

## Introduction

- <https://www.foxnews.com/lifestyle/reddit-wild-man-asks-wrong-use-treadmill-buildings-gym-four-hours-day> Jogging 4 hours a day to reflect on life! Helps him to make sense of life.
- Everyone is looking for a way to make sense out of life - we all ponder questions like, “Why am I here? What should I do with my life? What is my purpose?”
- 44 years old and I’ve found that the way to make sense out of life is to follow Jesus. He is the way, the TRUTH, and the life ([John 14:6](#)). BUT following Jesus is NOT showing up at church or simply learning some life hacks from the Bible.
- The call to follow Jesus is to immerse yourself in Jesus and His mission.
- [Luke 5](#) - Jesus call the first disciples. While Jesus died alone on the cross to pay the penalty of our sins, Jesus didn’t come to do ministry alone. He invites us to join Him in His mission to share the Good News of His Kingdom with others.
- Are you following Jesus? Most of you would say yes, but let’s consider again what it looks like to follow Jesus.
- Jesus’ 12 disciples spend 3 years with Jesus, learning about their King and His Kingdom, and doing ministry with Him. The 12 disciples give us great hope because these men show us how Jesus takes ordinary, sinful men and uses them for His glory.
- [Luke 5](#) - doesn’t show us everything about what Jesus wants to accomplish in His followers, but [Luke 5](#) does show us two characteristics that should exemplify every follower of Jesus.

# Followers of Jesus walk by faith in real life.

- Jesus' ministry has taken off. Again, Jesus preaching. Again, great crowds listening to him and pressing in to hear Him.
- Simon Peter there - but imagine not listening much to Jesus. Simon already encountered Jesus. Jesus healed his mother-in-law. Undoubtedly, heard Jesus preach in the past, but his mind is elsewhere.
- Long night of fruitless work - frustration - you don't catch fish you don't make money. Peter washing his nets - just wants to go home.
- You know how it works - hard to focus on what anyone is saying when you're frustrated. This morning, some of you have a hard time listening to Jesus because you're frustrated with life.
- BUT - if you're going to follow Jesus you have to have a good ear - you have to be able to listen to and distinguish the voice of Jesus above every other voice.
- In frustration - you're tempted to listen to other voices - the voice of self-pity, the voice of worry, the voice of anger, etc.
- Jesus climbs in Simon's boat and asked Simon to push the boat out - a floating stage so people could see and hear Him better. Simon probably didn't want to be bothered, but maybe he felt obligated to help Jesus out since Jesus had healed his mother-in-law.
- After teaching, a strange request... "Put out deeper and put down your nets." Peter: "Master..." A term of respect - not uncommon to call a teacher/rabbi "master." Maybe Simon is exasperated. Jesus is a great teacher, even a great carpenter, but fisherman? It wasn't even the right time of day for fishing. Simon had been fishing at the right time and caught nothing. "We worked hard all night..."
- THEN... a huge statement of faith... "But if you say so, I'll let the nets down again."
- What Jesus requested of Peter didn't make sense. It made sense to tell Jesus to get out of the boat and leave the fishing to Peter. BUT... Jesus

taught with authority. Jesus healed his mother-in-law. Why not listen to Him even if it didn't make complete sense?

- This is faith in REAL LIFE. This is faith when it counts. Jesus came to Peter in real life. Certainly, Jesus meets with us in a house of worship, with the body of Christ. BUT, Jesus also meets with us in the mundane - in the hard moments - in the frustrating places of life. Jesus meets with us and calls us to trust Him in the hard places.
- In REAL LIFE we need to respond to Jesus in faith. In REAL LIFE, when life is frustrating, we need to think about how Jesus would want us to respond. In REAL LIFE, when your marriage is struggling, what step of faith is Jesus calling you to take? To forgive when it's hard? To love when it's not returned? In REAL LIFE, when you've been mistreated by that coworker or classmate, what step of faith is Jesus calling you to take? To put the needs of that person who hurt you above your own? In REAL LIFE, when it's hard to pay the bills, what step of faith is Jesus calling you to take? To reorder your finances so you can be more generous?
- A follower of Jesus connects faith to life. The problem for many of us is that we walk away from a worship service where we've been taught the word saying, "That's interesting, but that's not for me" instead of saying, "I heard God's voice, I will do what He says." Time together in God's Word isn't intended to be just interesting, it's intended to be transforming.
- Our goal in discipleship is life transformation. Our discipleship groups are designed to help you understand the Word so you can live the Word.
- Three questions to ask to know if you're walking by faith in real life:
  - **Am I trusting God or something else?** Real life reveals who/what you trust. Hard circumstances usually reveal who/what you trust: yourself, your money, other people, etc. What do you trust to get you through hard times?
  - **Am I more concerned with my agenda or God's agenda?** Real life reveals what you're living for. Frustration and hard times reveal whose agenda you're living for. Often, "I just want to get this over with." Rather than, "God, use me

- **Am I focused on the moment or the goal?** Real life reveals your focus. Often focused on the momentary rather than the goal. What I don't have in the moment vs. who God is making me into. God wastes nothing - in every experience/season God is making you more like Jesus.

