

## THE DECISION TO FOLLOW CHRIST

*“Jesus called out to them, “Come, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people!”*

*(Matth. 4:19 NLT)*

**INTRODUCTION:** *In this eighth and final week of our series, we will explore the importance of making the decision to follow Christ. This call, given by Jesus to his first disciples, is a call that extends to all of us. As we follow Christ, our lives are transformed, and we experience the true purpose and fulfillment that only He can offer.*

### 1. JESUS CALLS US.

- **Jesus calls us personally**

Jesus does not call the crowd in general, but addresses each of us in a specific and personal way. He knows our lives and invites us to a unique relationship with Him.

- **The call to a new mission.**

Following Jesus means leaving behind our old life to embark on a new and meaningful mission, one of sharing the love and teachings of Christ with others.

- **The promise of transformation.**

Jesus promises that as we follow Him, our lives will be transformed and we will find a new and deeper purpose in serving Him and following His teachings. *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!” (2 Corinthians 5:17 NIV)*

### 2. THE COST OF FOLLOWING CHRIST.

*“Then he said to them all: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.” (Luke 9:23 NIV)*

- **To give up oneself.** Following Christ requires us to give up our selfish desires and put His will above our own, which involves personal sacrifices.

- **Carry the cross.** Taking up our cross means accepting and facing the challenges and sacrifices that come with the decision to follow Christ, with the strength that He gives us.

- **Total surrender.** Following Christ involves a total surrender of our lives, surrendering all our areas to His guidance and purpose, trusting fully in His direction..

### 3. THE FRUITS OF FOLLOWING CHRIST.

*“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.” (John 15:5 NIV)*

- **Spiritual growth.** Abiding in Christ leads us to continuous spiritual growth, developing a deeper and stronger relationship with Him.

- **Abundant life.** Jesus offers us a full and abundant life, full of peace, joy and purpose, regardless of circumstances.

- **Impact on others.** By following Christ, our life becomes a living testimony that can positively influence the lives of others, showing the love and truth of Jesus.

**4. BENEFITS OF FOLLOWING CHRIST.**

- ***Intimate relationship with God:*** Following Christ allows us to develop a deep, personal connection with God. This relationship provides us with guidance, strength, and comfort in all areas of our lives. *"Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me."* (John 15:4 NIV)
- ***Eternal peace and security:*** As we follow Christ, we experience a peace that transcends circumstances and provides security, knowing that we are under God's care and protection eternally. *"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."* (John 14:27 NIV)
- ***Purpose and clear direction:*** Following Christ helps us find and live the purpose that God has for us, guiding us in our decisions and actions so that we can fulfill His will. *"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight"* (Prov. 3:5-6 NIV)

**INTERACTIVE QUESTIONS:**

- What does it mean to you to follow Christ in your daily life?
- What challenges have you faced in deciding to follow Christ and how have you overcome them?

- How has the decision to follow Christ transformed your life?

**PRACTICAL APPLICATION:**

- ***Spend time daily in prayer and Bible reading:*** Connecting with God daily through prayer and reading His Word will allow you to better understand His teachings, hear His voice, and strengthen your faith.
- ***Live according to the principles of Christ in all your actions:*** Let your decisions and behaviors reflect the love, compassion, and justice of Christ.
- ***Be actively involved in your church:*** Get involved in your church or CG where you can grow alongside other believers, serve in ministry, and receive spiritual support. This will help you stay strong in your walk with Christ.

**CONCLUSION:** *Make the choice to follow Christ! It's the most life-changing choice we can make. It leads us to a life filled with purpose, peace, and an intimate relationship with God. As we follow Christ, not only are our lives changed, but we also impact those around us, demonstrating the love and truth of Jesus. May each of us choose to follow Christ with all our hearts, trusting in His leading and embracing the abundant life He offers us.*

**SALVATION PRAYER:** *Lord Jesus, I recognize that I have sinned and that you died for me. Today I repent and ask for forgiveness. I give you my life and my heart so that you may be my Lord and personal Savior, amen.*