

Lesson 145 - Are You a Follower of Christ

1. What two things are required before following Jesus? **Matthew 16:24**

EGW: Humility, self-denial, benevolence, and the payment of a faithful tithe, these show that the grace of God is working in the heart. The greatest Teacher, the greatest Physician the world has ever known, gave many lessons on the need of humility. These lessons His followers are to bring into the practical life. They are to live lives of self-denial and self-sacrifice. To many this will be a new experience, but on it their salvation depends. "Whosoever will come after Me," Christ said, "let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." Mark 8:34. Following Christ produces the virtues of Christ's character. Humility is a precious grace, peculiarly pleasing to God. Christ says, "Learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Matthew 11:29. Those who follow Christ will overcome temptation and will receive the glorious reward of eternal life. And to Christ they will render all the praise and glory. {CH 590.1}

2. How often are we to do those two things? **Luke 9:23**

EGW: It should be the determination of every soul who desires to enter the pearly gates, not so much to seek to understand all about the conditions that will prevail in the future state, as to know what the Lord requires of him in this life. It is the will of God that each professing Christian shall perfect a character after the divine similitude. By studying the character of Christ revealed in the Word, by practicing His virtues, the believer will be changed into the same likeness of goodness and mercy. Christ's works of self-denial and sacrifice brought into the daily life, will develop in the soul the faith that works by love and purifies the soul. There are many who wish to evade the cross-bearing part, but the Lord speaks to all when He says, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me." {LUH, April 21, 1909 par. 3}

3. What do followers of Christ become? **Matthew 4:19**

EGW: "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." When the gospel net is cast, let there be a watching by the net, with tears and earnest prayer. Let the workers determine not to become discouraged; and not to let go the net until it is drawn ashore, with the fruit of their labor. Sometimes, indeed, we may say with Peter, "We have toiled all the night and have taken nothing," but still it is the Master's command, as of old, "Let down the net on the right side of the ship,"--work on in faith, and God will give success. {ST, March 16, 1882 par. 13}

Jesus bids us as a people, Go forward. There are higher attainments, a purer love, a deeper experience for us, if we will consecrate ourselves to God, and humbly take him at his word. The reason why we have no greater confidence and joy is that there is in us an evil heart of unbelief. Our Heavenly Father is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him than are earthly parents to give good gifts to their children. Let us shake off the spiritual paralysis that dishonors God and imperils our souls. If we draw near to God, he will draw near to us. We must not wait for better opportunities, for strong persuasions, or for holier tempers. We can do nothing of ourselves. We must trust to Jesus' power to save. He is holding out to us the crown of life, and desires us to accept it. Let us come to him, just as we are, and we shall find a present help in our time of need. {ST, March 16, 1882 par. 14}

4. In what manner are we to follow after God? **End of Ephesians 5:1**

EGW: "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 savor." Man by wicked works alienated himself from God, but Christ gave His life that all who would, might be freed from sin and reinstated in the favor of the Creator. It was the anticipation of a redeemed, holy universe that prompted Christ to make this great sacrifice. Have we accepted the privileges so dearly purchased? Are we followers of God as dear children, or are we servants of the prince of darkness? Are we worshipers of Jehovah, or of Baal? of the living God, or of idols? {5T 173.3}

5. What do followers of Christ do towards God? **Luke 18:43**

EGW: (no comment)

6. What do followers of Christ receive from God? **John 12:26**

EGW: "If any man serve Me," said Jesus, "let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall also My servant be: if any man serve Me, him will My Father honor." All who have borne with Jesus the cross of sacrifice will be sharers with Him of His glory. It was the joy of Christ in His humiliation and pain that His disciples should be glorified with Him. They are the fruit of His self-sacrifice. The outworking in them of His own character and spirit is His reward, and will be His joy throughout eternity. This joy they share with Him as the fruit of their labor and sacrifice is seen in other hearts and lives. They are workers together with Christ, and the Father will honor them as He honors His Son. {DA 624.2}

7. If we fail to follow all that Jesus would have us to follow, along with failing to take up our cross, what is Jesus' response? **Matthew 10:38**

EGW: "Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." What right have we to profess to be Christians, and yet deny our Lord in life and deed? "He that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." Day by day we are to deny self, to lift the cross and follow in the footsteps of the Master. O that the baptism of the Holy Spirit might come upon you, that you might be imbued with the Spirit of God! Then day by day you will become more and more conformed to the image of Christ, and in every action of your life, the question would be, "Will it glorify my Master?" By patient continuance in well-doing you would seek for glory and honor, and would receive the gift of immortality. {RH, May 10, 1892 par. 4}

