



## The King is on a Mission: Follow Me

### Behold Our God – Read the Bible for Life Series #43

Mark 1:14-20

Pastor David Sunday

August 26, 2012

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Please turn to Mark 1:14. We've spent this last year reading through the Old Testament, and now we're arriving at the New Testament, where our King, the Lord Jesus, breaks the 400 years of silence between the Old and New Testaments. Jesus preaches the Word of God. Let's hear God's Word beginning at verse 14.

*Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."*

*Passing alongside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men." And immediately they left their nets and followed him. And going on a little farther, he saw James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, who were in their boat mending the nets. And immediately he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants and followed him.*

Lord, we thank You for Your Word. We are hungry, needing to be filled; thirsty, needing to be refreshed. Lord, where we are sluggish and in need of motivation, we pray that You would move us forward. Captivate our hearts with Your Word through the power of Your Spirit. We pray that we would not leave this study unchanged but that we would be brought face to face with the claims of our Savior, Jesus and that we would follow Him more closely. In His name we pray. Amen.

If you've ever been in a preacher's first sermon, probably the only reason you remember it is because of how bad it was. I remember my first sermon. Thankfully, Kate was the only one in this room who was present there. As I expounded upon 1 Corinthians 13, I used the theme of how love is like the cream in the middle of an Oreo cookie, and that was my main point. As a young preacher, I often took the wisdom of Tim Keller. He said, "Every preacher has to preach at least 500 bad sermons before he really learns how to

preach.” I realize there are a few of you in this room who have now heard me preach more than 500 sermons and I admire you for your patience.

As we come to the beginning of the New Testament, we find this Preacher whose name is Jesus breaking the silence. His first sermon is unlike any other. This Preacher’s first message is bold, authoritative, pointed, clear, compelling and remarkably influential. Mark summarizes the preaching of Jesus in verses 14 and 15.

There is so much here in this potent summary that could captivate our attention. For instance, we could explore the relationship between John’s arrest in the beginning of Jesus’ ministry and trace how it’s impossible for the gospel to advance without a measure of suffering in the lives of those who would minister the gospel, showing how this illustrates the preeminence of Jesus. John the Baptist is like the rocket launcher. Once the rocket is launched, the rocket launcher fades into the background.

Another potent theme that we could explore is the fact that our Lord, Who is God as Mark calls Him in verse 1— “Jesus Christ, the Son of God” —comes on His mission into the world and the very first, primary activity of His missionary ministry is preaching. He proclaims the Gospel.

I understand and appreciate in some ways that saying, “Preach the gospel at all times and if necessary use words.” I think I understand to what the person was getting. You can’t really preach the gospel unless your life adorns the message. But I would ask, is it ever possible to preach the gospel without using words? Jesus was a Preacher.

Another theme that demands our attention is the words, “The time is fulfilled.” Everything we’ve been reading in the Old Testament—all the promises made to Abraham, David and through the prophets—finds its fulfillment in the coming of God’s Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. There’s so much to be explored there.

Then there’s the whole theme of what Jesus was preaching—the Kingdom of God is at hand. That Kingdom that is so glorious and beautiful. To live under Christ’s Kingship is to bask in the sunshine of God’s favor. It means to be the rightful heir of God’s royal treasury, to live in righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit for all eternity, to put yourself under the healing of Christ’s royal hands and to look forward to His return when all fear, sorrow, suffering and death will be swallowed up in endless joy and peace. Whole sermons could be preached on that theme—on the Kingdom of God which is at hand.

Finally, we could explore how it is impossible to believe in the Gospel without repenting of sin. Jesus said, “The Kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the

Gospel.” To repent means to change your mind, to think differently, to turn in a radical new direction, to turn away from all you once held dear in order to bow in joyful submission and loving adoration to Christ your King. And if we will not repent, we cannot say that we truly believe.

