

What Does It Mean to Follow Jesus? Mark 2:14-22

To follow Jesus you engage with any people who need Jesus. Mark 2:14-15

"As He passed by, He saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting in the tax booth, and He said to him, "Follow Me!" And he got up and followed Him. And it happened that He was reclining at the table in his house, and many tax collectors and sinners were dining with Jesus and His disciples; for there were many of them, and they were following Him."

- You leave behind your sinful past life. Luke 5:27-28
- You engage in a nonjudgmental setting to fully connect.
- You build on the common areas of interest:
- You love the person rather than judge the sin.
- You bring them to Jesus for forgiveness of their sin.
- You support people for life change.

To follow Jesus you overcome personal criticism from hypocrites. Mark 2:16-17

"When the scribes of the Pharisees saw that He was eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they said to His disciples, 'Why is He eating and drinking with tax collectors and sinners?'"

Matthew 7:1-6

Understand these things about the "Pharisees"

- They have no interest in following Jesus to reach people for Jesus.
- They are quick to judge based on their own personal opinions or rules.
- They are more interested in tearing you down rather than helping to improve your reach to sinners.
- They do not admit their own fault but criticize to appear as more holy.
- Consider what you can learn but do not be distracted from your calling to reach people.

To follow Jesus means your faith thrives from identity with Jesus and not from performance for people.

Mark 2:18-20

"John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting; and they came and said to Him, 'Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?' And Jesus said to them, 'While the bridegroom is with them, the attendants of the bridegroom cannot fast, can they? So long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day.'"

To follow Jesus requires a new heart to live this new life. Mark 2:21-22

"No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; otherwise the patch pulls away from it, the new from the old, and a worse tear results. No one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost and the skins as well; but one puts new wine into fresh wineskins."

- You do not force feed righteous living in an unrepentant heart. "new wine in old wineskins"
- You repent and believe in Jesus for forgiveness which results in a new heart to follow His teachings.
- As a follower of Jesus, you have a new "wineskin" heart which enables you to grow and expand as a follower of Jesus.

John 5:24 - *"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life."*

Digging Deeper + LifeGroup Discussion:

From Mark 2:14-16, what would you think if you saw Jesus sitting in a bar, eating dinner, laughing and talking to a bunch of people that Christians viewed as sinful and to be avoided? Who are we tempted to avoid these days rather than reach out to?

In what ways can you engage with people like Jesus did?

Read Matthew 7:1-6. What warning does Jesus offer regarding judging other people?

From Mark 2:18-20, Jesus and His disciples are criticized for not fasting. The Pharisees created their own rules to fast twice a week, Monday and Thursday. See Luke 18:12. What kind of “man made” rules today do some use to judge others that do not follow those rules? In this passage, fasting was a way to prove how spiritually mature a person was in allegiance to the law and leaders. However, Jesus was inviting people to follow and identify with Him, and not base their spiritual life on things or performance. This leads to legalism of gaining favor by what we do. We are called to enjoy Jesus while we have the opportunity because there will be a day when He is crucified and no longer with us as He is now.

From Mark 2:21, 22, Jesus says you do not put new wine in old wineskins. Old wineskins are brittle. When the new wine ferments and expands, the skin will break. Jesus’ salvation of “new wine” cannot be forced into old religious regulations, which in Jesus’ day was the Judaistic systems controlled by the Pharisees.

What are some “old wineskins” of traditionalism that some try to force Christians into, today?

Remember, traditionalism is the dead faith of living Christians. Man-made rules, religious routines.

Tradition can be good, for it is the living faith of dead Christians.

Next Steps:

REACH OUT AND INVITE SOMEONE to join you for these events during Easter Week:

- March 29 - Passover Seder · 6:00 pm · Fellowship Hall · Spots are Limited. Register at calvarylife.org/passover
- March 30 - Good Friday Communion Service · 7:00 pm · Worship Center
- March 31 - Easter Egg Hunt Outreach · 9:00 am · Calvary Field
- April 1 - Easter Sunday · 6:30 am + 9:00 am + 11:00 am

Learn more about all these events at calvarylife.org/easter

JOIN US THIS WEDNESDAY: Come grow in your faith on Wednesdays at 7:00 pm through the **Wednesday Pastor’s Study** on Zechariah with vintage worship music in the Chapel with amazing ministries for **Nursery to High School**. We also have great, ongoing programs to help you grow in different areas of life such as **Celebrate Recovery** and **Cal Fit**. learn more at calvarylife.org/wednesday

COME WORSHIP THIS THURSDAY: Come experience a time of Spirit-filled, passionate worship through music and a word of encouragement to encounter, engage and embrace the love of Jesus each Thursday from 7:30-8:30 in the Underground. calvarylife.org/thursday



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