

## FOLLOW ME

Jesus utters the words, "Follow me," seven times in the New Testament. (NIV). In perhaps the most familiar utterance in Matthew 4:18-20 it states "As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." At once they left their nets and followed him." Imagine this scene, here are Peter and Andrew, brothers providing for the care of their families through the only means known to them, and this stranger walks up and says, "Follow me" and they do. They just lay down their nets and go. Did they perhaps recognize Jesus as a Rabbi and being faithful jews they obeyed Rabbis?' In Matthew 4:21-22, "Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James, son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him." Once again, we see the command given and immediately followed. Did Zebedee object? Here he was left with the work and his two sons just get up and leave. Would he have called out to them to come back and help as I might have, or did he just accept that his sons had left him to follow a stranger. What do we do when we hear those words "Follow me" whispered in the night or during times of quiet reflection and prayer? Do we get up and follow or wait for further instructions? God nudged me when I was twelve, but it took me 3 years to answer that nudge. I certainly was no Peter, Andrew, James, or John. I eventually came to Christ but not without a lot of protesting and arguing and sometimes I wonder if I am where He wants me to be yet. As it is said. "Be patient with me, God's not finished with me yet!" We are all on a faith journey and we are all on different stages of that journey, but God is with us all and is patiently guiding us and "nudging" us along. I pray for your journey as I hope you pray for mine.

Lord, we thank you for the day. We ask that you guide us and bring us safely through each day. Be with those who are suffering illness and misfortune. Bless them with your love and comfort. Be with those who are grieving, comfort them and may they remember the love shared with the one who has passed. Be with our church, guide us so it becomes your church. Help us to reach out to those who are in need and may we provide for them. May we welcome those who seek you and may they find you in our midst. Be with our Pastor, bless his ministry. Be with his family, bless them. Be with our Staff and leaders, bless their ministries. May we seek you in all we do and may we truly be the hands and feet of Christ. In Jesus name we pray, Amen

Grace Epperson