



**Following Jesus in His Steps**  
**MATT BLACK**, Sun, Sept 17, 2017  
1 Peter 2:21-25, "Living as Lights" series

**Introduction:** Open your Bible to 1 Peter 2:21-25. We are continuing in a series in 1 Peter called "Living as Lights." This morning's study is entitled: "Following Jesus in His Steps."

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

1. **Welcome to our Visitors!**
2. **Welcome** to Bill and Mary Rosa Roop (ministering in Spanish church)
3. **Ladies**, Sign up for Ladies' Retreat Oct 6-7
4. **Lots of Dinners** and Banquets – sign up for ministries that we partner with: Wayside, Carenet, Truth Alliance

"Just as a servant knows that he must first obey his master in all things, so the surrender to an implicit and unquestionable obedience must become the essential characteristic of our lives."

~ **Andrew Murray**

**Introduction**

The entire book of 1 Peter is about living as lights in a pagan world. **1 Peter 2:9** – "We are called out of darkness into His marvelous light." Today's message is dealing with how we can be lights in the most extreme situations in this world. Peter talks about various areas. Last week we talked about pagan government, and this week we are talking about slavery.

**Opening Illustration**

I have five siblings. I am 14 years younger than my oldest brother, Scott. When I was young, we used to take walks together. My brother is six feet, six inches tall. I used to try and keep up with Scott. I wanted to be like him, and I would literally try and follow him around. I would have to take two steps for his one step. That's what we are doing today. We are talking about following Jesus.

**Scripture**

1 Peter 2:21-25, "For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. 22 He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. 23 When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. 24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. 25 For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls."

## I. The one way we **cannot** follow Jesus, vs. 21 – Christ...suffered for you.

1 Peter 2:21-25, “For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. 22 He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. 23 When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. 24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. 25 For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.”

There is a sense in which we cannot follow in Christ’s steps, because Christ’s death was unique. Christ atoned for sin so that the unrighteous might become righteous in God’s sight. In that way we cannot follow, because only Christ can do that. We cannot atone for our sins. You cannot atone for another’s sins. We must get that guilt-ridden, performance focused mindset far away from us.

From Tim Keller: “At one time, and at one time only, God treated someone who was righteous as if he were unrighteous. The words *righteous* and *unrighteous* have a legal meaning in the Greek. One is *dikaios*. One is *adikos*. What it means is to be right with the law or not right with the law. If you’re right with the law, there are no claims against you. You’re free to come and go and do what you wish.”

“For Christ died ... once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring us to God.” This is identical to what Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5:21, where he says, “God made him who [knew] no sin to be sin ... that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” The same thing. It’s just stated a little bit differently. Here’s what I mean, and this is what it means: at the central moment of the central day of history ... at the triumphant moment, there was a transfer.

### Illustration

If you want a rough analogy of it, it would be something like this. Imagine the IRS is coming to shut you down because what you owe is twice what you have. What if a friend of yours came and she walked in at the last minute and said, “I’ll tell you what. I am worth exactly what you owe. Therefore, I will pay it”? The IRS people say, “Fine. If that’s how you like it, great. That’s fine.” Over they go to her place, and of course, she’s worth exactly what you owe, which means she’s ruined.

They take the paintings off her walls. They take the jewelry off from around her neck. They take the furniture out of her house. They throw her out in the street. She’s worth exactly what you owe. In a sense, you have this metaphor. She’s righteous tax-wise, but she’s treated as if she’s unrighteous. Your liabilities have been transferred to her, and she is gutted. She’s been gutted. This is what the Scripture says on at the fullness of time as the perfect and prophetic moment on that day happened. There was a legal transfer.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Keller, T. J. (2013). *The Timothy Keller Sermon Archive*. New York City: Redeemer Presbyterian Church.

## II. What it means to follow Jesus: **discipleship**, vs. 21 – Follow in his steps...

**1 Peter 2:21**, “For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.”

We are called to follow Jesus, to be like him, to imitate him. The Bible calls this progressive sanctification. It means that through your life, if you are born again, you will most definitely, though not perfectly, follow in the steps of Jesus.

