

## Follow whom?

A young man wrote me:

"The last year has really forced me to look in the mirror and figure out what I believe in, follow Christ's example, and not base my beliefs on man." What he said was not incorrect, but what it will lead to, I could not disagree with more. We are exhorted to find good men to follow and learn from them.

*2 Corinthians 8:5 "And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God."*

I do not know of anyone or any situation so clear, so absolute as this: God says follow their faith, obey, and submit to them.

*Hebrews 13:7 "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation."*

This command is not addressed to some old man who stands in a pulpit, but to a man who has proven his faith, "whose faith follow." Can you see his faith? Can you see his life and testimony? Can you see evidence of God's being in his life and ministry in such a manner that you can follow HIS faith?

*Let's see, if you were to pick who to follow which one would you chose? Maybe the old man? I have the incredible honor to know and serve with these young men. These are the hope of tomorrow, but they are going to need someone to follow today.*

Speaking of this man whose faith you have seen whom you can trust, whose faith you have seen proven over the years:

*Hebrews 13:17 "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."*



*2 Timothy 3:14 "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;"*

The issue in this passage is "knowing of whom thou hast learned them;"

Do you know the man? What do you need to know in order to follow a man? Look back to the prior verses.

There are some men you do not want to follow, men who have tried to lead others astray:

vs. 8 *"Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses,"*

These are the wrong men to follow. "But..." Paul says...

vs. 10 *"But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience,"*

vs. 11 *"Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me."*

Thou hast fully known my...

- \* Doctrine
- \* Manner of life
- \* Purpose
- \* Faith
- \* Longsuffering
- \* Charity
- \* Patience
- \* Persecutions
- \* Afflictions



*What a privilege that this young preacher boy, out of my youth group, can know my 85-year-old pastor and lean on his time-tested faith.*

Paul says, You have "fully known" what I am and what I believe. Now pay attention and do things the way I have taught you.

If you can find a man like that, relax and listen.

In college, I was a missions major intending to head to the large cities of Europe. First, I met with our college president and then our pastor. Both agreed my goal was not the wise thing to do. Their advice was short and simple -- and it worked.

This nonsense about not following men was invented by the devil and backslidden preachers who are not close enough to the Lord to stand up and say, check me out and make your call.

Now I must admit, I have almost never told someone what I thought they should do, I often just point out some things or offer some illustrations. There is nothing wrong with trusting the advice of your parents and your pastor; for doing so is as biblical as "be not drunk with wine." For that reason, there are times you must find a new pastor, one you can trust completely. Even I have had to move my loyalties at one point in life.

We are constantly reminded to receive instruction:

*Proverbs 1:7 "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction."*

*vs. 8 "My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:"*

*Proverbs 8:10 "Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold."*

*Proverbs 8:33 "Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not."*

The Bible tells us "wise men will hear," yet many say that their knowledge and experience suffices so that they do not need to listen or learn.

*Proverbs 9:9 "Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning."*

God's opinion of those who listen and do not listen is obvious:

*Proverbs 10:17 "He is in the way of life that keepeth instruction: but he that refuseth reproof erreth."*

*Proverbs 12:1 "Whoso loveth instruction loveth knowledge: but he that hateth reproof is brutish."*

A young preacher is very wise to find solid, older, more experienced men to follow, to learn from, and to trust.