

“For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps” – 1 Peter 2:21

I. For the next two weeks, I will be sharing a study which I have entitled, “Following in the Footsteps of Jesus”

a. When I was ten years old, in the year 1992, I remember Gatorade, the sports drink company, aired a commercial entitled – “Be Like Mike”

- i. In the commercial, highlights of Michael Jordan were aired with children’s voices singing in the background, *“Like Mike, If I could be like Mike, I want to be Like Mike”*
- ii. You see, back then, everyone wanted to be like Michael Jordan...
- iii. Millions of people across the country aspired to follow in the footsteps of Michael Jordan and achieve basketball greatness

b. However, in 1 Peter 2:21, the apostle Peter tells us that it’s not Michael Jordan that we should aspire to be like, but one far greater, Jesus Christ

- i. The apostle Peter tells us that Jesus Christ is our “*example*” and we should “*follow*” in His footsteps
- ii. Interestingly, the word “*example*” used here by the apostle Peter is the Greek word “*Hupogrammos*”
- iii. This word was used to describe a “copy of writings” given to children to assist them in learning how to write the alphabet
- iv. The child would trace and copy the writings over and over again until he finally learned how to write
- v. This teaching technique is still used in our schooling system to this day

c. And this is what the apostle Peter is trying to teach us

- i. In the same way a child carefully follows and imitates the “writings” of his teacher to learn how to write correctly
- ii. Christians must carefully follow and imitate the “life of Christ” to learn how to live correctly
- iii. He is the perfect example and ideal pattern on how we ought to live towards God and towards man

d. You see, one of the purposes why the Son of God became a man and came to the earth was to teach us how to live

- i. He came to redeem and save, yes, but He also came to be our example – in **John 13:15**, the Lord Jesus declared, *“For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you”*
- ii. All that Jesus did on earth, as recorded in the four Gospels, was done as a perfect example and model for us to follow...
- iii. And all Christians are called to follow closely in the footsteps of Jesus Christ – *“That is what it means to be a Christian”* Cf. **1 John 2:6**

- e. After we accept Christ in our lives, we are called to imitate Christ and be like Christ – “Christ Like”
 - i. In **1 Corinthians 11:1**, the apostle Paul declared, *“Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ”*
 - ii. The apostle Paul is telling us to “imitate” him “imitating” Christ, in other words, he is saying, *“follow my example and be like Christ!”*
 - iii. Pattern your life around the life of Jesus Christ...
- f. Now, in order to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, we must carefully study His life and the example He has given us
 - i. He is our example in our relationship with God and in our relationship with each other
 - ii. He perfectly showed us what God always intended mankind to be...
- g. Now, for our study this morning, we are going to first examine the example Jesus gave us towards God
 - i. We are going to look at *“Seven Things”* about the life of Jesus that serves as our example and pattern for our relationship with God
 - ii. As a Christian, this is how we are expected to act towards God:

II. 1st – “Jesus was in constant communication with God”

- a. Throughout the Gospels, over and over again, we read of Jesus’ constant communication with His Heavenly Father in prayer
 - i. Jesus was completely given over to prayer – *“A Man of Prayer”*
 - ii. **Mark 1:35** declares, *“Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed”*
 - iii. **Luke 5:16** declares, *“So He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed”*
 - iv. **Luke 6:12** declares, *“Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray and continued all night in prayer to God”*
- b. No matter how busy Jesus got (He was very busy), He always made sure to spend time with His Heavenly Father in prayer
 - i. He couldn’t go a day without seeking out the Father’s face in prayer – you see, His Father’s presence was His delight
 - ii. Jesus had an intense hunger and unquenchable desire to be in the presence of His Father – *“O God, You are my God; early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for You; My flesh longs for You in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water.”* – Psalm 63:1-2
- c. In the same way, we must follow in the footsteps of Jesus and be in constant communication with God
 - i. I cannot stress enough the importance of prayer in the life of a Christian
 - ii. As a Christian, we must never neglect our alone time with our Heavenly Father – *“Prayer makes all the difference”*

- iii. **Romans 12:12** – *“Continuing steadfastly in prayer”*; **Ephesians 6:18** – *“Praying always with all prayer and supplication”*; **1 Thessalonians 5:17** – *“Pray without Ceasing”*
- d. It is only in the presence of God that we find strength, joy, direction, comfort, peace, and times of refreshing – “Spend Time with Him!”