All of these very potent themes are encapsulated in the summary of Jesus’ preaching. The whole Gospel of Mark is going to trace these themes. As we read the Gospels together over the next few weeks, we’ll see these themes being repeated over and over again. But as rich, potent and magnificent as all of these themes are, I want to rivet your attention this morning on just two simple words that Jesus spoke after He had finished preaching and that He continues to speak today. Whenever anyone encounters the Word of Jesus through the Holy Spirit, these two words are what Jesus wants to impress upon minds and hearts. These two simple words deserve our most profound attention because our response to these two words really determines whether or not our Savior’s preaching of the Kingdom of God has captivated our hearts. You could listen to biblical preaching and give a clear and sophisticated definition of all the words that Jesus spoke. But the real test of whether or not your life has been shaped by King Jesus is how you respond to these two simple words: *“Follow Me.”*

That’s what Jesus says after He finishes preaching. He goes alongside the Sea of Galilee and finds some men who are fishermen—Simon and Andrew—in the middle of their labors. In verse 17 Jesus said to them, *“Follow Me.”* Again, in verse 19, He finds James, the Son of Zebedee, and John his brother, and immediately He calls them. *“Follow me.”* These are the two simple words I want us to think about this morning—*“Follow me.”*

I think we’re always liable to forget what Christianity is all about. Being a Christian is not about attending church on Sundays, accumulating an impressive understanding of biblical teaching, living a moral life, supporting a particular political agenda or doing lots of good things to help people in this world. Don’t get me wrong; being a Christian involves all of those things. If you are a Christian you will love worship and the fellowship of the church, eagerly seek to understand the Bible and go deep into the knowledge of the things of God and pursue holiness. If you are a Christian, it will influence your citizenship in this world and your life will be overflowing with works of mercy, goodness and service to others. But none of these things in themselves defines what it means to be a Christian or captures the essence of true Christianity.

Two simple words capture the essence of what it means to be a Christian. Jesus said, “Follow Me.” A Christian is someone who is following a Person, not just a bunch of ideas. Jesus is a Person Who has walked on this planet in history—a fully authentic human being—and He is also a Person Who has existed for all eternity with no beginning and Who will have no end; Who created the universe by the word of His power and Who is indeed the eternal God of God’s. Christianity is about following Jesus.

Jesus is real. He is alive, present and active. He speaks, is sovereign, sets the agenda for our lives and captures the affections of our hearts. He is on the move—on a mission. And we are called to follow Him.

There are only two types of people in this world: those who are following Jesus and those who are not. If Jesus was in this room (and He is) and was to list the names of His followers, would your name be on that list? I’m not asking how frequently you attend church, how comfortable you are in Christian company, if you stay away from certain moral taboos, or whether or not you have positive thoughts about Jesus. If I were to take a poll of this congregation, I would imagine that Jesus’ approval rating in this congregation would be in the high 90’s. This isn’t a question of whether or not you approve of Jesus. I’m not asking if you would vote for Jesus because He’s not up for election. I’m asking if you are following Him. How have you responded to these words that ring through the ages; that must be impressed upon the hearts and minds of every generation: “Follow Me.”

## 1. What the Call of Jesus is Not

I’d like to consider two things: what the call of Jesus is not and what are the reasons His disciples follow Him.

### A. The call to follow Jesus is not initiated by His followers

In Jesus’ day, it was common for students to come under the instruction of a Rabbi. They would search for a Rabbi who could teach them God’s Law, the Torah. As long as they were happy with the instruction they were receiving, they would stay there under his tutelage. Sort of like people do today—look for preachers who impress them and teach them. As long as they’re happy with the preaching, they stay. If they’re not, they move somewhere else.

Jesus is not a Teacher-for-hire. Simon, Andrew, James and John didn’t go looking for Jesus to teach them. They didn’t check Him out or download His sermons on the internet

and say, “What do we think of this Preacher? Do we want to follow Him?” They did not call Jesus to be their Master; Jesus called them to be His followers. That’s the way it always is. Jesus takes the initiative with His disciples. We don’t take the initiative.

In Luke 9:57, *“As they [Jesus and His disciples] were going along the road, someone said to him, ‘I will follow you wherever you go.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.’”* In other words, Jesus was saying to them, “You have no idea what you’re saying when you say you will follow Me. You don’t know what you’re talking about.” And neither do we until Jesus takes the initiative and calls us to Himself. We do not know how to follow Him.

That’s why Jesus said to His disciples in John 15:16, *“You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide...”* He says the same to us. We don’t take the initiative to follow Him; He takes the initiative to call us. The call to discipleship is always the sovereign summons of a gracious King.

