

The Everlasting Gospel Bible Study

Introduction

Thus far we have discussed the love of God revealed in the life and the death of Jesus. Namely, that God allowed Him to die in our place, and to impute to us His righteous life. We also took a difficult look at the fallen, sinful nature of man, and realize that we have a sinner's need. Today we will be discussing the next step in the gospel journey. Through this gospel story, God has revealed enough about the plan of salvation that before we can go another step God has a question to ask you. In other words, at this point the ball is in our court. We can choose to go further, or at this point turn away. Which choice will you make today?

Lesson Five: Come unto Me

1. At the beginning of Jesus' Ministry, He went about the cities, and was preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God. Many of the disciples, before they were disciples, were just men like everyone else listening to the words of this new Rabbi. After having heard God's plan of salvation through Jesus, what was the first step that Jesus asked people to take?

Read:

- a. Mark 1:17-20 *"Then Jesus said to them, "_____ Me, and I will make you become fishers of men." They immediately left their nets and _____ Him. When He had gone a little farther from there, He saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the boat mending their nets. And immediately He _____ them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and _____ after Him."*
- b. Luke 18:22 *"So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and _____, _____ Me."*

The first thing that Jesus says when someone has been hearing the Gospel story, and when the heart begins to open up to God, and a desire to be saved enters the soul, is Come and Follow me! The first step that Jesus desires us to take is simply saying, "Yes, I will follow you."

2. Another great "come and follow Me" moment in the story of Jesus (Matthew 11) is when He has been preaching to a crowd of people, and some of John the Baptist's disciples came to ask Jesus a few questions about who He was. Jesus begins telling them that God has been sending great prophets down through the centuries to save man. He said that John was the greatest prophet to ever exists. He then summarizes what they had been asking all along. What had they really been trying to say? Read Matthew 11:28. What does it mean to come to Jesus? Read Matthew 11:29. *"Take My _____ upon you and _____ from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."*

The yoke that Jesus is talking about was a wooden instrument that bound animals together for the purpose of pulling plows. However, it was also what the Rabbi's referred to as their teachings, because you were "yoked" to them. When you were yoked to a Rabbi you were to

learn what he had to say, but even more importantly you began a journey of thinking and living like the Rabbi. Thus, Jesus is asking us to learn from Him a new way of life.

- a. In choosing to follow Jesus, is there first an accepting of what He has done in your behalf (refer back to lesson two and three), which is His life and death for your salvation? But to follow Him is more than just accepting teachings that tell us what He has done for us, it also includes a choice to follow Him, and begin a process of learning what God wants you to do and not to do.
- b. For an example of this read, Mark 8:34. *“When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, “Whoever desires to come after Me, let him _____ himself, and take up his _____, and follow Me.”*
 - i. Discuss what this means to you.
- c. To better understand what becoming a follower of Jesus means (AKA disciple), read Romans 12:1-2. *“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your _____ a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your _____ service. And do not be _____ to this world, but be _____ by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”*
- d. 2 Corinthians 5:17. *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new _____; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become _____.”*

It is clear, then, that to become a follower of Jesus there must be a desire to be saved, and a desire to become a new person, which means to put away the old life, and become a new person. We will discuss this in greater detail in upcoming lessons, but for now no person that ever decided to follow Jesus stayed the same.

3. What does Jesus call it when we make the above choices? Matthew 16:24 *“Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him _____ himself, and take up his _____, and follow Me.”*
 - a. In many religious circles, people believe that all we have to do is just believe that Jesus died for our sins, but Jesus said if you want to be saved you must come to Him and deny yourself by choosing to live a new life with Him. Discuss what you think about this idea?
4. When you choose to follow Jesus what does He say you have found?
 - a. Read Matthew 19:21 *“Jesus said to him, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have _____ in heaven; and come, follow Me.”*
 - b. Matthew 11:29 *“Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find _____ for your souls.”*

Following Jesus is our treasure in Heaven because He has died for us and His righteousness represents us before the Father. It is a priceless treasure, and it brings rest to us. We rest in the fact that He has saved us. No more trying to be good enough, no more trying to earn our way into the kingdom if we choose to believe and follow we can rest in His works for our behalf.

Read and discuss this following statement:

Just here is a point on which many may err, and hence they fail of receiving the help that Christ desires to give them. They think that they cannot come to Christ unless they first repent, and that

repentance prepares for the forgiveness of their sins. It is true that repentance does precede the forgiveness of sins; for it is only the broken and contrite heart that will feel the need of a Saviour. But must the sinner wait till he has repented before he can come to Jesus? Is repentance to be made an obstacle between the sinner and the Saviour? The Bible does not teach that the sinner must repent before he can heed the invitation of Christ, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28. It is the virtue that goes forth from Christ, that leads to genuine repentance."

Discuss: What is the virtue that goes forth from Christ? Do you see how powerful coming to Christ can be? If we do, He has promised to do help us live that "new" Christian life!

Summary: After Jesus has presented His work in our behalf, and has then shown us our need of Him, He then asks us to follow Him. Following or coming to Jesus is accepting His life and death on your behalf, then deciding to live anew life with Jesus where you begin becoming a new person.

Is it your desire today to answer the call and come to Jesus that you may have treasure in heaven and a rest for your soul?

Appeal: Read Matthew 11:27: "All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him."

Obviously, you would not be here studying this lesson if the Son had not chosen to reveal God to you, and now that you know that Jesus has purposely revealed the Father to you, will you come and follow Jesus today?