



# FOLLOWorship

## LESSON 5: FOLLOW

Have you ever been following a dump truck or a cement truck down the highway and wondered about that sign they have on the their rear bumper that says “don’t follow into work area”? Somebody must have done that at some time or otherwise, why the sign? Maybe you’ve never wondered why someone would follow a truck into a work area, but have you ever followed someone or something that you later regretted?

1. Ice breaker question: Have you ever felt like you followed someone or something into a proverbial dump site? Share your story.

Our first four lessons in this series have covered the foundational steps of becoming a Christian and our focus has been on our internal faith. These next four lessons will focus on how we respond to our belief or move from an internal focus to an external one. Now that we are believers in Christ, what actions will we take to live out our Christianity? This lesson is to help us learn what it means to “Follow Christ”.

God has so much more for us than just church attending. He has a whole new life planned for us full of adventure, blessings, surprises, satisfaction, healing, hope and unconditional love. The question is, are we willing to take the next step into this adventure called Christianity?

### **Matthew 16:24-26**

*Then Jesus said to his disciples, “If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, 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. And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul? Is anything worth more than your soul?”*

2. What does it mean to you to give up your own way, take up your cross and follow me?

So how do we follow Jesus? There are three areas to consider as we seek to know if we are following Christ.

The first is the Bible, God’s Word to us, the first and most important resource to examine as we seek to follow Christ. Our actions and beliefs should line up with Biblical truth. Remember that we need to take all of God’s counsel into consideration when seeking truth and not just cherry pick scripture that seems to match up with what we might be thinking. A good place to start as a new believer would be the first four books of the New Testament-Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. These are called the Gospels (The Good News). These books cover the life and ministry of Jesus and will give us the clearest picture of what being a follower of Christ means. Jesus’ ministry style was “show and tell”. He showed his disciples what to do and told them how to respond. So we should do the same. How did Jesus act? What did he say? What was important to him? Who did he hang out with? How did he spend his time? How did he pray? If we learn about Jesus, we learn how to follow him. Understanding God’s word will require study on your part and help from Christians that are more mature. Seek wisdom from your pastors and other resources that

are available. A study Bible can be very helpful along with using a translation that is written in our modern American English language. One excellent on-line resource is [Gotquestions.org](http://Gotquestions.org).

**James 1: 22**

*But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves.*

3. What might prevent you from spending time reading your Bible?

Second we need to learn to tune into the prompting of the Holy Spirit and how it works in our lives. This is something that may take a new Christian some time to become aware of. Remember in our third lesson we learned that we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit at our Salvation. The Holy Spirit will lead us to take actions according to God's will. Whereas our salvation is a one-time event, our transformation and learning to obey the prompting of the Holy Spirit is something we work out over time. The character of the voice and how it makes you feel will help you know if it's God's voice or the enemy trying to trip you up. God's voice should lead you towards hope, life, peace and love. If it leads you to feel anxiety, fear, or hopelessness then likely it is not the Holy Spirit speaking to you. Learn to spend time in prayer and listening in order to develop an "ear" for the Holy Spirit. And remember the Holy Spirit will not lead you to contradict God's Word. See the notes at the end of this lesson to learn some "Always and Nevers" about the voice of God.\*

**Galatians 5:24-25**

*Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives.*

**John 10:27**

*My sheep know my voice; and I know them and they follow me.*

4. What would help you develop a more in-depth prayer life in order to listen to God?

The fruit that is produced in our lives is a third indicator that we are following Christ. Is the result of your choices and thoughts leading you to better relationships, more peace, forgiveness of others, healing from your past and showing love to others? If not then you may need to reexamine your walk with Christ. You may need help from a trusted Pastor, or Christian who is more mature in their walk. Sometimes Christian counseling is needed to help overcome past issues in your life that may be keeping you stuck.

**Galatians 5:22**

*But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!*

5. What fruits in your life demonstrate that you are a Christ follower?

Following Christ should be an exciting adventure and bring a sense of satisfaction above any you've experienced. We are taught that each of us has been given at least one spiritual gift that is given to us by God so we can live out our faith and build up the church. If you don't know what your gifts are, you may want to take a spiritual gift assessment\*\* or watch a DVD series like "Your Divine Design" by Chip Ingram.

## Key areas for discussion

1. Refer to the Scriptures below. What does being a "Follower of Christ" mean to you?
2. Share how becoming a "Follower" changed how you've lived your life.
3. If you are just beginning your walk with Christ share some things you may have learned in this lesson

**Action Step:** Pick one area of your life that you can identify where you want to become stronger as you follow Christ. Write it down and share it with at least one person. What steps will you take to transform your life to be more Christ like?

## Additional Scripture for this lesson

### Psalm 1: 1-3

*Oh, the joys of those who do not  
follow the advice of the wicked,  
or stand around with sinners,  
or join in with mockers.  
But they delight in the law of the Lord,  
meditating on it day and night.  
They are like trees planted along the riverbank,  
bearing fruit each season.  
Their leaves never wither,  
and they prosper in all the days of their lives*

### Matthew 9:9

*As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at his tax collector's booth. "Follow me and be my disciple," Jesus said to him. So Matthew got up and followed him.*

### Matthew 19:21

*Jesus told him, "If you want to be perfect, go and sell all your possessions and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."*

### Luke 5:27-28

*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. So Levi got up, left everything, and followed him.*

### John 10: 1-5

*"I tell you the truth, anyone who sneaks over the wall of a sheepfold, rather than going through the gate, must surely be a thief and a robber! But the one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep recognize his voice and come to him. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. After he has gathered his own flock, he walks ahead of them, and they follow him because they know his voice. They won't follow a stranger; they will run from him because they don't know his voice."*



**\*Some "Nevers" about the Voice of God**-God's voice will never:

- |                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Make you feel hopeless               | Be non-relational                       |
| Make you feel like a failure         | Make you feel worthless                 |
| Make you want to run away from God   | Leave you in the dark                   |
| Lead you into error                  | Lead you into evil or produce bad fruit |
| Tell you to act contrary to His Word | Express disgust with you                |
| Lead you to greater anxiety          | Make you feel like giving up            |
| Tempt you                            | Make you love God less                  |
| Manipulate you by withholding love   |   |

**\*Some "Always" about the Voice of God**-God's voice will always:

- Confirm His written Word
- Bring you hope (even if at first it causes pain)
- Draw you nearer to God
- Lead you to peace
- Lead you to a deeper love for God
- Give you courage to do what is right, even if it's scary
- Shape you more into the person you are destined to be
- Address your negative behaviors, but not curse you
- Offer redemption in the midst of your worst sin
- Let you know it's "not too late" to change
- Bless you so that you can bless others
- Be holy (set apart, other than the common)
- Be pure
- Bring about good fruit (love, joy, patience, peace, kindest etc.)
- Help you improve

\*Resource: Shame Off You-workbook by Alan D. Wright

\*\*Spiritual Gift Assessment:

[http://www.lifeway.com/lwc/files/lwcf\\_myics\\_030526\\_spiritual\\_gifts\\_survey.pdf](http://www.lifeway.com/lwc/files/lwcf_myics_030526_spiritual_gifts_survey.pdf)



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