#### **B. The call to follow Jesus is not accompanied with a contract**

Jesus did not spell out the terms of discipleship for Simon, Andrew, James and John. He didn’t say to them, “If you will work for Me 40 hours a week, I’ll pay you this much and you’ll get so much vacation. If you’re not happy with the employment, here’s how you can back out of it.” None of that. There’s no contract here. He simply said two simple words to them: *“Follow me.”* They had no idea where following Him would lead them. Jesus did not see Himself under any obligation to explain it to them. He didn’t feel like He needed to define what this would entail. All they needed to do was trust Him.

What is it going to take for you to follow Jesus? Where is He going to lead you? How far will it take you and what will it cost you? I do not know. And I ask, do you need to know those things or will you just trust Him?

In his book *The King’s Cross*, Tim Keller says, “Imagine sitting down with a seven year old and asking her to write an essay on what it will be like to fall in love and get married. She writes out that essay and you read and think, ‘She has very little idea of what love and marriage is all about.’” She can’t. She’s just seven years old. There’s no way she can know what a life-long covenant commitment through all the changing seasons of life is like. She doesn’t have the capacity to understand and at the beginning of our discipleship, neither do we have the capacity to understand everything that is entailed in following Jesus.

But all we need to know is that we can trust Him. Those are the terms Jesus lists. No contract. No more definition than that. Just, “Follow Me.”

### C. Following Jesus is not open to negotiation

When Jesus calls His disciples, He asks for whole-hearted, unreserved, complete abandonment to Himself. Nothing can be held back or be seen as a higher priority. Listen again to Luke 9:59-60. *“To another he said, ‘Follow me.’ But he said, ‘Lord, let me first go and bury my father.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘Leave the dead to bury their own dead. But as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.’”*

In other words, “Let me first...” is not an appropriate response to Jesus’ call to discipleship. Jesus must be first.

Thou and Thou only, first in my heart,  
High King of Heaven, my treasure Thou art.

(“Be Thou My Vision” by Dallan Forgaill)

*“Yet another said, ‘I will follow you, Lord, but let me first say farewell to those at my home.’ Jesus said to him, ‘No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.’”* There’s no negotiating here. Are you saying, “Jesus, I’ll follow You but first let me do this.” Or, “I’ll follow You, Lord, as long as these qualifications are met: as long as it fits comfortably into my schedule; as long as it doesn’t demand too much of me financially; as long as it doesn’t disrupt my relationships.” Jesus said, “No. This call is not open to negotiation. I must take precedence over everything. Your family, livelihood, career, success, health and reputation must all fall in line behind Me. I demand complete, unreserved, unhesitating obedience.”

To illustrate this, David Platt gives a funny illustration to his congregation. He says, “Imagine me, the preacher, coming into a service 45 minutes late.” (Sometimes I dread this. Preachers have bad dreams that they will wake up late and be late for church.) He says,

“Imagine me coming in late. All the songs have stopped and the congregation has been awkwardly sitting there for five to ten minutes waiting for the preacher to show up. I come walking in and say, ‘I’m sorry. I got a flat tire on the highway on the way here. As I was getting out of my car to fix the tire, I got hit by a Mack truck—plowed over! And it hurt! But thankfully, I got the tire fixed, got back up on my feet and came as quickly as I possibly could.’ That is such an absurd thing to imagine because no one gets hit by a Mack truck and looks the same afterwards.”

Likewise, no one confronts the majesty of King Jesus and His sovereign call and looks the same afterwards. The resplendent King of Glory, Who laid His life down on the cross to redeem for Himself a people who belong to Him, summons *“Follow Me.”* When you answer that call, your life is radically transformed and your priorities are radically reoriented. Everything you once held dear and built your life upon now is counted loss for the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus as Lord.

One of the reasons the church sometimes has a weak influence on the culture is people hear us talking about this “Mack truck of glory” that has confronted our lives. They look at us and say, “But nothing looks different. Where’s the change? How are you any different than we are?”

The disciples recognized His sovereign authority and when He called them— *“Follow Me”*—they responded by immediately leaving their nets and following Him (1:18). Their vocational priorities and ambitions changed. Later on we read in verse 20 when James and John were in their boat mending the nets, *“And immediately he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants and followed him.”* Back in that culture, your family was your identity. To leave your father in the boat to follow Jesus was a remarkable statement of a transformed loyalty. That’s what following Jesus entails. There’s no negotiation. He asks to be first. He asks to be all. He wants to have all of us.