### Charles Haddon Spurgeon Quote

Charles Haddon Spurgeon trumpeted the Scriptures’ promise of progressive sanctification for every believer. He said, “Those whom free grace chooses, free grace cleanses. We are not chosen because we are holy, but chosen to be holy: and being chosen, the purpose is no dead letter, but we are made alive in Christ and made to seek after holiness.”<sup>2</sup>

### Biblical Definition

**Discipleship**, according to the *Lexham Theological Dictionary* is, “the process of learning the teachings of Jesus and following after his example in obedience through the power of the Holy Spirit. Discipleship not only involves the process of becoming a disciple but of making other disciples through teaching and evangelism.”<sup>3</sup>

Disciple means “learner.” Discipleship is the relationship between a teacher (discipler) and student (disciple). As in the life of Jesus, discipleship takes place in the soil of our Christian relationships, with the water of the Word and the sunlight of ministry.

In other words, discipleship is not just learning the Word, but learning it in committed relationship with other Christians in the context of ministry.

Discipleship means you are afraid to jump in the deep in. It’s intensely practical.

### Theological Definition

What does it mean to “follow in his steps”? It means to be willing to suffer for humanity. Not, of course in the way he did. His was vicarious and substitutionary. Our suffering is one of discipleship. We are to give up all and follow Jesus. God calls us **to slowly progress into the image of Jesus**.

Peter tells us to “follow in his steps.” Christians are to follow in the path of discipleship with Jesus. We are his **followers**. We are called to be disciples and to “make disciples” (**Mt 28:18-20**).

### The Original Disciples (Example)

Two thousand years ago, Jesus approached a handful of men and called them to be imitators of Him. He said: “Follow me.” The call of the first disciples is no different than ours. A disciple is a follower – an imitator. We are called to stop following everything else, and follow only one Person – the Lord Jesus Christ.

Think about Jesus command to his apostles. He went to Matthew at the seat of customs and taxes and basically told him, “Follow me.” And Matthew left his self-focused life and followed Jesus into all kinds of suffering.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Spurgeon. *Exploring the Mind and Heart of the Prince of Preachers* (Oswego, IL: Fox River Press, 2005), 228.

<sup>3</sup> Byrley, C. (2014). *Discipleship*. D. Mangum, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, & R. Hurst (Eds.), *Lexham Theological Wordbook*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

Peter and James and John were commanded as well, “Follow me.” They left their fishing businesses and followed Christ.

Charles Sheldon, who wrote, “In His Steps,” and asked the famous question, “What would Jesus do?” declared, “The call of this dying century and of the new one soon to be, is a call for a new discipleship, a new following of Jesus, more like the early, simple, apostolic Christianity, when the disciples left all and literally **followed the Master.**”<sup>4</sup>

### Jesus’ Description of Discipleship

Jesus described what it means to follow him in Luke 9:23-24, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. 24 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.”

### Disciples of FATE – Predestined to be Conformed to Jesus

Someone described discipleship with the acronym FATE. The fate of every believer is to be conformed to the image of Christ (**Rom 8:28-30**).

**F-Faithful:** He obeyed the Father in all things. He was fully committed to everything he put His heart to!

**A-Available:** Christ gave Himself completely in the Cross. We must give ourselves to God and to each other. It is hard to train someone who is not around. Therefore, a potential disciple must show a willingness to be around the brothers and sisters. He or she must model commitment.

**T-Teachable:** **John 15:15**, “all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.” It is impossible to teach someone who thinks they know everything and are not receptive to instruction or rebuke. Just as Jesus modeled, we are not to waste the stewardship of our lives with know-it-alls.

**E-Educating/Evangelizing Others:** Jesus Christ trained twelve who went out and made disciples of all nations across the Roman Empire and then all paid dearly with suffering for their obedience.

### Disciples through Church History

**D. L. Moody** was an unknown shoe salesman in Chicago when he started his own Sunday School in an abandoned freight car. D.L. Moody simply made himself available. The school became so large teaching 1500 children a week that the Mayor of Chicago gave him the hall over the city's North Market for his meetings, rent free.