III. 2nd – **“Jesus had a high reverence for the Word of God”**

- a. As you began to study the life of Jesus in the Gospels, one thing becomes apparent really quickly, Jesus had a high reverence for the Word of God
 - i. He had a thorough, perfect knowledge of the Scriptures...
 - ii. Throughout the Gospels, we read of Jesus constantly quoting from the Old Testament (He quoted more than 60 verses from 24 different books)
- b. A good example of Jesus’ reverence for the Word of God is found in His Temptation recorded in Mathew 4 and Luke 4
 - i. As Christ was being tempted by the Devil in the wilderness, He withstood every temptation thrown out Him with the Word of God
 - ii. After every temptation, the Lord Jesus declared, *“It is written...”* then quoted a verse from the book of Deuteronomy (8:3; 6:16; 6:13)
 - iii. Jesus studied the Word of God, and when the Enemy confronted Him, He was fully prepared and ready – *“What an Example!”*
- c. In the same way, we must follow in the footsteps of Jesus and have a high reverence for the Word of God
 - i. As a Christian, the Word of God should be a top priority in your life – You should constantly be studying it, memorizing it, & meditating upon it
 - ii. Learn to be a student of the Word of God – *“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth”* – **2 Timothy 2:15**
- d. The Bible will be a great blessing to your life: It will keep you from sin, bring direction and guidance into your life, bring comfort to your heart, bring growth to your Christian walk, and always point you to Jesus (*You will like it*)

IV. 3rd – **“Jesus found great delight in God”**

- a. In Psalm 40:7-8, we read the words the Messiah would declare upon His entrance into the world, “Then I said, ‘Behold, I come; in the scroll of the book it is written of me. I delight to do Your will, O my God, and Your law is within my heart.’” Cf. Hebrews 10:5
 - i. Like no other, the Lord Jesus found great delight in God – He enjoyed God, rejoiced in God, and was completely satisfied in God
 - ii. Jesus’ upmost delight and joy was found in His Heavenly Father – in **John 4:34**, the Lord Jesus declared, *“My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work”*

- iii. The Savior found complete satisfaction, pleasure, and delight in the Will of His Father – ***“He enjoyed God!”***
- b. In the same way, we must follow in the footsteps of Jesus and delight in God
 - i. **Psalm 37:4** declares, ***“Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart”***
 - ii. **Psalm 149:2** declares, ***“Let Israel rejoice in their Maker; let the children of Zion be joyful in their King”***
 - iii. **Philippians 4:4** declares, ***“Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!”***
 - iv. Make sure you are enjoying God, ***“Learn to enjoy His faithfulness, His goodness, His patience, His mercy, His grace, and His love”***
- c. The Westminster Catechism begins by declaring, “What is the chief end of man? Man’s chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever”

V. 4th – “Jesus walked in perfect obedience towards God”

- a. Jesus’ entire life, from birth till death, was lived out in perfect obedience and devotion to the will of God
 - i. He was completely devoted and submitted to the Father’s will even to the point of death – ***“He was the Devoted One”***
 - ii. In **John 6:38**, the Lord Jesus declared, ***“For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me”***
- b. A good illustration of Jesus’ devotion and obedience to the Father is found in the Garden of Gethsemane
 - i. In the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus offered a prayer 3x to the Father that clearly demonstrated His devotion and obedience to Him
 - ii. He declared, ***“O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will”*** Cf. **Mathew 26:39**
 - iii. And with those words, in spite of all the horror and agony which awaited Him at the Cross, He chose to be obedient and go to the Cross
 - iv. And through this single act of obedience, He made available salvation to all mankind
 - v. The last Adam succeeded where the first Adam failed, in a Garden...
- c. In the same way, we must follow in the footsteps of Jesus and walk in obedience towards God
 - i. **1 Samuel 15:22** declares, ***“Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams”***
 - ii. Obedience is very important in the sight of God, and as children of God, we are expected to walk in obedience towards God
 - iii. The Word of God is not filled with “suggestions,” but it is filled with “commands,” and God expects us to obey...