## **2. The Reasons Jesus’ Disciples Follow Him**

You might ask, “Why would anyone follow Him if He demands everything and it costs so much? Why do people follow Jesus?” Listen carefully as I try to extoll for you the glories of my God and King, the triumphs of His grace. If you ask anyone who is truly following Jesus, they will say to you without hesitation, “It’s worth everything. It’s worth leaving all. He’s the treasure that’s hidden in the field that’s worth selling all you have to obtain that field in order to get the treasure (Matthew 13:44). He’s the pearl of greatest price (Matthew 13:45).

Jim Eliot—missionary to the Auca Indians in Ecuador who was martyred in 1956—said, “He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he can never lose.”

### **A. Because of the unparalleled honor of being called by Him**

Every follower of Jesus will say, “Yes, that’s true. Why do we follow Him? First, we follow Him because of the unparalleled honor of being called by Him.” He calls us. The

King of the Universe comes to us—mere humans—and says, “I want you to follow Me, to be close to Me, to know Me.” And we say, “Amazing love! What an honor and privilege!”

As they talk about who might serve as a Vice Presidential candidate, it is often said that even when people publically say, “No, I wouldn’t do that,” it looks a lot different when the Presidential candidate asks them to serve. Then, the honor of being asked tends to wipe out all other reservations and they say, “Yes.” Jesus is far more important than the President of the United States—He’s asking, inviting and summoning us to be His followers!

Sometimes we look at the stories, especially here in Mark, and try to imagine what it was like for Peter, James, John and Andrew to be out there doing their daily work and all of the sudden this Man comes walking by and says, “Follow Me.” They drop everything. We wonder, “Are they crazy?” Would you do that this week? Don’t we tell our kids, “If you’re outside and someone comes and says, ‘Follow me,’ don’t follow them!”

Why did they do this? We need to understand that it wasn’t totally out of the blue. They knew Who this was Who was calling them. They had some prior experience with Him. Before Jesus went to Galilee, He had encountered these men. They had sat down and enjoyed a meal with Him (John 1:36-43). They had heard some of His teaching and had heard others talking about Him. They knew about Jesus, just like some of you have been brought to church by a friend who has been telling you about Jesus—introducing you to Him. Or maybe you’ve grown up in the church and have become acquainted with Jesus and are intrigued by Him. You’re getting to know Him. Jesus doesn’t ask you to follow Him without first revealing something of Who He is to you.

They had known something about Jesus, but now they’re just going about their normal lives and He comes to them. He also comes to you and says, “You’ve been hearing about Me. You know Who I am enough to know that I’m not like any other man. Now follow Me!” And when a disciple hears that call from the lips of his Savior, he says, “This is such an unparalleled honor; such a privilege. It’s my joy to honor You in all I do, King Jesus.” It’s not a burden. If you feel like Jesus is sort of like shackles on your life or that Jesus is holding you back, then you don’t know Him and are not following Him.

Flannery O’Connor was a novelist in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century—a woman from Georgia. She spoke and wrote very penetratingly of Southern culture as she knew it. She spoke about Bible-Belt culture in her day as being “Christ-haunted.” She said, “The reason people in the South avoid sinning is they want to avoid Jesus.” They don’t want to have to come face to face with their need for a Savior, so they put on a veneer of outward morality because

they're haunted by Christ and they're hoping with all their might that they can stay at a far enough distance from Him. That's not following Jesus. Those who follow Jesus never do so grudgingly but count it their joy and honor—it's not a burden but a privilege! The King of the Universe, the Lord of Glory, the Savior Who went to the cross to die as a sacrifice for your sins, Who rose from the dead, Who reigns with all authority in Heaven and on earth, is now inviting you to fellowship with Him. He's saying, "I want to take your life and make it something totally different than you could have asked or ever imagined." Because of Who He is, you respond, "Gladly. O Lamb of God. I will follow You wherever You go."

### **B. Because of the company we find along the way**

Sometimes it's possible as a follower of God to start to feel like Elijah. "Lord, I am left all alone. I am the only one in this horrible, wicked world who has any shred of righteousness left." That's the way Elijah felt (1 Kings 19:9-18). God said to him, "No, Elijah, that's not true. I've kept for Myself 7,000 who have not bowed the knee to Baal." God never leads His disciples all alone—at least not for long. He brings us into a community of Christ-followers. That's what we see here in this narrative.

