“Following Jesus”

Text: Matthew 4:19; John 21:18,19

Matthew 4:19—*And he saith unto them,* ***Follow me****, and I will make you fishers of men.*

John 21:18,19–Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. *This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him,* ***Follow me****.*

THOUGHT: Christ has made us a promise, “I will make you fishers of men” and that promise was given with a condition, “If we follow.”

INTRODUCTION

There are no quick fixes in the work of God, but long term processes instead. People can get emotionally stirred and even get caught up in the ‘spirit of the moment’, but successful soul winning requires a season of sowing, followed by the labor of reaping.

We can enter into His promise of **successful soul winning** only as we follow Christ thereby 1)Knowing His Word, 2)Receiving his power, and 3)maintaining our faith and confidence steadfastly in Him. This is true because following Jesus results in becoming like Jesus.

1. PROMISE: Made a Successful Soul Winner.
2. CONDITION: Follow Me.
3. Know His Word
4. Receive His Power
5. Trust His Word
6. He Reveals his Promise through His Word

Christ travelled throughout Galilee (Matt. 4:23) and Palestine not only healing, but **preaching** and **teaching**. Christ’s disciples, in **following** their master, were enlightened to the truths of the kingdom of Heaven and God’s will. They were given:

1. A Will to Submit To – CHRIST’S WILL
2. A Law to Obey – CHRIST’S LAW
3. A Promise to Have Faith For – CHRIST’S PROMISE
4. He Relays his Promise with Power

Mt 4:23 ¶ And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

Lu 9:1 ¶ Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases.

Lu 10:1 ¶ After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.

* All the tools a ‘fisher of men’ will need to be successful are obtained from Christ. He not only gives us his will, but he give us His power!
* This power was demonstrated by Christ in his healing all manner of sickeness and diseases.
* This power was delivered to the disciples in Christ’s sending them forth. His commission to them was with both **authority** and **power**.

1. He Relates his Promise with Faith.

In our text, John 21:18,19, Christ gives a startling prophecy to Peter: *When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.*

1. Deny Reliance on Self

* The moral of this prophecy is that Peter was not to rely on his own strength, but was to rely on Christ.

We could loosely restate Christ’s message to Peter as follows, “Peter, You are young and strong now, but later it is not going to be so. You cannot place your confidence in your own strength because, as a matter of fact, it is going to fail you. Follow me, Peter, and I will make you and teach you to be strong when you are weak.”

* Look forward and to the end results of reliance on self: It is fool hearty!

*…when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.*

1. Place Hope in Christ

* We place our hope in a strength that will NEVER lessen when our hope is in Christ and our confidence is in His Word.

1. Maintain Confidence in God’s Word.

* **Faith** in God’s Word is absolutely necessary and the key to successful soul winning.
* **It is not enough just to know His Word, but we must trust in His Word.**
* Keep an eye on His Word. It may seem delayed, but God is working.
* Remain steadfast in the assurance that His word will not return void.

**Isaiah 55:11**—*So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.*

* We need to have a strong desire to fulfill His Word. God’s will must become our passion and singular goal.

CONCLUSION

He has promised to make those that follow Him effective witnesses. That is, witnesses with a real experience. This experience you will never forget and will win others.

* Gold, Linen, Fine Flour, beautiful, attractive.