8. Being followers here, what task will be granted to us in the regeneration, which is a reference to be gathered in Heaven? **Matthew 19:28**

EGW: The lesson of the laborers had a bearing upon the question about which the disciples had disputed by the way,—who should be greatest in the kingdom of heaven. The world's Redeemer saw the danger that would imperil his church, and sought to arouse his people to an understanding of their position; for this parable was but a continuation of the lesson taught when Peter asked, "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye shall also sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. But many that are first shall be last, and the last shall be first." {RH, July 3, 1894 par. 4}

The Lord will have all who receive his grace, believe and trust him that justifieth the ungodly. With implicit trust we are to stay upon God, and let the heart rest in him without a question as to what is to be our measure of reward. The Saviour presents before us the scene of the last judgment when the reward is given to those upon his right hand, and the sentence of condemnation to those upon his left hand. The righteous are represented as wondering what they have done for which they are to be so liberally rewarded. They had had the abiding presence of Christ in their hearts; they had been imbued with his Spirit, and without conscious effort on their part; they had been serving Christ in the person of his saints, and had thereby gained the sure reward. But they had not had in view the reward they were to receive, and the expectation of it had been no part of the motive that had actuated their service. What they did was done from love to Christ and to their fellow-men, and

Christ identifies himself with suffering humanity, and accounts that all deeds done in sympathy and compassion and love to men, are done to him. {RH, July 3, 1894 par. 5}

9. What do followers of Christ not walk in? **John 8:12**

EGW: Do not choose darkness. Come out of the cold, dark caverns of unbelief into the upper chamber, where you may bask in the sunshine of God's love, and enjoy peace and rest in the presence of Jesus. The Saviour said: "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." [John 8:12.] When you constantly complain of darkness, you represent to the world that you are not following Jesus, or else that he has deceived you. But, dear brethren, have you not been in the habit of talking darkness and unbelief? Have you not, by so doing, greatly shadowed the path of others, and led them to think that there could be nothing attractive in the truth, nothing satisfying in the religion and service of Christ? Your words, your life, and your character have represented your religion; and how many souls have you discouraged, and balanced in the wrong direction? {GW92 435.1}

10. What do followers of Christ have? **John 8:12**

EGW: To those who comply with the conditions, Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean, God's promise is, "I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." [2 Corinthians 6:17, 18.] It is the privilege and the duty of every Christian to have a rich and abundant experience in the things of God. "I am the light of the world," said Jesus. "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." [John 8:12.] "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." [Proverbs 4:18.] Every step of faith and obedience brings the soul into closer connection with the Light of the world, in whom "there is no darkness at all." The bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness shine upon the servants of God, and they are to reflect his rays. As the stars tell us that there is a great light in Heaven with whose glory they are made bright, so Christians are to make it manifest that there is a God on the throne of the universe whose character is worthy of praise and imitation. The graces of his Spirit, the purity and holiness of his character, will be manifest in his witnesses. {GC88 475.3}

11. What do followers of Christ recognize or know? **John 10:4, 27**

EGW: "He calleth His own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.... And the sheep follow Him: for

they know His voice." The Eastern shepherd does not drive his sheep. He depends not upon force or fear; but going before, he calls them. They know his voice, and obey the call. So does the Saviour-Shepherd with His sheep. The Scripture says, "Thou leddest Thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron." Through the prophet, Jesus declares, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." He compels none to follow Him. "I drew them," He says, "with cords of a man, with bands of love." Psalm 77:20; Jeremiah 31:3; Hosea 11:4. {DA 480.2}

12. What will followers of Christ flee from? **John 10:5**

EGW: Everywhere error will be presented for truth; and unless we have a living connection with God, and are diligent in searching the Scriptures, there is danger of being misled. Voices will be heard on every side, saying, "Come with us; we have the truth." Jesus is the true Shepherd. His sheep hear his voice, and follow him; but a "stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers." But unless we are ever on our guard, there is constant danger of listening to strange voices. {ST, October 29, 1885 par. 12}

13. What are followers of Christ given? **John 10:28**

EGW: Those who love not the truth will place many obstacles in the way of all such little companies; false doctrines will surely be presented for their acceptance. But if they are listening attentively to the voice of the True Shepherd, they will walk in the light as he is in the light. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." He who is all-powerful is able to keep his people, although they may be exposed to temptations and perils. He has promised to do this, however, only on condition that they trust and obey him. "Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." {RH, July 20, 1886 par. 3}

