

THE WOMAN AT THE WELL

John 4:1-33

This is a series about following Jesus. When you hear that phrase, how do you respond? If you're like most, you give a hearty, "AMEN, BROTHER!" But, sadly, that's about as far as it goes. Jesus declared, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19) and "If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me." (Luke 9:23) When He spoke these words, 12 young men did follow Him.

The Bible does not tell us how old they were, but most Biblical Historians estimate their ages to be between 15 and 30 years old, with Peter being the oldest and John, most likely, the youngest. These young men became His "Disciples." For approximately 3 1/2 years they followed Jesus everywhere He went and experienced what it truly meant to take up your cross daily. Equipped from these struggles, they became the pioneer builders of the Church and earned the moniker, "CHRISTIAN," when the citizens of Antioch decided that was the only appropriate name to call them – "LITTLE CHRISTS."

Their life goal was simple: wake up and follow Jesus wherever He went. So, this is our heritage: Go where He goes. Stay where He stays. Eat when He eats. Pray when He prays. And say what He says. Our life is not easy, but it is simple – FOLLOW HIM. The only fly in the ointment is that Jesus is NOW invisible. The disciples had the luxury of physically seeing His footprints; but, for us, it's as the writer of Hebrews exclaims, "THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH" (Romans 1:17). So, BY FAITH, we see into the unseen, and we follow this invisible – yet ever-present – Jesus.

THREE OBSERVATIONS THAT REVEAL THE TRUTH ABOUT FOLLOWING JESUS

1st Observation

Following Jesus requires you to face issues that you would rather avoid.

John 4:7-8, 26-27; Acts 1:8

Many people talk about following Jesus, but conveniently and repeatedly avoid that which is difficult or painful. It is clear to me that we "cut class" far too often! I wonder sometimes if my life is too safe. Don't get me wrong. I believe your soul and spirit are safe with Jesus; but your plans, schedule, goals, intentions and desires are exposed and vulnerable to His fearless ways. Walking with Jesus is NOT as safe as you were led to believe.

2nd Observation

Following Jesus requires walking toward things you may not understand.

John 4:26-27; Genesis 12

If you understand everything about where you are going with Jesus, I wonder if you've missed a few eye-opening field trips. Maybe you took that day off. The mystery of it all! God spoke to Abraham (Genesis 12) and basically said, "Let's go!" *Go where?* "I'll let you know." And remember, Abraham is the earthly father of our faith! So, sometimes we find ourselves like those disciples...walking toward a well...all bumfuzzled #*?#*.

3rd Observation

Following Jesus requires you to expand your understanding of God's love.

John 4:10-15; Luke 5:30-31

A good working concept of RELIGION is a belief that our doctrines are settled, closed, and finished. That's all there is, and that's all we need, and everybody that doesn't fit that belief is OUT! The Word of God is settled and true, but our understanding of it certainly IS NOT! That's why we don't have a religion. We're in a Kingdom that is growing exponentially, and the more we grow, the more He reveals. For us to sit here and think that we understand the vastness of God's love or even His willingness to put us in uncomfortable situations to expand our understanding of the depth of His love... would be laughable... if it weren't so critical. We would certainly be amiss to think we have arrived at that!