

Bay City Wesleyan Church  
April 16, 2017

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Sunday Morning 04-16-2017

Our Challenge for 2017 is to regularly ask Jesus, "Am I following you?"

When was the last time you asked?

<http://bible.com/events/204139>

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[Image]

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Our theme for 2017 is Jesus' invitation, "Follow me."

These two simple words will transform every person that accepts the challenge. I pray that in the next few months all of us in this church, as well as those who join us, will see Jesus more clearly, love him more dearly, and follow him more nearly.

Today's message could be called "How Nick and Joe Saved Easter."

Jesus taught that life in God's Kingdom Family is about building relationships and not about keeping rules.

Jesus' call to follow is an invitation to relationship.

John 3:1-15 NIV

Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him." Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again. " "How can someone be born when they are old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother's womb to be born!" Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit." "How can this be?" Nicodemus asked. "You are Israel's teacher," said Jesus, "and do you not understand these things? Very truly I tell you, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man. Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him." <http://bible.com/111/jhn.3.1-15.NIV>

Their question will inevitably be our question too.

How can I know that I know that I'm part of God's Kingdom Family?  
How can I know I'm close to God and instead of far from him?

John 11:45-48 NIV

Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him. But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. Then the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the Sanhedrin. "What are we accomplishing?" they asked. "Here is this man performing many signs. If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and then the Romans will come and take away both our temple and our nation."

<http://bible.com/111/jhn.11.45-48.NIV>

John 19:30 NIV

When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

<http://bible.com/111/jhn.19.30.NIV>

John 19:38-40 NIV

Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jewish leaders. With Pilate's permission, he came and took the body away. He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds. Taking Jesus' body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of linen. This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs.

<http://bible.com/111/jhn.19.38-40.NIV>

Matthew 27:59-61 NIV

Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and placed it in his own new tomb that he had cut out of the rock. He rolled a big stone in front of the entrance to the tomb and went away. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting there opposite the tomb.

<http://bible.com/111/mat.27.59-61.NIV>

Sermon in a Sentence

Jesus did the impossible for us so now it's possible for us.