

REMAH WEEK 2 | I Will Follow

INTRO

A remah word – God’s word revealed. a word for right now, for you.

These words are from your Heavenly Father and so I pray that you would open your heart and your ears to hear these words as though He were standing here, delivering them to you Himself.

You are all called and created to be leaders. Leaders in your school, on your teams, leaders in your family, leaders in the church. If you’ve not heard this before, I am telling you now, you are called to be a leader.

And because of this, we spend time trying to become the best leader we can possibly be – we read books, we listen to podcasts, we find mentors to help us be better leaders.

Sometimes we can miss the very first step of what it is to be a leader.

**You cannot be a great leader,
until you learn how to be a faithful follower.**

The title of my message tonight is “I Will Follow”

We’re all following someone. Who are you following? Friends, influencers, musicians, who is leading us in our beliefs in our actions. Whose voice have we been following?

Who we follow, we imitate, and who we imitate, we become.

Who you follow will determine who you become. Who are you following?

If you want to lead people, you have to know where you’re going, and you can’t know where you’re going if you don’t know who you’re following.

Matthew 16:24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.

Now Jesus had many faithful followers. Many of these were known as disciples. Now I know that “disciples” is kind of a Christian word that you wouldn’t hear and most other places, but it is truly what we are. People who are committed to following Christ.

Disciple: a personal follower of a teacher. A true disciple is not just a student, but a follower; one who applies what they have learned. **That is what you are.**

Not just hearers of the Word, but doers. People whose walk is LIKE Jesus, because they walk WITH Jesus.

One of those disciples was Simon Peter, who was one of the greatest evangelists, one of Jesus' closest disciples, and ultimately the one whom Jesus "built His church upon". And I want to take a look back at the moment He said yes and followed Jesus.

Central Verse:

Luke 5:1-11 One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret,^[a] the people were crowding around him and listening to the word of God. ² He saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. ³ He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore.

Simon was washing his nets. He was in the middle of something and Jesus asks him to stop what he's doing so he can use him to be a part of what he's about to teach.

I believe Jesus has come in here today, to tell you to stop what you're in the middle of doing, and he's inviting you to be a part of what he's about to do.

I think many of you have been praying and asking God to use you, but when it's time to actually do something, you're busy, or you're too tired, or you can't be bothered.

Don't dismiss an opportunity, because you see it as an interruption.

When it's inconvenient, we can quickly call it an interruption.

Can I tell you there will be many times that God chooses to use you in your daily life, at inconvenient times. The timing of his requests will not always be ideal.

In fact sometimes, they are a test of your yes. Will you follow me even when it's difficult, when it's uncomfortable, or even unknown.

If we're following Him though, we can trust that with every request, He is leading us into something better than before. And the best part is that we're going TOGETHER.

Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat. ⁴ When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch." ⁵ Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets."

When God begins to lead us in a direction that seems out of the way, uncomfortable, or just doesn't make sense - some of us may find ourselves responding initially like Simon did, with an excuse, ***Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything.***

God, I'm tired and I need a break. God, that doesn't make sense, so I'm not going to do it. God, they might make fun of me. God, I'm not very good at sharing my faith, so I'd rather not. God, so and so is better at that, ask them...

“Master, we’ve worked hard all night and haven’t caught anything.”

But what was the difference?? They had gone alone that night, but now, they were with Jesus, now they were following Him and His word, and everything was about to change for them!

And he could've just left it at that. It was the logical response. But the faithful response was to obey, to follow the instruction, in spite of what he could see or justify, which ultimately changed the trajectory of his life.

In following Christ, where have you begun to lean on logic, instead of faith?

We have to start leaning on faith and following FAITHfully.

EXAMPLES

It becomes infinitely easier to be a follower of Christ when you have an accurate picture of who He is.

Peter knew about Jesus before this moment. In fact shortly before this encounter, Jesus had healed his mother in law of a high fever. He witnessed this man do a miraculous healing.

It's difficult to put your faith in something you've never seen work, in something you can't trust, in something you don't believe in.

But can I tell you it is EASY to put your faith in God, to follow His teaching, to obey His instruction, to trust in His promise, when you KNOW who He is, when you've SEEN what He's done, when you've HEARD His voice, and FELT His presence.

