**Follow Me - Part 1 - "Truly Following Jesus"**

**Cape Coral Launch Weekend**

**February 21st, 2021**

**Intro: *(25:00 minutes Keller!!!)***

**- Welcome ALL 3 Locations!**

 **- Celebrate CC!!!**

 **- Story of Cape Coral Location!**

 **- 2 years ago we were given Lighthouse Fellowship,**

 **- but this journey really began 22 years ago this month!**

 **- 13 years ago - 2018 Committed to Launching Portable**

 **- Open a year ago; then COVID!!!**

**Proverbs 19:21 "Many are the plans in a person's heart, but it is the LORD's purpose that prevails."**

**- Honor Ken & Ruthie & Board!!!**

 **- 1st COPY MACHINE!!! Saved $25 in taxes!!! We've been saving money ever since!!!**

 **- Honor People of Lighthouse for Giving all those years!**

 **- 1,000's of Lives will be changed b/c of your Decision! Thank you!**

**- I prayed the prayer of dedication over this building in 2004!!!**

**- VIDEO CLIP!!!**

**- Seque: Welcome to New People at all 3 of our locations today!**

 **- We are so honored you’ve made a decision to join us today & honestly, we believe a whole lot of things can be different in your life because of your one decision to be here today!!!**

**LETS PRAY & Ask God for Open Hearts...**

**- We're launching a Brand New Series today that will lead us up to Easter called, *"Follow Me! Following Jesus beyond just Believing!"***

**- Jesus said over & over again, "Come, Follow Me!"**

**Matthew 4:19 (ESV) "And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.”**

**Mark 1:17 (BSB) “Come, follow Me,” Jesus said, “and I will make you fishers of men.”**

**John 1:43 (NLT) "The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, “Come, follow me.”**

**Matthew 8:22 "** **But Jesus told him, "Follow me..."**

**- And yet, in our world today, we have replaced "Following" with "Believing."**

 **- Now, let me be clear, Believing is where our Faith Starts!**

**Romans 10:10 "For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved."**

 **- God doesn't just want us to "Believe" in Him, He wants us to Follow Him, that's why Jesus came!**

**What does it mean to Truly "Follow Jesus?"**

**1. Following Jesus is a Way of Life.**

 **A. RUNNER ILL. - I have a goal to run a half-marathon this year!**

 **- For years, I've looked at people who run & thought, *"I want to look like that & be able to do that & have a body like that!"***

 **- Now that I'm 5 weeks into my training, I'm realizing there's a Massive difference between people who "Believe" in Running & those who have a Lifestyle of Running!**

 **- I'm awake drinking coffee while they're out Running!!!**

 **B. The same is true with Following Jesus.**

 **- It's one thing to say, "I believe in Jesus!" It's another thing to have a *Lifestyle* that actually does!**

 **C. A Lifestyle of Following Jesus has the Fruit to Prove it!**

**John 15:5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit..."**

 **- If you've encountered someone who said they believed in Jesus but did not have the Fruit in their Lifestyle, *I'm sorry!***

 **D. Around here, our heart's desire is to have the Fruit of Jesus present in our lives.**

 **- We're not perfect, but we sure are giving our all to Follow Him & not just say we believe in Him.**

**2. Following Jesus is not something we DO, its who we ARE.**

**Matthew 4:19 (ESV) "And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.”**

 **A. Jesus said, "We're not Making Some THING, I'm Making YOU Something Different!!!"**

 **- Yes, I'm going to give your life greater Purpose & Meaning & Usefulness...**

 **- But I'm going to "make" YOU into something different & greater!**

 **- Following Jesus isn't just about *"Believing" SomeTHING*, it's about *Becoming SOMEONE New*!!!**

**2 Corinthians 5:17 "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!"**

 **B. He makes us a New Creation!!!**

**Let me take it out another step...**

**Romans 8:14-15 "For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship."**

 **C. When we decide to Follow Jesus, God makes us Sons & Daughters of our Heavenly Father!**

**Galatians 3:26 (NLT) "For you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus."**

 **D. Following Jesus isn't something we DO, it's who we ARE!!!**

**3. Following Jesus is about Jesus.**

 **A. It's not about Rules or Religion or a Set of Beliefs.**

 **- It's about a Relationship with a Person.**

 **B. KNOWING ABOUT SOMEONE VS. KNOWING SOMEONE ILL.**

 **- JOHN MAXWELL ILL. - I went to a mtg. in 1998 in Indiana!**

 **- For 20 years I read nearly all his books!**

 **- I knew a lot about him, but I didn't know him!**

 **- Then I went to Costa Rica w/ him for a week in 2018! (PIC)**

 **- & I ate meals w/ him & sat next to him & we sang together!!!**

 **- I asked him questions & heard his Heart!**

 **- He's an Evangelist, not just a Writer & Teacher!!!**

 **- PASTOR LAST WEEK SAYING, "REALLY???"**

 **- Yeah, I KNOW him!!!**

 **C. MIP: ? What about you... Do you KNOW Jesus?**

 **- Or do you just know ABOUT Him???**

 **- You can know Him personally today!!!**

**Challenge:**

**1. Salvation**

**2. If you do know Jesus, what are you doing to become more like Him?**

 **- Around here at NLC, we're constantly talking about Next Steps!**

 **- We believe every one of us ALWAYS have a Next Step!!!**

**? What's your Next Step today?**

 **- Empowerment Track? Launching next weekend?**

 **- Join a Group - Get on Involved on a Team**

 **- Come Back next week for Part 2!**

**PRAY**