14. In following after Christ, what further will we follow after? **Isaiah 9:6, Romans 14:19, Hebrews 12:14**

EGW: Jesus Himself never purchased peace by compromise. His heart overflowed with love for the whole human race, but He was never indulgent to their sins. He was too much their friend to remain silent while they were pursuing a course that would ruin their souls,—the souls He had purchased with His own blood. He labored that man should be true to himself, true to his higher and eternal interest. The servants of Christ are called to the same work, and they should beware lest, in seeking

to prevent discord, they surrender the truth. They are to "follow after the things which make for peace" (Romans 14:19); but real peace can never be secured by compromising principle. And no man can be true to principle without exciting opposition. A Christianity that is spiritual will be opposed by the children of disobedience. But Jesus bade His disciples, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." Those who are true to God need not fear the power of men nor the enmity of Satan. In Christ their eternal life is secure. Their only fear should be lest they surrender the truth, and thus betray the trust with which God has honored them. {DA 356.1}

15. What additionally will followers of Christ follow after? **1 Corinthians 14:1**

EGW: (no comment)

16. What list of items do the followers of Christ follow after? **1 Timothy 6:11, 2 Timothy 2:22**

EGW: Paul exhorts Timothy to "follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness." And in the next sentence he adds: "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life." A conflict is here brought to view in which every Christian must engage. There must be no flagging of the energies; day by day there must be a hand-to-hand fight with the powers of darkness, or victory will never be ours. {RH, February 17, 1885 par. 21}

17. When should we follow other human beings? **1 Corinthians 11:1, 2 Thessalonians 3:9**

EGW: David's power had been given him by God, but to be exercised only in harmony with the divine law. When he commanded that which was contrary to God's law, it became sin to obey. "The powers that be are ordained of God" (Romans 13:1), but we are not to obey them contrary to God's law. The apostle Paul, writing to the Corinthians, sets forth the principle by which we should be governed. He says, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." 1 Corinthians 11:1. {PP 719.3}

18. What will followers of Christ not follow? **2 Peter 1:16**

EGW: There is to be no compromise with those who make void the law of God. It is not safe to rely upon them as counselors. Our testimony is not to be less decided now than formerly; our real

position is not to be cloaked in order to please the world's great men. They may desire us to unite with them and accept their plans, and may make propositions in regard to our course of action which may give the enemy an advantage over us. "Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy" (Isaiah 8:12). While we should not seek for controversy, and should not needlessly offend, we must present the truth clearly and decidedly, and stand firm to what God has taught us in His Word. You are not to look to the world in order to learn what you shall write and publish or what you shall speak. Let all your words and works testify, "We have not followed cunningly devised fables" (2 Peter 1:16). "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place" (2 Peter 1:19). {2SM 371.1}

19. What did Christ leave us to follow? **1 Peter 2:21**

EGW: Those who were servants were advised to remain subject to their masters "with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thankworthy," the apostle explained, "if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." {RH, August 1, 1912 par. 6}

20. In following that which Christ left us with, what are we in general following after? **3 John 1:11**

EGW: (no comment)

21. What does the last generation follow after? **Revelation 14:4**

EGW: Upon the crystal sea before the throne, that sea of glass as it were mingled with fire,—so resplendent is it with the glory of God,—are gathered the company that have "gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name." [Revelation 15:2.] With the Lamb upon Mount Zion, "having the harps of God," they stand, the

hundred and forty and four thousand that were redeemed from among men; and there is heard, as the sound of many waters, and as the sound of a great thunder, “the voice of harpers harping with their harps.” [Revelation 14:1-5; 15:3; 7:14-17] And they sing “a new song” before the throne, a song which no man can learn save the hundred and forty and four thousand. It is the song of Moses and the Lamb,—a song of deliverance. None but the hundred and forty-four thousand can learn that song; for it is the song of their experience,—an experience such as no other company have ever had. “These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.” These, having been translated from the earth, from among the living, are counted as “the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb.” “These are they which came out of great tribulation;” [Revelation 14:1-5; 15:3; Revelation 7:14-17.] they have passed through the time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation; they have endured the anguish of the time of Jacob's trouble; they have stood without an intercessor through the final outpouring of God's judgments. But they have been delivered, for they have “washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” “In their mouth was found no guile; for they are without fault” before God. “Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.” [Revelation 14:1-5; 15:3; Revelation 7:14-17.] They have seen the earth wasted with famine and pestilence, the sun having power to scorch men with great heat, and they themselves have endured suffering, hunger, and thirst. But “they shall hunger no more; neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.” [Revelation 14:1-5; 15:3; 7:14-17.] {GC88 648.3}