



FOLLOWING CHRIST ON HIS TERMS

BY: Pastor Samuel AJ Williams

Day 1: The Question That Changes Everything

Devotional

In the midst of Jesus' most successful ministry season, with crowds gathering and miracles happening, He asked His disciples a penetrating question: "Who do you say that I am?" This wasn't about gathering feedback or boosting His reputation. This was about identity the foundation upon which everything else is built. The crowds had opinions. Some thought Jesus was John the Baptist, others believed He was Elijah or another prophet. These weren't necessarily wrong answers, but they were incomplete. They recognized His power but missed His true identity. When Jesus made it personal with His disciples, Peter got it right: "The Christ of God." This same question confronts us today. Not what your pastor says about Jesus, not what your family believes, not what culture thinks but who do YOU say that He is? Your answer to this question will determine how you live, what you prioritize, and how you respond to His call on your life. When we see Jesus correctly as the Christ—the anointed King of God—everything changes. He's not just a good teacher to listen to or a prophet to respect. He's the King who deserves our complete surrender and obedience.

Bible Verse

"Once when Jesus was praying in private and his disciples were with him, he asked them, 'Who do the crowds say I am?'" - Luke 9:18

Reflection Question

If someone asked you today, "Who is Jesus to you?" what would your honest answer reveal about your relationship with Him?

Quote

When people fail to see Jesus correctly, they inevitably fail to follow him correctly.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, help me see You clearly for who You truly are—not just a teacher or prophet, but the Christ, the King of my life. Give me courage to answer Your question with both my words and my life.

Day 2: Knowing the God You Serve

Devotional

There's a profound difference between knowing about someone and truly knowing them. You can read every biography about a person, study their achievements, and memorize their quotes, but until you spend time with them personally, you don't really know them. The same is true with Jesus. Many people have head knowledge about Christ they know the stories, can recite verses, and understand theology. But Jesus calls us into relationship, not just religion. He wants us to sit with Him, break bread with Him, and spend quiet moments in His presence. This intimate knowledge transforms how we serve Him. When you truly know someone's heart, character, and love for you, serving them becomes a joy rather than a duty. You understand their motivations, trust their decisions, and follow their lead because you know they have your best interests at heart. Jesus isn't looking for people who serve Him from a distance. He's calling us into the kind



of relationship where we know His voice, understand His ways, and trust His heart completely. This kind of knowing only comes through time spent together in prayer, in His Word, and in the quiet moments where He reveals Himself to us. The question isn't whether you know about Jesus, but whether you truly know Him.

Bible Verse

"Once when Jesus was praying in private and his disciples were with him, he asked them, 'Who do the crowds say I am?'" - Luke 9:18

Reflection Question

When was the last time you spent unhurried, quiet time with Jesus just to know Him better, not to ask for something?

Quote

You can't serve a God you don't know. You can't serve a savior you didn't sit down with and break some bread with. You can't serve a God that you have never spent any lonely time with.

Prayer

Jesus, I want to know You personally, not just know about You. Draw me into deeper relationship with You through prayer and Your Word.

Day 3: The Authority Question

Devotional

Recognition without submission is incomplete discipleship. Many people acknowledge Jesus as a great teacher, respect Him as a prophet, or even admire Him as a historical figure. But Jesus isn't looking for admirers He's looking for followers who submit to His authority as King. There's a significant difference between serving right and submitting right. You can participate in church activities, volunteer for ministries, and do good works while still holding back areas of your life from His lordship. You can be present around the work of God while never fully surrendering to the will of God. When Peter declared Jesus as "The Christ of God," he was acknowledging Jesus' divine authority. Christ means "anointed one" the King appointed by God. Kings don't make suggestions; they give commands. They don't offer advice; they establish laws. They don't seek approval; they expect obedience. This is where many people struggle. We love the benefits of following Jesus forgiveness, peace, hope, community but we resist His authority over our decisions, relationships, finances, and future plans. We want Him as Savior but not as Lord. True discipleship means coming under His authority completely. It means trusting His wisdom over our understanding and His plans over our preferences. Admiration is not the same as submission, and Jesus calls us to both.

Bible Verse

"Once when Jesus was praying in private and his disciples were with him, he asked them, 'Who do the crowds say I am?'" - Luke 9:18

Reflection Question

What areas of your life are you still trying to manage without Jesus' authority, and what would it look like to surrender those areas to Him?

Quote

If Jesus is a teacher, yes, you'll listen to him. If he's a prophet, oh, you gonna give him the respect. But remember, if he's the Christ, the anointed King of God, then you must come under his authority.

Prayer



Lord, I acknowledge You not just as my Savior but as my King. Help me submit every area of my life to Your loving authority.

Day 4: The Daily Cross

Devotional

Jesus made discipleship crystal clear: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me." Notice that word daily. This isn't a one-time decision but a daily choice to die to self and live for Christ. The cross wasn't just a symbol in Jesus' time; it was an instrument of execution. When Jesus spoke of taking up your cross, His listeners understood the gravity of His words. A condemned person carried their crossbeam to the place where they would die. Jesus is calling us to a daily death death to our selfish desires, our need for control, our old habits, and anything that competes with His lordship. This daily dying isn't easy. It means saying no to things that feel good but aren't good for us. It means choosing His will over our wants, His timing over our urgency, His ways over our preferences. Some days the cross feels heavier than others, but the promise remains: the kingdom of God moves through sacrifice before it moves into glory. The beautiful truth is that this daily death leads to daily resurrection. As we die to self, we come alive to God. As we surrender our plans, we discover His better purposes. As we let go of control, we find the freedom that comes from trusting the One who loves us perfectly. The call isn't complicated, but it is costly. Yet the cost of following Jesus is nothing compared to the cost of not following Him.

Bible Verse

"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

Reflection Question

What does "taking up your cross daily" look like practically in your current season of life?

Quote

The call of Jesus is not complicated, but it is costly.

Prayer

Jesus, give me strength for the daily choice to die to myself and live for You. Help me embrace the cross knowing it leads to resurrection life.

Day 5: Let Go and Rise Up

Devotional

Following Jesus requires both letting go and picking up. You have to release some things to receive what He has for you. You have to surrender your grip on certain relationships, habits, dreams, or securities to take hold of His better plan for your life. This process isn't always comfortable. Just as Jesus experienced pain, rejection, and suffering before His resurrection, we too will face difficulties as we follow Him. The cross comes with hurt, disappointment, and sacrifice. But here's the incredible promise: just as He got up, we will too. The path of discipleship leads through the valley before it reaches the mountaintop. It moves through sacrifice before it enters glory. But every step of surrender brings us closer to the abundant life Jesus promised. Every moment of dying to self creates space for His life to flourish in us. The enemy wants you to believe that letting go means losing out. But Jesus offers a divine exchange: your brokenness for His wholeness, your weakness for His strength, your limited plans for His unlimited purposes. When you let go of what you're clinging to, He picks you up and carries you to places you never imagined. The question isn't whether you'll face challenges as you follow Jesus you will. The question is whether you'll trust Him through them, knowing that resurrection



always follows crucifixion in God's kingdom. If you let go right now, He'll pick you up right now.

Bible Verse

"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

Reflection Question

What is God asking you to let go of today so He can lift you up to something better?

Quote

If you let go right now, he'll pick you up right now. If you let go right now, he'll take you up right now.

Prayer

Father, I choose to let go of what I'm holding onto and trust You to lift me up. Help me remember that Your plans for me are always good.