

FOLLOW GOD AS CHILDREN

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Romans 6:1 AV "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in in sin, that grace may abound? 2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"

Whoever follows the teaching of Jesus in the New Testament, is a true child of God. The apostle wrote Ephesians 5:1-2 AV "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour."

Following Jesus is obeying the Word of God; it is following His advice concerning our treatment of, and attitude toward, the people we interact with every day. It is always acting toward loved ones, family, friends, co-workers, and fellow believers in a Christ-like way, from divine love in our heart, because 1 John 4:8 NKJV "He who does not love does not know God, for God is love."

It is good to take inventory of our faith in God, as this will help us keep a right attitude toward people. Scripture verses help in assessing our heart attitude---James 3:17 NKJV "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy."

The apostle prayed Ephesians 3:16-17 AV "That [God] would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love."

Grounded in love, means acting from love toward everyone; it is depending on divine power to do things and treat people in a scriptural way---that is faith in the Atonement of Christ. Ephesian's 3:19-20 AV "To know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us."

Following God is listening to Christ---who told us Matthew 22:37-40 AV "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

Acting in divine love toward people; forgiving everyone of everything; and praying for those who may have offended us---is just evidence of this divine love in our heart. It is simply following Jesus and accepting his advice Matthew 7:12 AV "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."

Keeping our thoughts pure may seem difficult today, but God calls us to a high standard of morality. He supplies the ability---if we will first make the choice. Ephesians 5:3 AV "But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints."

An everyday sacrifice of our self-will to God's divine-will enables His Spirit to help us follow that high calling--- Ephesians 3:20 NIV "to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us." God receives all the honor and glory, when we follow His Word in faith.

We should walk away from conversations, discussions, or activities that we know would not have God's approval or blessing. Jesus said that it is as much a sin to think of immoral thoughts, as committing immoral acts Matthew 5:28. Adulterers do not inherit the kingdom 1 Corinthians 6:9.

Ephesians 5:5-7 NKJV "For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous [greedy NIV] man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them."

Idolatry is a serious sin because anything that replaces God in our life, has become an idol in our heart---which violates the First Commandment

Exodus 20:3 AV "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Anything can become an idol---money, immoral lifestyle, unscriptural fellowship, secular interests, worldly activities or---just about anything. Greed is wanting more and more, and never saying enough; never thanking God; and never being content with what God has already given.

Drinking alcohol can quickly lead to drunkenness--which is why the apostle warns Ephesians 5:18 WEY "Do not over-indulge in wine--- a thing in which excess is so easy." If we tolerate such sins, the wrath of God can come upon us. False teachers say we are still saved in sin, but the truth is we will have no part in the kingdom.

Galatians 6:7 AV "Be not deceived; God is not mocked." Ephesians 5:6 AV "Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience." Ephesians 5:8 NKJV "For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light" ---which is always following Jesus.

We may have acted and thought like the world in the past, but now we have been enlightened and know that we are to act and think as children of light---in a way that would help the spiritual walk of others. If we claim to be a believer, then our life should give evidence. 1John 1:6 NIV "If we claim to have fellowship with Him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth."

We are to be salt and light in the world--- Ephesians 5:11 NKJV "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. 12 For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. 13 But all things that are exposed are made manifest [visible] by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light."

Following Jesus on the matter of fellowship means we are to separate ourselves from those who walk in the spiritual darkness of the world---anyone who does not trust God in faith; and from anyone who is immoral; indulges in alcohol; or uses offensive language.

The devil tempts people to tolerate or listen to conversations and jokes that a follower of Jesus should not tolerate or have any desire to be part of-- and we should never pass on such

conversations to others. Ephesians 5:12 AV "It is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret."

The light of God's Word makes the evil of this world known for what it is. Jesus said John 8:12 NKJV "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life." There are many things said that would never be said if Jesus were part of the conversation. Jesus offered Himself as a sacrifice so we could be free from such unprofitable talk.

A spiritual revival and a recommitment to the Christian walk of faith in Christ is always needed. Ephesians 5:14 AV "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light"---Isaiah 60:1. It is always time for corrections to be made---especially if we have taken part in conduct or conversations that are unscriptural, wrong, or not following Jesus.

To wake up spiritually is to be a help spiritually to others---not a hindrance. We are to follow the Word of God as a child of the Father. Ephesians 5:15-17 AV "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is."

The will of the Father is to separate ourselves from activities, interests, or conversations that are not in harmony with the Word of God. We are warned not to be involved in unscriptural ways as it will affect our life---and eventually our eternal life. We must always be a spiritual light of God's Truth in our conversations and our conduct when others are observing or listening.

Satan is out to destroy the soul of anyone who is not aware of his strategy. We are to be constantly alert to the spiritual dangers surrounding us today. It is our responsibility to know God's will by reading His Word--- Romans 12:2 AV "Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

Whoever follows Jesus is accepting the advice of the Word of God--- Ephesians 5:18-21 AV "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making