This happens over time. It happens over moment after moment where it's hard, or you're sick, or you're stuck, or you're hurt, or you lost someone, or you've been betrayed, or you're confused, and he shows up, and he comforts, and He encourages you, and He leads you, and He answers you and He's faithful. And you know that, because you've stuck around long enough to see it.

Too many people don't understand the faithfulness of God because they haven't stuck around long enough for Him to show them.

They bail after the first prayer doesn't get answered immediately. After the first week of not "feeling" a change. They stop following, they get off the path, and they don't get to witness the faithfulness of God.

The tried and the tested and the true, are the ones who haven't just been through their fire, but the ones who burned and survived, and came out the other side untouched because their faithful Father never stopped leading them, and they never stopped following Him!

Do you know who you're following?

⁶ When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. ⁷ So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink. ⁸ When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!"

Peter falls to his knees in this moment because the nearer people get to God, the more aware they become of their own sinfulness and unworthiness.

Our proximity to God changes our posture.

So when we follow closely, we walk a little different.

It's difficult to be hopeless when you're walking hand in hand with the Great I am.
It's difficult to be prideful when you're standing in God's presence. No, you become keenly aware of your inadequacy and God's greatness.
It's difficult to be lonely, when God Himself is leading you by His presence.

And so when we follow Jesus, we become more like Jesus.
His presence begins to bring a conviction, by way of the Holy Spirit, which allows us to have a greater self-awareness, so we see where we are lacking and in need of more of Christ.

When I know whose I am, I know who I am.

And this gives us an accurate perspective that every leader should have:

Philippians 4:13 "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" and John 15:5 "If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing"

It's your closeness to Christ that yields the fruit. Without Him, we are aimless!

When we are not following Christ, we are left to our own devices. We go here and we go there, and we have no actual direction.

**Do not despise your dependency on God, as though it makes you weak.
Delight in your dependency on God, as though it makes you strong.**

This is what following faithfully looks like. Depending on God.

⁹ For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, ¹⁰ and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners. Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will fish for people." ¹¹ So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.

They left everything and followed him.

A couple years ago Pastor Elisha and I went to a conference with our staff. We were flying and we encountered some bad weather. Ticket counter. "Are you all in mate?" Once you get on this flight, there's no going back, you're going to have to see it through. You're going to have to rush from one plane to the next, the windows of time will be tight. It won't be easy, it's going to be a journey, so I have to know, are you all in?

And I believe God is giving us that same call:

John 16:33 "...In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

A life with Jesus will not be free from highs and lows, there may be seasons of discomfort, things we have to let go of, relationships we need to end, habits we need to stop, but God is looking at you and He's asking "are you all in mate?" "Will you follow me? Will you go where few are willing to go?"

Even if no one else does. Even if it's hard. Even if it doesn't look or feel the way you thought it would. Will you walk with me? Will you let me be the leader of your life, so you can lead others to me?

We must allow Jesus to lead us, so that He can lead THROUGH us.

We want to be great leaders, but we first we must be faithful followers.

I love the final verse in this scripture when Jesus invites them to come be fishers of men, and the immediate response from all of them! There was no excuse, no discussion, just immediate obedience. I believe this is in large part because they had just seen how good and faithful he had been to them in their prior act of obedience.

I believe some of us today may need to take a moment to look back to remember the faithfulness of God in our yesterdays, and allow it to encourage us to be obedient to what He's asking of us today. The entire trajectory of their lives and impact was transformed through this one act of obedience to follow. What could God have waiting for you on the other side of your yes?

Are you all in mate?

I think tonight is about commitment. For some of you it is saying yes to Jesus for the first time and committing your life to following him. And for some of you, it is a re-commitment to re-up. It's saying yes, still. I'm still in. I'm still following. I'm still choosing you, Jesus

When it gets heavy, when it's hard, when I can't see what's in front of me, when I'm confused, when I'm doubting, when I'm unsure, when it doesn't make sense, I'm still following you

SALVATION

And so I want to give that opportunity to the first group. Those that have yet to say yes to Jesus.

SECOND CALL

If you decide in here. In your heart that you will follow, it will change the course of your life, but not only that, it will change how you experience that life.

When we follow Jesus, when we align our hearts with the Holy Spirit, we are empowered, we are not alone, and we are positioned for God to use us. The fullness of God in our life – through our life.

So if you're all in today, I want you to step out of your seat.