

Why Follow Jesus?

Jesus says: ***"I am the way, the truth, and the life."*** That's a pretty strong statement from someone to all of us who are used to doing things our way and basing our hopes and dreams on our own experience. We are also told in God's word that: ***"There is a path before each person that seems right, but it ends in death."***

God alone knows what is best for each of us. Only God has all the information necessary to give good guidance over the long haul. We make choices that seem good for the time but before we know it we end up in trouble and wonder what happened. Sometimes we even blame God when we find ourselves burdened down by our troubles. We were never made to live on our own but were rather, were created to live in relationship with God through Jesus Christ. We were made to be forgiven and healed and **saved from** a life following our own inadequate plans. We were created to **live in a new way** that God would show us, and empower us, through the Holy Spirit to live. This new life would be meaningful and satisfying. It would be the way of life and truth.

God invites us today to consider the consequences of our own choices and to make a new and living choice. The Bible shows us how God sees us with these words: ***You are saying, "Our sins are heavy upon us; we are wasting away! How can we survive?" As surely as I live, says the Sovereign LORD, I take no pleasure in the death of wicked people. I only want them to turn from their wicked ways so they can live. Turn! Turn from your wickedness, O people ... Why should you die? ... The good works of righteous people will not save them if they turn to sin, nor will the sins of evil people destroy them if they repent and turn from their sins.*** (Ezekiel 33)

If we are experiencing life in any way that is not what we hoped it would be, then there is some way that we are doing things on our own and some way that we are not surrendering ourselves to Jesus. God invites us to trust in many good things that He says are real when we face troubles. We often feel sorry for ourselves and choose to believe lies

instead of standing up for something and holding onto the truth until our circumstances line up with God's word. Here are some examples of promises God makes to us that we can hang onto and use to change our lives in positive ways:

Instead of saying, "I can't", God tells me that, **"I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength"** (Philippians 4)

Instead of complaining that I am weak and that what I have in my life is "too much" I can affirm the truth that **"the Lord is the strength of my life. I will display strength and take action because I know God."** (Psalm 27; Daniel 11).

Why should I allow Satan supremacy over my life when **He that is in me is greater than he that is in the world?** (1 John 4)

Instead of worrying and fretting about how things will work out, God tells us to **"cast all your anxiety on Christ who cares for you."** (1 Peter 5)

If I am missing something and feeling a lack, God has provision for me. It's His way that works and I'll have to make new choices. It's God's time that brings all the hidden factors into forming a positive solution. I need to let go and let God.

Questions For Reflection and Discussion

1. What does it mean to turn my life over to God and live in relationship with Him through Jesus Christ?
2. We are saved from a life of destruction and saved to a life of truth and fulfillment. What's gone from me that was a wreck and what is the new that has come?
3. What actions and attitudes in my life are those that God continues to ask me to turn from, that God considers wicked?
4. As we face difficulties and troubles, what are the new ways that I can face them with Christ in my life?