- d. You will never regret obeying God – “God honors those who honor Him” – 1 Samuel 2:30

VI. 5th – “Jesus had a complete dependency upon God”

- a. Everything Jesus did throughout His earthly ministry He did by the power of the Holy Spirit – “He was completely dependent upon the Spirit of God”
- i. In **John 5:19a**, the Lord Jesus declared, “*Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself...*”
 - ii. Also, in **John 5:30a**, the Lord Jesus declared, “*I can of Myself do nothing...*”
 - iii. Now, as “God,” Jesus was capable of doing anything by Himself, but He chose to do everything as a “Man” in complete dependency on the Spirit
 - iv. Everything Jesus did, He did as a Man in the power and anointing of the Holy Spirit – Even His sacrifice on the Cross **Cf. Hebrews 9:14**
- b. In the same way, we must follow in the footsteps of Jesus and completely depend upon God
- i. Precious saint, learn to live a life completely dependent upon God...
 - ii. You can’t make it on your own; you can’t do it by yourself; you don’t have the strength or answer in and of yourself
 - iii. You must rely and depend on the Spirit of God – He will give you the strength and ability that you so desperately need...
 - iv. **Zechariah 4:6** declares, “*Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the Lord of hosts*”
- c. Everyone will fail you, but God will never fail you, therefore, learn to put your trust in Him

VII. 6th – “Jesus had an undying passion for God”

- a. From an early age, Jesus demonstrated an undying passion and zeal for God
- i. We see this passion demonstrated in **John Chapter 2:13-17** when Jesus cleansed the Temple from the moneychangers and vendors
 - ii. After this was done, the apostle John tells us, “*Then His disciples remembered that it was written, ‘Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up’*”
 - iii. Because Jesus had such a great passion for God, He couldn’t tolerate sin, evil, or iniquity
 - iv. He couldn’t stay quiet or simply do nothing when evil was abounding, but He had to take a stand for what was right
 - v. At every moment, He had to be about His Father’s business...
- b. In the same way, we must follow in the footsteps of Jesus and be passionate for God
- i. Let me ask you a question, “*What is your passion? What do you invest most of your time, energy, resources, talents, and abilities into to?*”
 - ii. The answer to that question will tell you what your is passion...

- c. Like Jesus, our single passion in life must be to bring glory to God
 - i. Don't be afraid to dedicate time, energy, resources, and abilities into the Kingdom of God (*It will be all worth it in the end*)
 - ii. Have one passion in life, and one alone, Jesus Christ, and Him alone...

VIII. **7th – “Jesus had a supreme love for God”**

- a. In John 14:31, the Lord Jesus declared, “...I love the Father...”
 - i. Jesus' entire life was lived out in perfect, steadfast love for the Father – His love for God was without equal (*incomparable*)
- b. He loved God more than He loved Himself, and because of that great love, He was in constant communication with God, He had a high reverence for the Word of God, He delighted in God, He obeyed God, He depended upon God, and He was passionate for God
 - i. In the same way, we must love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and everything else will flow from our love for God...
 - ii. A.W. Tozer declared, “*The great of the Kingdom have been those who loved God more than others did*”

IX. **Therefore, we see that Jesus is our perfect example in our relationship with God**

- a. This week, follow in the footsteps of Jesus, and commune with God, enjoy God, obey God, depend upon God, be passionate for God, and love God
 - i. God is most pleased with us when we are most like His Son, therefore, this week, “*Be like Christ, Be a Christian!*”