During his first trip to England while Moody was recovering from a spiritual depression and fatigue, he heard these words, “The world has yet to see what God will do with and for and through and in and by the man who is fully and wholly consecrated to Him.” D.L. Moody again, made himself available. Moody said, “The world has yet to see a man fully consecrated to God—he did not say a great man, nor a learned man, nor a rich man, nor a wise man, nor an eloquent man, nor a smart man, but simply a man. I am a man, and it lies with the man himself whether he will or will not make that entire and full consecration.”<sup>5</sup> “By the grace of God, I'll be that man.” D.L. Moody made himself available.

**C. H. Spurgeon** was an unknown young preacher at age 17. At only 17 years of age, two years after his conversion, he took the pastorate of a very small church, Waterbeach Baptist Chapel. Then at age 19, he took the New Park Street Church in London. (With a new building it later

<sup>4</sup> Charles M. Sheldon. *In His Steps* (Chicago: Advance Publishing Co., 1899), 277.

<sup>5</sup> William R. Moody, *The Life of Dwight L. Moody*, (Sword of the Lord Publishers: Murfreesboro, TN; 1900), 134.

became known as the Metropolitan Tabernacle). Spurgeon was an unknown, but he made himself available. There were 232 members then. During his pastorate, 14,692 were baptized and joined the Tabernacle. Spurgeon made himself available.

**Susana Wesley** was a mother of 18 children, and she made herself available as a “keeper of the home” and changed the world through her love for God.

**Jim Elliot** and the other four martyrs to the Auca Indians were not extraordinary people. They just made themselves available to God! And what about Rachel Saint along with Elizabeth Elliot who went in after her husband’s death to live among the savage Indians who killed her husband to point them to Christ? These were not amazing people. They were regular people with an amazing God. They made themselves available.

**My Wife.** She follows Jesus when exhausted and when filled with energy. Whatever state she is in she follows Jesus. She points the children to Jesus. She points me to Jesus.

You say OK, I want to be a disciple. I want to follow in Jesus’ steps. How do I do that? I’m glad you asked!

### III. How to follow Christ’s example, vs. 21-23a – Follow in his steps...

#### Ancient Christian Hymn

2:22–25 In this passage Peter draws extensively on the language and theology of the fourth Servant Song in Isaiah (Isa 52:13–53:12). The particular form of the Servant Song used by Peter may have already been circulating among the early church as a type of hymn.

#### The Lord’s Redemptive Disciple Making

There is perhaps nothing more beautiful in the English language than Milton’s depiction of the moment God’s Son stood upon the rim of the universe in *Paradise Lost*. Seeing our need for a Savior, he said to the Father, “I will go.” So the eternal Word of God took on flesh. And this one, Jesus, the one who possesses all authority and all power—this one humbled himself and became a servant.

Peter, knowing just how difficult our sojourning in this world will be, says in essence, “I have an example for you to imitate. I have an exile for you to follow. The one who flung the stars into space—this one shall lead you!”<sup>6</sup> How did Christ set an example for us? He redeemed the world.

#### How is Christ Our Example?

We must follow Christ’s **example** in order to be a true disciple. The Greek for “example” is ὑπογραμμός—a word which occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. It means a copy set by a writing or drawing master, which was to be exactly reproduced by his students.<sup>7</sup>

Christ left us an example. **1 Peter 2:21**, “For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an **example**, so that you might **follow in his steps**.”

#### Christ is the Exact Image of the Father

You need to understand that on the earth, Christ is doing his own imitating. To understand Christ’s example, you must know that he is the “The Son is the radiance of the glory of God and

<sup>6</sup> Helm, D. R. (2008). *1 & 2 Peter and Jude: sharing Christ’s sufferings* (p. 96). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.

<sup>7</sup> Spence-Jones, H. D. M. (Ed.). (1909). *1 Peter* (p. 75). London; New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company.

the **exact imprint of his nature**, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power” (**Heb 1:3**). **John 1:18**, “No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known.” Literally it says, “He has revealed God to us.” To “make known” is the word *exēgéomai* which means to “**reveal**,” to “**dig** it out, to “**explain**,” or to “**recount**.” Christ is digging out the treasures of the Father and showing them to us. He’s revealing and explaining and recounting the glories of the Father to us because he’s “full of grace and truth” (Jn 1:14).