## Followers of Jesus live for what's best for God's Kingdom.

- Simon does it - He and his partners put down their nets in the deep. Miracle! The catch of a lifetime! Nets begin to tear. They can't pull all the fish in - they signal for the other boat. So many fish that the boats begin to sink.
- Simon cries out: "Go away from me, I am a sinful man, Lord!" vs. 5 - Simon calls Jesus *master*, now he calls Jesus *Lord*. Don't know exactly what Simon knows, but undoubtedly he knows that Jesus is far more than a teacher and a miracle worker. He's in the presence of the divine.
- Similar to [Isaiah 6](#) - when you're in the presence of God, you see yourself for who you are - a sinner who doesn't deserve to be in the presence of God's holiness. "Go away..." Simon's afraid... Healing his mother-in-law was one thing, this is entirely different. Jesus controlling the waters and nature. This isn't just any man! Simon doesn't know what to say. He doesn't know to say, "Save me." Or, "Forgive me." In this moment of holy terror, all he can say is "Go away."
- BUT... Jesus doesn't go away. Jesus pursues. Jesus wants to save Peter. Jesus wants to give Peter a different life. "Don't be afraid... From now on you will be catching people." This miracle a picture of a different kind of fishing. Jesus wants to fill His nets with people that He has caught out of sin and despair, and He wants to us Simon and His disciples to do a different kind of fishing. It's the same calling that Jesus has placed on your life.
- When they get back to the shore, Simon and his fishing partners leave everything and follow Jesus. Notice what they don't do. Simon doesn't try to change Jesus' mission. He doesn't say, "Jesus, stay here. We can start a lucrative business on the Sea of Galilee." (We often try to get

Jesus on our mission.) Instead, Simon leaves his life's work and joins Jesus' mission.

- THIS doesn't mean that Simon never fishes again (end of the Gospel of John. Paul still worked as a tentmaker after he was called to be an apostle.) BUT His priorities absolutely changed. Fishing was no longer his life priority - Jesus' mission was his life priority.
- Followers of Jesus live for what's best for God's Kingdom.
- **I only live for what's best when I come to the end of myself.** In the moment that Peter pulled up the great catch he didn't say, "That was awesome!" Instead, he said, "I'm terrible..." In that moment... He realized that life didn't center around Him, life centers around God. When you come to the end of yourself, you'll finally realize that life centers around God. And... you won't live for God's Kingdom until you realize that life centers around God and His Kingdom.
- **I only live for what's best when I constantly evaluate the motives of my heart.** What are my priorities? For the next year, what are your priorities? Good to have goals - to finish school, to achieve at work, to finally finish that project at home, etc. A lot of goals/priorities are self-improvement goals. What about Kingdom goals? How many of us set goals like "I'm going to sacrifice more of myself for the Kingdom of God?" I'm going to give away more of my time, resources, etc. for the Kingdom. The motives of my heart are usually set on how to improve my life instead of how can I live more for the Kingdom.
- **I only live for what's best when my eyes are on eternity.** For Peter, while fishing mattered it wasn't eternal. BUT, fishing for men had eternal implications. A lot of the goals we set in this life won't matter in eternity, but the investment I make into the Kingdom of God will matter for eternity. I need to ask the question, "What am I investing in right now that will have an eternal impact?" E.g., Gospel conversations, discipling my kids, pursuing Christlikeness, etc.
- What's been helpful for me has been learning to ask the right question. Instead of constantly asking: What's best for me? I'm learning to ask: What's best for God's Kingdom? What's best for God's Kingdom is that I

live on His mission, that I grow up, that I grow as a disciple who makes disciples, etc.

- This morning, come to the end of yourself. See that the eternal God has stepped into human history to pursue you. When you see God for who He is, like Simon Peter you'll say, "I'm a sinful person," but your sin doesn't cause Jesus to run from you. He runs to you in grace to give you a new life. Jesus loves you so much that He went to the cross to die the death you deserve. He rose from the dead so all your sins could be forgiven and you could be given the gift of life. Turn to Him today.
- Follower of Jesus... What step of faith is God calling you to? This week, how will you grow as a disciple? How will you invest in God's Kingdom? How will you live on God's mission?