

1/7/2018: Walking away with excuses (Student Lesson)

Excuses for not following Jesus

Matthew 16:24

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, and follow me.

Matthew 8:18-22

18 When Jesus saw the crowd around him, he instructed his disciples to cross to the other side of the lake.

19 Then one of the teachers of religious law said to him, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go."

20 But Jesus replied, "Foxes have dens to live in, and birds have nests, but the Son of Man[a] has no place even to lay his head."

21 Another of his disciples said, "Lord, first let me return home and bury my father."

22 But Jesus told him, "Follow me now. Let the spiritually dead bury their own dead.[b]"

Philippians 2:5-8

5 You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had.

6 Though he was God,

he did not think of equality with God
as something to cling to.

7 Instead, he gave up his divine privileges[b];

he took the humble position of a slave[c]
and was born as a human being.

When he appeared in human form,[d]

8 he humbled himself in obedience to God
and died a criminal's death on a cross.

Instagram Followers:

- How many people do you follow on instagram?
- How many people follow you?
- What is your standard for following people?
- What is your standard for accepting request to follow?
- Do you ever unfollow someone? Why?
- What does a person's follow numbers say about them?

Follow the Leader:

Read Matthew 16:24

- What is Jesus standard for following him?
- What does he mean for us to give up your own ways?
- What does he mean for us to take up our cross?
- Goldilocks question: Are his standards for following him too high, too low, or just right? Why?

Excuses:

- What excuses do people give for not Giving up, taking up, and following him?
- Read Matthew 8:18-22
- Skit: Read the skit "I'll like follow you"

- What were the excuses these women had for following Jesus?
- Why do so many people choose to turn away from Jesus?

Jesus the example:

- Jesus standards for following him are high, but he does not ask of us, what he is not willing to do himself?
- Read Philippians 2:5-8
- How does Jesus lead by example in "giving up his own way"?
- How does Jesus lead by example on "taking up his cross"?

Application:

- Listen to the song Wherever He Leads:
www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=rrhwRldFvC8
- What do you think it would look like if you were to give up your own way? How might that shape your relationships with you parents? Siblings? Friends? Teachers? etc?
- What do you think it would look like to "take up your cross"? How might that shape your faith and how you follow Jesus?
- Emphasize the idea in the song that we follow Jesus, because he loves us! All he did (for example at Christmas & Easter) flows out of his love for us, and we follow him, not out of obligation, but out of love.