



# JESUS, MAY I FOLLOW?

a church in the World

## ABSTRACT

We left off last week with the entire town  
begging Jesus to leave ...

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## Passage

Mark 5:18 – 20, Luke 8:38 – 39

## Notes

The translations are basically the same.

## What is the Author Saying to the Audience?

When God truly has changed you, you will want to follow Him, even if everyone else does not want to follow. Also, following Him may not be what you would want it to be or expect it to be.

## Scripture of the Day

<sup>30</sup> So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?” <sup>31</sup> And he said, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. <sup>32</sup> Now the passage of the Scripture that he was reading was this:

*“Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter  
and like a lamb before its shearer is silent,  
so he opens not his mouth.*

<sup>33</sup> *In his humiliation justice was denied him.  
Who can describe his generation?  
For his life is taken away from the earth.”*

<sup>34</sup> And the eunuch said to Philip, “About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?” <sup>35</sup> Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus. <sup>36</sup> And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?” <sup>38</sup> And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him.

- - Acts 8:30 – 38

## Introduction

We left off last week with the entire town begging Jesus to leave. Crazy as that sounds, it is true. However, it turns out there is one lone sole who is begging Jesus as well, but this person is not begging Jesus to leave, but is begging Jesus, to follow.

## Body

### Mark 5:17 – 20

<sup>17</sup> Then the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region. <sup>18</sup> As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that he might be with him. <sup>19</sup> And he did not permit him but said to him, “Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.” <sup>20</sup> And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled.

## Jesus Does Not Stay Where He is Not Wanted

As we see here, as I mentioned earlier, all the people of the town and countryside were begging Jesus to leave. Last week we went into why everyone would beg the God of the universe to leave, so I encourage to go to our sermon archive and listen to that message. There is something important here that we see throughout Jesus's ministry.

He does not stay, where He is not wanted. We are going to see this as we follow Jesus:

### Mark 6:1 – 6

*He went away from there and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. <sup>2</sup>And on the Sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished, saying, "Where did this man get these things? What is the wisdom given to him? How are such mighty works done by his hands? <sup>3</sup>Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him. <sup>4</sup>And Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor, except in his hometown and among his relatives and in his own household." <sup>5</sup>And he could do no mighty work there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and healed them. <sup>6</sup>And he marveled because of their unbelief.*

### Matthew 10:14 – 15

*<sup>14</sup>And if anyone will not receive you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet when you leave that house or town. <sup>15</sup>Truly, I say to you, it will be more bearable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town.*

The reasons why people will not listen to the words of God will be different, but we are never to be surprised by it. We need to keep moving on to where the Spirit of the Lord is guiding us.

## The Least of These

So we see in verse 18 of Mark Chapter 5 that Jesus and His disciples are leaving in the boat, but I did exaggerate just a tiny, tiny bit. There is one person who is still begging, but instead of begging for Jesus to leave, he is begging to follow Jesus.

Who is this person? Is it a person of wealth? A person of learning? A leader from the government? No, it is the man freed of the 2,000 demons. The person throughout all of that land who would be considered the least of the least, but knows that he has been healed and has been transformed not just in his body, but more importantly in his heart.

We must remember we have seen an example of someone who was miraculously healed, but did not change his ways immediately. Do you remember the paralyzed man at the pool of Bethesda? There may be some folks who were not here with us for that message, so let's do a flashback:

### John 5:2 – 14

*<sup>2</sup>Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Aramaic called Bethesda, which has five roofed colonnades. <sup>3</sup>In these lay a multitude of invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed. <sup>5</sup>One man*

*was there who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. <sup>6</sup> When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had already been there a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be healed?" <sup>7</sup> The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, and while I am going another steps down before me." <sup>8</sup> Jesus said to him, "Get up, take up your bed, and walk." <sup>9</sup> And at once the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked.*

*Now that day was the Sabbath. <sup>10</sup> So the Jews said to the man who had been healed, "It is the Sabbath, and it is not lawful for you to take up your bed." <sup>11</sup> But he answered them, "The man who healed me, that man said to me, 'Take up your bed, and walk.'" <sup>12</sup> They asked him, "Who is the man who said to you, 'Take up your bed and walk'?" <sup>13</sup> Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, as there was a crowd in the place. <sup>14</sup> Afterward Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, "See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you."*

We cannot be certain as to what Jesus is referring to in verse 14, but it doesn't sound like this healed person is doing what they are supposed to be doing. The healed man from the pool at Bethesda didn't go after Jesus and ask to follow him, like this man who has been released from demonic bondage.

So I want us to see that even when Jesus helped people, they didn't all respond the same way. Our expectations is that people will be eternally grateful and change their ways and follow God. We should know that is not the case. We see throughout the Old Testament that God did so many miracles for the people of Israel and they were thankful for a moment, but then went right back to their sinful ways.

So we cannot be surprised when this happens to us. When we are a blessing to someone and share God's love and compassion with people and they are thankful for the moment, but are unchanged.

## Following Jesus May Not Be What You Think

However, this man has changed. He comes to Jesus and wants to go with Him in the boat. He wants to follow Jesus, which is correct. However, we see here that for this man, following Jesus meant something different from what he thought.

Following Jesus for this man was not like it was for Peter or Matthew where Jesus told them to follow Him physically from place to place (Matt 4:18 – 20; 9:9). However, Jesus did give him specific instructions on what he was supposed to do. He was to go back to his family and friends and tell them what God had done for him. And he did it and his family and friends were amazed.

## Take Aways

### Following Jesus Wherever He Goes

Now we don't know for sure, but it seems as if this man didn't debate with Jesus. At least from Scripture it seems like he wasn't upset with Jesus. No, he received his assignment with joy and vigor and went and followed Jesus in the way the Lord had called him to and people were impacted.

We have to remember that as transformed born again people we now have Jesus in us by the power of the Holy Spirit in us. We have to remember that we are part of one body and each of us are following Jesus, but we will be called to serve in different ways.

#### 1 Corinthians 12:12 – 20

*<sup>12</sup>For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. <sup>13</sup>For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.*

*<sup>14</sup>For the body does not consist of one member but of many. <sup>15</sup>If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. <sup>16</sup>And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. <sup>17</sup>If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? <sup>18</sup>But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. <sup>19</sup>If all were a single member, where would the body be? <sup>20</sup>As it is, there are many parts, yet one body.*

Every part of the body is important to the Lord. That means you! Even if the world may see what you are doing as insignificant, remember the judge is not the world, but God.

This man wanted to go with Jesus, but when he was told his purpose, he received it with joy. My prayer for you is that you are open to follow Jesus wherever He may take you and that you are willing to receive it with joy.

I pray that you beg like this man and ask Jesus to follow Him.