**

The gospels are like no other book from antiquity,
 THAT close to the people who made it happen,
 when it happened.

But because the Bible is living and active,
 and God breathed,
 as disciples of Jesus, Jesus IS talking directly to us.

We are no less disciples than they were.

And we can be, should be... right there, listening,
 observing, taking GOOD notes,
 trying to figure out how we can grow up to be
 just...like...that.

Ain't nobody lived, just like Jesus.

No one has captured the attention of humanity
 like Jesus has.

No one has had the impact for good on humanity
 that Jesus has.

And he says we can be like, HAVE to be...like him,
 if we are his disciples, whether leaders or followers.

Bible study, it's a wonderful thing.

Meditating on the Word, esp. the gospels-
 absolutely essential.

Being there, as part of the story,
 because we ARE part of the story...priceless.

This morning,

do you see yourself as part of

the ongoing story of Jesus and his disciples?

Not just VBS, where we all dress up in bath robes

and pretend that we are living in the 1st Century, or earlier.

No Jesus, in “dress casual,”
or Jesus as the mother of 4 kids at home,
or Jesus driving a freight truck or working for the CIA.

What WOULD Jesus do? How do you know?
Are you willing to invest the time and energy to find out?

Luke 11:1

One day Jesus was praying in a certain place.
When he finished, one of his disciples said to him,
“Lord, teach us to pray,
just as John taught his disciples.”

Are we asking this of Jesus today, through the gospels?
We should be asking Him, and CAN be asking Him,
if we are willing to invest the effort.

How do we do it?

- #1. We block out time, just like we do
for other things that are important to us.
- #2. We protect that time
from distractions and interference.

We don't have to be Nazis about it.

God will occasionally send us interruptions
to remind us that kids are important people, too,
but we will guard the time, schedule that time
when we are most likely to be successful.

- #3. When we miss, we won't beat ourselves up about it,
but we WILL just get back into the practice
of spending time at the feet of Jesus.

**#4. We will learn from our study,
what Jesus wants us to do,
how we are to relate to particular people TODAY.
We learn that through prayer-
listening, not always asking for stuff.**

**#5. And this is indeed radical, revolutionary-
we will do our best to attend Bible classes
and other opportunities,
to be taught how to study and pray,
and to learn from those who have
been in the Word longer than we have.
What...a...concept!!**

**What people would do in the Middle East,
or in North Korea, or China, or Central Africa,
to have access to the resources for Bible Study
that we take so much for granted.**

**Here we are, between Memorial Day and the 4th of July.
It took one kind of sacrifice to open up the possibility
of a particular kind of freedom...true?**

**Is it time for us to appreciate our freedoms,
perhaps especially our freedom
from the consequences of sin,
by committing to truly live as disciples of Jesus,
striving to be like Him,
whether we have positions of “servant leadership”
or positions of “servant followership.”**

**So- today, as you turn in
your prayerfully considered recommendations to our elders
of other men who you feel are qualified to serve
as new shepherds/fellow elders,**

**Also make commitments before God to yourself,
that you will do whatever it takes
to be the best representation of Jesus that you can,
to the unique world that God has placed you in.
Not all of us are called to be elders
or deacons or evangelists,
but we ARE all called to be disciples,
who, when fully formed, are to be just like their master.**

**On Wednesday nights,
we are spending “Evenings with Andy,”
watching old episodes of the Andy Griffith show.**

**Opie so wants to be like Andy,
because of the incredibly good example that his Daddy is,
most of the time.**

**I SO want to be just like Jesus,
because of the incredible example that Jesus was,
and is, not just most of the time, but ALL the time.**

**How about you?
Whether leader or follower,
we all can, and should, look like Jesus... Amen?**