First He calls Simon and Andrew in verse 16. Just a little while after that in verse 19, He goes a little farther. He said, "Oh, here are some others—James and John. I'm going to call them too." They become a community of Christ-followers just like we're a community of Christ-followers. The joy of following Him is we get to share this journey with others who are also on mission with the King and following Him wherever He goes.

Sometimes we might get a little tired of the people with whom we are following Him, and we might think, "Are they really all that special?" Ask yourself what the alternative is: to be left all by yourself—one single solitary disciple? Wouldn't that be hard? Praise God that He gives us traveling companions! Praise God that He gives us places like a church and care groups where we can encourage one another in our fellowship and stimulate one another to love and good deeds as we follow our King. We find that the joy of those who are walking this journey with us helps sustain us through the hard struggles of discipleship.

### **C. Because of what He makes us into**

Spurgeon said, "When Christ calls us by His grace, we ought not only to remember what we are but we ought also to think of what He can make us." Jesus said in Mar 1:17, "*And Jesus said to them, 'Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men.'*" Hear

that? *“Follow Me and I will make you...”* We should repent of what we have been and rejoice in what we will become.

Jesus is calling His disciples into something bigger than themselves—to invest in a cause greater than their own livelihoods, their own self-advancement and their own financial security. He’s saying to them, “Do you see what I was just doing here in verse 15, how I was proclaiming that the Kingship of God is now here, how I was calling men and women to turn away from their self-reliance and repent and believe in the Gospel? Do you see that?”

The most-important activity in the universe is bringing fallen men and women in touch with reality—the reality of our sin, rebellion and God’s restoration of all things in Jesus Christ. This is the most important activity in the universe and now, disciples, I’m calling you to invest your life in that most-important activity too. It’s not just for apostles, preachers or career missionaries. You don’t have to change your job or where you live to be involved in Jesus’ mission—all you have to do is follow Him! You don’t need to go to seminary and have a sophisticated knowledge of theology. You need to know Him and be on a life-long quest to get to know Him better. You need to be obeying Him, loving Him and delighting in Him. And when you do, Jesus promises you will become something that you never were before—a fisher of men!

That’s not just a possibility but a promise! When you are following Jesus and are radically committed to Him, He will put you in places and situations with people who He is preparing for His eternal Kingdom. He will make your life an investment in something that’s much bigger than yourself. You will become engaged in the very activities He was engaged in when He walked on earth. The mission He embraced will become your mission. That’s going to be our theme throughout this fall: God’s mission, our vision.

#### **D. Because He will never lead us where He has not gone first**

Jesus does not hide the cost of discipleship from us. Dietrich Bonhoeffer was right when he said, “When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die.” Come and die. Turn over to Mark 8 where we see Jesus clearly spelling out the cost of discipleship. Mark 8:34 says, *“And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, ‘If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.’”* This is not just for those original disciples but for anyone. There’s going to be suffering and hardship.

John Bunyan paraphrased the verse like this: "Following Me is not following some other masters. The wind sits always on My face and the foaming rage of the sea of this world and the proud and lofty waves thereof do continually beat upon the sides of the ship that Myself, My cause and My followers are in. He therefore who will not run hazards and he who is afraid to venture a drowning, let him not set foot into this vessel."

There's going to be a cost to following Jesus.

Must I be carried to the skies  
On flowery beds of ease,  
While others fought to win the prize  
And sailed through bloody seas?

Since I must fight if I would reign,  
Increase my courage, Lord!  
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,  
Supported by Thy Word.

("Am I a Soldier of the Cross" by Isaac Watts)

That courage is increased by realizing that wherever He leads us, He's already been there. He's already gone through it!

If He leads us to leave our fathers and families behind...

He left His Father's throne above,  
So free, so infinite His grace;

If He calls us to serve with no recognition and to humbly pour our lives out for people who do not appreciate it, we can remember that He...

Emptied Himself of all but love,  
And bled for Adam's helpless race...

If He calls us to embrace a cross, it's nothing that He has not already embraced. And not only has He gone before us but He will be with us in it to empower us through it.

Long my imprisoned spirit lay  
Fast bound in sin and nature's night;  
Thine eye diffused a quickening ray,  
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light;  
My chains fell off, my heart was free,  
I rose, went forth, and followed Thee.