### Reveals the Father’s Glory to Us

How does Christ reveal the Father’s glory to us? The King of Glory enters into a state of suffering. All the while he is expressing the Father’s love to a rebellious world. We can almost see him standing before the earthly governor, Pilate, and, out of love, not reviling in return. When he suffers at the hands of the officer who flogged him and beat him, he did not threaten in return. Why? Because he loves them. He wants them to “die to sin and live to righteousness” (vs. 24). How did he do it? He entrusted himself to the one who judges justly.<sup>8</sup> We are prone to take that in a negative, vengeful way, but don’t. God is actually going to judge the rebels as righteous because of Christ’s sacrifice. Remember his cry, “Father forgive them for they know not what they do” (**Lk 23:24**).

### What is Christ’s Example?

Here we see Christ’s example: “When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.”

Peter sums it up in chapter 3:18, “Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God” (**1 Pet 3:18**).

The world around him are rebels, but Christ is **obedient** – “He committed no sin” (vs. 22a).

Everywhere are deceitful words and crooked, gossipy people, but Christ is **truthful** – “neither was deceit found in his mouth” (vs. 22b). Deception wasn’t a tactic of Christ’s. He didn’t slander people. He didn’t try to lie about people to get them back. He didn’t gossip. He spoke the truth.

The Jews were raging against him, and all the while he was **gentle**. He was healing them. “**healing** them” (Augustine).<sup>9</sup> Anger is usually the first human reaction when we are wronged. Christ did not “**get even**” with anyone. He took the pain with a gentle spirit. He suffered, but he did not make threats.

In America, we are all kind of personal vigilantes. In other words, we believe in a just society which is a good thing. It’s our way of life here. It’s the best place in the world to live because of this. If we are wronged, we use force to make it right. There are certainly times when we need to do that, especially for the vulnerable. But when Christ is personally injured, he is gentle. He is love. He is forgiving.

## IV. The many **benefits** of following Jesus, vs. 24-25 – By his wounds you have been healed...

**1 Peter 2:24-25**, “He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. 25 For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.”

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 97-98.

<sup>9</sup> St. Augustine. In J. E. Rotelle, ed. *Works of St. Augustine: A Translation for the Twenty-First Century, Volume 6* (Hyde Park, N.Y.: New City Press, 1995) 284.

What are the benefits of following Christ? We entrust ourselves to a perfect loving Father. We have a good, good Father indeed. We “to him who judges justly” (vs. 23). He’s going to judge us righteous because of Christ. He will repay if he must, but He is “not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Pet 3:18, KJV).

### **New Life in Jesus**

Christ gives us new life! “He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness” (1 Pet 2:24a). By the indwelling Spirit through faith that comes by God’s Word (Rom 10:17), we are born again and now dead to sin! Through new life in Christ, our old life is put to death. Because of the death of Christ, by faith we receive Christ’s life into us and we now live to righteousness. We die to sin by living in Christ. Our new life puts the old life to death. All of this is a gift because Christ died in our place.

### **Healing in Jesus**

“By his wounds you have been healed” (1 Pet 2:24b). All of us are wounded by sin – wounded by our old nature. Anger. Lust. Pride. Being controlled by toxic emotions. We need healing. In Christ our righteousness, we have healing. We will never be that person that we once were, because Jesus has healed us! He’s transformed our heart, given us his Spirit, implanted his Word in our heart and mind. We are healed. Now we still struggle with sin, but now we have the victory! Daily now we need to apply the Word like a salve to our heart!

### **Shepherding by Jesus**

When I was a kid, we used to play kick the can every Saturday night in the summers. And we always had our lookouts. Someone had to keep their eye on the one guarding the can. But we are all human, and though we would always try to kick the can, sometimes our lookout would get distracted. If you are a Christian, you have a lookout and a Shepherd for your soul who never fails. “Casting all your care upon him for he cares for you” (1 Pet 5:7).

### **Conclusion**

As we think of our good Shepherd, let us close with Psalm 23.

“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. 3 He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. 4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”