



This is a prayer that Jesus prays for all who follow him. It is as timeless as Jesus is.

Jesus prays that his followers would have joy.

Jesus prays that his followers be kept safe from the evil one.

Jesus prays that his followers are sanctified (made pure and holy).

Jesus prays that his followers will be sent into the world.

Jesus prays that his followers will be one with each other, with him and with God.

This prayer that Jesus prayed is still being answered today, in the lives of all those who choose to follow Him. Jesus was “sent” into the world by God. The very idea of the messiah is “the sent one.” Here, Jesus promises to prepare and work in the life of each of his followers to send us into the world.

Do you think that the first people God sends his followers to were their own families, communities and networks of friends? Who is God sending you today?

Who needs the Good News? Who needs Jesus? Who needs you?

GPS for Families

GrowPrayStudy.org/family

Help young children understand what it means to be a follower of Jesus. Play a game of follow the leader. Before you start, tell the kids there is a reward at the end of the game if they complete the entire path. In the beginning do silly and fun stuff that make it easy to follow you. After a few minutes, change to walking slowly for a while, then try some push ups or sit ups, and make it almost unbearable to keep following you. At an unexpected moment, stop the game and tell them it’s time for their reward for completing the path. Be sure to have a good reward like a sweet treat or a small gift for each person.

Discuss how in the beginning it was easier to follow you because they were excited and it was fun, but later they were bored or it was hard, and they were tired of following you. Explain that is how it can be to follow Jesus sometimes. When we want to follow him, it is easy. For example, when we want to go to church because there is something fun happening. But other times we may be tired, and we don’t feel like going. That’s when it can be hard. But Jesus asks us to follow him all the time. And when we do, there are rewards like joy and peace and friendships with other followers. Not just at the end but all along the way.

MESSAGE

“Follow Me”

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SCRIPTURE

John 10:27,28

Things I’d like to remember from today’s sermon:

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PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

Jesus, I believe you have invited me to follow you. I want to be one of your followers. I want to live your way. I want to learn from you. I want to live as one of your disciples. Some days it seems so easy; other days it seems impossible. Forgive me when I fall short, and give me strength when I am on the right track. But hear my choice today, I choose to follow you, Jesus.

These first disciples, Peter and Andrew, went fishing. They were professional fishermen, as was their father. This is what they did almost every day and what they expected to do the rest of their lives. It's how they fed their family. It was a hard life. They did not fish for enjoyment like many of us; they used nets to catch the many small fish that lived in the Sea of Galilee. The last thing they expected was to hear these words from Jesus, "Come follow me, and I will make you fishers of men!"

Why do you think that Jesus called fishermen to be his first disciples? Why do you think they said yes, tossed their nets aside and headed out?

Notice that there were no prerequisites for their journey as disciples. They didn't have to pass a religious test, make a commitment or promises or answer a bunch of questions. All they had to do was "begin" the journey. They began as fishers of fish; they ended as fishers of men. What would it take to get out of the boat?

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Matthew was a tax collector sitting in his office. In that time, tax collectors were wealthy and made their money in often unethical ways. Matthew was a Jew, collected taxes from his people and gave it to the Roman occupiers, taking a cut for himself. This was how it worked. Tax collectors were hated by the people of Israel and despised by the Romans for making a living this way. Yet, the invitation to Matthew from Jesus was the same as to the fishermen, except even shorter, "Follow me!"

Why would Jesus call a tax collector to follow him? Wasn't he a better judge of character than this? It certainly did not make Jesus look good that one of his disciples came from a profession like this.

Notice that all Matthew had to do to follow Jesus was to get up and follow, to begin the journey from where he was, who he was and what he was; he did not have to change immediately. Matthew just had to make a decision, "Do I leave my office or not?" What would it mean for you to leave your "figurative" office to follow Jesus?

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One man, whose name we never know, promised to follow Jesus "wherever you go!" Promises are easy to make, yet, Jesus knew that following him would not be an easy journey. That which is of value is almost never easy. It was certainly easier for Peter and Andrew to continue to fish; they knew everything there was to know about fishing. It would have been easier for Matthew to keep collecting taxes; he already had wealth and position.

Why do you think that Jesus points out that his life includes sleeping on the ground, using rocks for a pillow? What does this have to do with the man who has just promised to follow Jesus anywhere? Do you think he still followed Jesus after this?

The second man said he had to go bury his father first. This is not what many think. He probably had to go home and stay until his father eventually died, maybe years away. For if he left early, he would not get his inheritance. He would "wait" for a better time to follow Jesus. Why do you think there is no better time than now? Why do excuses often come to mind immediately as we think about the decision to follow Christ?

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Jesus teaches here about the cost of following him, the price that will be paid by those who begin and continue the journey. It is hard to begin the journey, but in many ways, it is even harder to finish it. After all, the one we are invited to follow was crucified and persecuted.

Sometimes we hear preachers teach that if we are Christians, everything will be great. In life, good things will always happen, and everything will always turn out. How is this contradicted by the simple truth that the one we follow, Jesus, was crucified by sinful men? Sometimes we might think that the Christian life is an easy way. After all, we have God on our side, don't we? Why do you think Jesus challenges his followers to count the costs before they make the decision to accept and follow him?

The greatest rewards of following Jesus are not always at the beginning, though the greatest excitement and enthusiasm is often then. The greatest rewards come after the sacrifice is made, as the years go by, and the Christian life is built and eternal life is on the horizon. Jesus knows this.

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