

Kids: What does "follow" mean?

- What kinds of things can you follow?
 - person
 - directions, or a string
 - leader
 - a dream ("any dream will do")
 - Talk about how you follow those things...
 - I've got some things you can follow:
 - string, directions (on paper), a leader (who shouts directions), and a person!!
 - in each of the first three its to get confusing
 - with the person, they can lead the volunteers correctly round!
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Jesus' Says...

- Introduction to series on what Jesus calls us to do
 - carefully not calling them commands, because that word carries overtones of that being how you please God...
 - though in another sense they are commands - they are the things Jesus says to us that we should do
 - but what they do is invite us into relationship with him
- Nowhere more clearly so than here:
 - here is a command - **follow me** (v.19)
 - but what does it mean?
- Is it like a dream?
- Is it like directions?
- Is it like a leader, doing what they say?
- Or is it like a person, being with them?
- Three things - one more central than the other two - that are worth saying:
 - the Lord's call is Rooted in Repentance
 - the Lord's call is Focused on the Lord - this central...
 - the Lord's call is Leading to Service

Rooted in Repentance

- As we touched on last week in Psalm 80:
 - starting point for any engagement with God is repentance
 - see v.17

Focused on the Lord

- Follow me
 - absolutely central to Christian faith and belief and practise
 - it is not a system of belief, a series of philosophies, a guide to good living
 - it is Jesus
 - he is at the centre of it all
 - whole Bible is focused round him
 - Gospels - letters - prophets - law - even the wisdom literature - all have him as their hub
- His command here is to follow him:
- Jesus does not here say any of the things Simon/Peter or the others were to do later on
 - he doesn't yet tell him to go and make disciples

- he doesn't yet tell him to turn the other cheek
- he doesn't yet tell him to heal the sick
- he doesn't yet tell him give generously and humbly
- he doesn't even tell them how they will become fishers of men - or even what that means!
- All those things, and more, will come in due time
 - those instructions, though, have to be rooted in the people who Jesus says the disciples are to be.... **people who follow Jesus**
- Who is Jesus?
 - come and find out...
 - disciples were to come with him, watch, listen, find out
 - our invitation is the same - not to have our faith all wrapped up, **knowing what we believe**
 - even for the most mature Christian, even for those who have studied the Bible all their lives, even for those who have done theology degrees...
 - the invitation is to live following Jesus
 - looking to him, centred on him, talking with him
- Bible study, prayer, talking with other Christians, all these are intended to help us **follow Jesus**
- **Start!** course, from 22nd in the evenings - venue TBC!

Leading to Service

- Jesus' command, Jesus' call, leads us into service:
 - we can't ever be passive consumers of God's gifts
 - we are called to be followers, those who do what Jesus did, and does, and invites us to do too!
 - to tell others, to love others, to serve others, to heal others....
- Many of the other sayings or instructions or commands of Jesus that we will be looking at are the out-working of this call to service:
 - to tell others of Jesus
 - to care for the poor
 - to heal the sick
- ***But let us be fully committed to serving Jesus, focused on him, devoted to him...***