

## **Let It Go! Follow Jesus!**

### **Aiming for 2<sup>nd</sup> Place**

Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself and pick up his cross and follow me.” **Matthew 16:24**

Nothing is more important than following Jesus. While this is a true statement, we must stop to ask ourselves, “Does my life reflect this truth?” Nothing is more important than following Jesus. Do I believe this proclamation with my whole heart? To **“Become a Faithful Kingdom Servant Like Jesus”** one must take the follower’s position. And a follower’s position is not a popular position, especially in our **me- first** society, which promotes self-aggrandizement, self-indulgence, and self-worship. And that’s just to name a few.

Following Jesus means coming after Jesus, living in His shadow, bringing up the rear, and yes following His commands. These are not popular terms. And the world tells us that we are worth more and deserve more. It’s just like what the serpent told Eve in the Garden. “You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” **Gen 3:4,5** We have been falling for the same lie over and over, the lie that tells us that God is holding goodness back from us and doesn’t want us to be our best self and live our best life. The truth is our best self and best life can only be found in Christ Jesus. “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.” **Gal2:20; Phil 3:9**

Nobody remembers the second-place team. Nobody remembers the runner up in the beauty pageant. And nobody competes with the hopes of coming in second place. And following Jesus means that we will never be number one. Let that sink in. Jesus said, “For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.” **Matt 16:25 Do you want them to remember you or do you want them to remember Jesus?**

So the question remains, “what is Jesus bidding us to let go of?” The answer is simple: Everything!

Jesus tells us in **Luke 14:26**, “If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.”

Peter asked a profound question that we all would like to ask the Lord. In **Matt 19:27** Peter answered and said to Him, “See we have left all and followed You. Therefore, what shall we have?” Jesus was not afraid of this question. He knows how fickle we can be. He answers Peter in **vs.28-30** “Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name’s sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life. But many who are first shall be last, and the last first.”

Let's see what this looks like:

- Matt **4:18 -20** letting go of my livelihood
- Matt **4:21-22** letting go of my earthly inheritance and father
- John **12:1-8** letting go of my glory and finances
- John **13:1-5; 12-20** letting go of my position and title

Let us make a resolution: **Philippians 3:7-6**

## **Philippians 3:7-16**

### **New King James Version**

<sup>7</sup> But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. <sup>8</sup> Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup> and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; <sup>10</sup> that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, <sup>11</sup> if, by any means, I may attain<sup>[a]</sup> to the resurrection from the dead.

## Pressing Toward the Goal

<sup>12</sup> Not that I have already attained,<sup>[b]</sup> or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. <sup>13</sup> Brethren, I do not count myself to have <sup>[c]</sup>apprehended; but one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, <sup>14</sup> I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

<sup>15</sup> Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. <sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, to *the degree* that we have already <sup>[d]</sup>attained, let us walk by the same <sup>[e]</sup>rule, let us be of the same mind.