

Bay City Wesleyan Church  
January 22, 2017

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Sunday Morning 01-22-2017

Launch a new year and a new series of messages with us as we hear Jesus' invitation, "Follow me."  
<http://bible.com/events/158545>

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Our theme for 2017

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WESLEYAN LIFE Magazine

Winter 2017 The mission of the church is discipleship.

<https://wesleyan.life/magazine/winter-2017>

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 12 months all of us in this place, as well as those who join us, will see Jesus more clearly, love him more dearly, and follow him more nearly.

A Quick Review

Jesus invites everyone to follow no matter what they believe about him or how they behave.

Most people think they need to clean up their lives before they can follow Jesus. That's religion and religion says, "Change and you can join us." But that's not the way Jesus views it. Jesus says, "Join us and you will change."

Following Jesus always starts with listening and learning but goes on from there.

While becoming a better person or going to heaven when we die are benefits of following Jesus, the definitive goal is to develop a faith that overwhelms our fear.

Now it's time for us to read the fine print. What does it cost to follow Jesus?

Mark 8:27-37 NIV

Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked them, "Who do people say I am?" They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets." "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "You are the Messiah." Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him. He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again. He spoke plainly about this, and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. "Get behind me, Satan!" he said. "You do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns." Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life

for me and for the gospel will save it. What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?

Sermon in a Sentence:

Following Jesus will cost you something  
but not following him will cost you more.

How will I know when I'm at a point of decision like this?  
Based on the experience of Jesus followers who've gone before us, there are three signs that you've come to a point of decision.

1. It will feel like you are choosing between right and wrong.
2. It will feel like something in you is dying.
3. It will be a defining moment for you.

A New Mind Set

You and I have an aversion to denying ourselves and to paying any cost. You like free, don't you? You may be tempted to take a step back when Jesus says you need to deny yourself and take up your cross to follow him. But following Jesus will cost you something that you will eventually lose anyway. Not following him will cost you even more.

The Invitation

If you choose to serve the Lord today, and desire to proclaim your entrance into this covenant, please stand. Let's make our promises to God together.

The Covenant Prayer (on hand out cards)

I am no longer my own, but yours.

Set me to what you will,  
rank me with whom you will;  
set me to doing,  
set me to suffering;  
let me be active for you  
or laid aside for you,  
praised for you  
or humbled for you;  
let me be full,  
let me be empty;  
let me have all things,  
let me have nothing;  
I freely and cheerfully yield all things  
to your pleasure and purpose.  
And now, dear glorious and blessed God,  
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
you are mine,  
and I am yours.  
So be it. And the pledge that I have made on earth,  
let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.

In response to today's message, I will...

Change my mind by memorizing Luke 9:23

Move forward by praying The Covenant Prayer at least once a month this year