

# What does following Christ's footsteps mean for us?

1 Peter 2:21 says, "In fact, to this course you were called, because even Christ suffered for you, leaving you a model for you to follow his steps closely."

What does following Christ's steps mean for Christians?

Jesus' words at John 8:29 tell us that to follow his steps, we need to do what God wants: "And he that sent me is with me; he did not abandon me to myself, because I always do the things pleasing to him."

John 7:4 says, "I have glorified you on the earth, having finished the work you have given me to do."

Jesus glorified God and did His work. Christians today need to do the same. Since Jesus set the example, reading what the Bible tells us he did will tell us what we should be doing.



**sharon corcoran**

• use it or lose it

Luke 6:12, 13 says, "In the progress of these days he went out into the mountain to pray, and he continued the whole night in prayer to God. But when it became day, he called the disciples to him and chose from among them twelve, whom he also named apostles."

Christians today should likewise pray for God's help when making decisions. Though we don't have as big a decision as choosing apostles, there may be times we need to pray

for hours, even all night, over a major decision. And, of course, we can pray for short periods over minor decisions.

Christians should take what the Bible says to heart and apply it.

Luke 4:5-8 tells us Jesus did that: "So he brought him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the inhabited earth in an instant of time; and the Devil said to him: 'I will give you all this authority and the glory of them, because it has been delivered to me, and to whomever I wish I give it. You, therefore, if you do an act of worship before me, it will all be yours.' In reply Jesus said to him: 'It is God you must worship, and it

is to him alone you must render sacred service.'"

Christians not only need to obey God's commands, but also need to understand and apply the spirit of those commands. Jesus made this clear in many conversations with the Pharisees.

Mark 7:9-13 tells us about an instance: "Further, he went on to say to them: 'Adroitly you set aside the commandment of God in order to retain your tradition. For example, Moses said, "Honor your father and your mother," and "Let him that reviles father or mother end up in death." But you men say, "If a man says to his father or his mother: 'Whatever I have by which you may get benefit from me is corban, (that is, a gift dedicated to God.)' You

men no longer let him do a single thing for his father or his mother, and thus you make the word of God invalid by your tradition which you handed down. And many things similar to this you do.'"

Jesus had proper respect for God, the one who sent him to earth. Christians today should ask themselves if they follow his steps in that regard.

Romans 1:20 tells us: "For his invisible qualities are clearly seen from the world's creation onward, because they are perceived by the things made, even his eternal power and Godship, so that they are inexcusable."

Do we take the time to think about what that means? To ponder over what God's creations tell us about

him? To appreciate that if it weren't for Him, we wouldn't be here?

Isaiah 48:17 says God is "the One teaching you to benefit yourself, the One causing you to tread in the way in which you should walk."

God pleads with us in verse 18: "O if only you would actually pay attention to my commandments! Then your peace would become just like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea."

Christians today who follow Christ's footsteps in appreciating God's position as the creator and who obey him learn the truth of the words at 1 John 5:3: "For this is what the love of God means, that we observe his commandments; and yet his commandments are not burdensome."

## Holiday season a time of merriment, parties, but also a time of stress, loneliness

The stress of the holiday season is something that is discussed and written about every year.

Society defines this time of year as full of merriment, parties and social gatherings where everyone is happy and joyful. The media, advertisements and songs foster high expectations.

Stress does not come only from holiday activities. It is understandable to feel less than happy when dealing with a significant life change or loss, such as divorce or



**high plains mental health**

• plain sense

the death of a loved one.

Loneliness, health problems, family grudges, drinking problems and job pressures can also contribute.

When a person doesn't feel so cheery, they think that something is

wrong with them. Quite often, those feelings of discouragement are due mostly to trying to do too much and attempting to make the holiday

season a wonderful experience for all those involved. Taking on that much responsibility can result in a big strain on a person and on the rest of the family.

Opinions, attitudes and expecta-

tions for celebrating the holidays are not the same for everyone. Personal history and past experiences differ and affect how individuals and families view holiday activities.

Wanting others to react in a certain manner or to change behavior is not realistic and can result in frustration and bad feelings for all involved. For some reason people are expected to behave differently (usually better) during the holiday season, and when that doesn't happen, others who are involved in the plan-

ning and preparation tend to feel that they failed in their efforts.

The reality is that strained relationships cannot be mended in one day. Expecting other family members to get involved, to be sociable and to get along just may not be possible.

Not everyone should have to celebrate the holidays in the same way. In fact, it should even be all right to not celebrate, to slow down and simplify the season.

A person should feel at ease saying "no" to some requests, includ-

ing gifts, uncomfortable family gatherings and unrealistic time commitments.

*Contributed by Karen Beery, manager, Consultation and Education Department. The views expressed here are those of the individual writer and should not be considered a replacement for seeking professional help. Mail questions to High Plains Mental Health Center, Plain Sense, Consultation and Education Department, 208 E. Seventh, Hays, Kan. 67601.*

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