Listen to the beautiful words of John 12:26. *"If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also..."* I love that! *"Where I am there will My servant be also."* He's gone before us. He's our Forerunner, the Pioneer and the Perfecter of

our faith. We follow in the triumphant train of the Lamb of God, Who has suffered death but has risen from the dead. *“Where I am, there will my servant be also.”*

No condemnation now I dread;  
Jesus, and all in Him, is mine!  
Alive in Him, my living Head,  
And clothed in righteousness Divine,  
Bold I approach the eternal throne,  
And claim the crown, through Christ my own.

(All four stanzas above are from “And Can It Be That I Should Gain” by Charles Wesley)

### **E. Because of where He leads us**

Where is Jesus now? He is in Glory. We follow Him because of where He is leading us. Jesus is in Glory right now, friends! He’s not on a cross. His sufferings are over and He is reigning at the right hand of the Father. *“When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory”* (Colossians 3:4). So it is true, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, that when Christ calls a man, He bids him come and die. But I’m really thankful for my friend, Mike Bullmore, who said, “That’s not the only truth. Death is not the goal of our discipleship—life is!” When Christ calls a man, He bids him come and live! Yes, there is death, but it is death that issues forth in everlasting life! Jesus said, “I have come that you might have life and have it more abundantly” (John 10:10). *“When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.”*

When we follow Jesus all the way to the end, we will see that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing to the glory that will be revealed to us. When the glory that will be revealed to us captivates our hearts, when we start to fix our eyes on Jesus seated at the right hand of God, that gives us endurance to run this race with perseverance, not counting the cost as too much but rejoicing that we get to share in fellowship with Him—that we get to follow Him!

Follow Jesus!

Young people raised in this church, don’t just follow the tide or the parents; get into His Word! Take it seriously! Follow Him! Ask Him, “Lord Jesus Christ, are my thoughts, words and attitudes pleasing in Your sight? If they’re not, teach me, Lord Jesus Christ, to make You the King and Lord of every part of my life? I want to follow You, Jesus!”

Moms and dads, follow Jesus! Don’t make your kids the ultimate object of everything; make the Kingdom of God the ultimate object of everything! Live so fully under the authority of Christ your King that your kids see that you’ve been hit by the Mack truck

of His glory and your life has been changed. Then they are moved to repent and believe in the Gospel.

Men and women, when you go to work this week, let it be seen by those with whom you work that the Mack truck of Christ's glory has so impressed itself upon your life that the things this world cares so much about—the accumulation of money, the proliferation of your own success—don't have a hold on you. Yes, you work hard for God's glory but you should also see that all you do is an opportunity to make much of Jesus Christ. You are a fisher of men.

Elderly people in our congregation, follow Jesus all the way to the end of your lives—until old age and gray hairs crown your heads, until you proclaim His might to another generation and His power to all those to come.

Jesus says, "Follow Me! Follow Me!" He's here and knows who is following Him. He knows who He's calling to Himself today. Would He name you as among His followers?

Bow your heads and close your eyes. Do a moment's worth of business here in the presence of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Don't let these be words that go in one ear and out the other. Hear the sovereign summons of Christ the King. Bow your knee; bow your heart. Give your life to Jesus right now. Begin a life of following Him today. Renew your commitments to Him today, for Jesus is Lord!

Lord Jesus, here we are with all our weaknesses and distractions, and we confess that we need You to captivate our hearts so that we truly live under Your Lordship. We pray that it would be evident to all whom we encounter that we are followers of the Lamb. We pray that we would not just be casually acquainted with Christianity for an hour or two each week but that Christ, You would be all in all to us for You are Lord. We bow our knees and our tongues confess, Jesus Christ, You are Lord. Amen.

"Jesus is Lord!"—the cry that echoes through creation:  
Resplendent pow'r, eternal Word, our rock.  
The Son of God, the King whose glory fills the heavens,  
Yet bids us come to taste this living bread.

Jesus is Lord—Whose voice sustains the stars and planets,  
Yet in His wisdom laid aside His crown.  
Jesus the Man, who washed our feet, who bore our suffering,  
Became a curse to bring salvation's plan.

Jesus is Lord—the tomb is gloriously empty!  
Not even death could crush this King of love!  
The price is paid, the chains are loosed, and we're forgiven,  
And we can run into the arms of God.

"Jesus is Lord!"—a shout of joy, a cry of anguish,  
As He returns, and ev'ry knee bows low.  
Then ev'ry eye and ev'ry heart will see His glory,  
The Judge of all will take His children home.

("Jesus Is Lord" by Keith Getty & Stuart Townend)

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