

Following Jesus, Not Idols

by Paul van Engelenhoven

This sermon emphasizes the importance of following Jesus and not idols, drawing from Exodus, 1 Corinthians, and Matthew to illustrate the commandment to have no other gods before God. It highlights the need to be freed from idolatry through the cleansing power of Christ and to live without idolatry by fixing our eyes on Jesus and imitating His ways. The message stresses that true freedom from idols comes from a life of faith and wholeheartedly following Christ.

Scripture: Exodus 20:3, 1 Corinthians 10:7, Matthew 16:24, Ezekiel 36:25, Colossians 3:5, John 5:21, Romans 7:4

Topics: "Following Jesus", "Freedom from Idolatry"

Description

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Transcript

Let us open up the Word of God. I have three passages, three verses, from three sections of the Bible that I will read to you. The message is entitled, Following Jesus, Not Idols.

I will read first Exodus chapter 20, verse 3, which gives the commandment of God through Moses to the Israelites. Then we'll look at 1st Corinthians 10, verse 7, to see the failure of Israel to keep that, and then we'll look at Christ to see the new way to live. Exodus chapter 20, verse 3, we must be familiar with, says, You shall have no other gods before me.

In other words, the Lord is the only God, and you cannot make yourself idols to worship or to serve. Then if we look at the response of Israel to this, in 1st Corinthians 10, verse 7, we read this, Do not be idolaters, that is, worshipers of false gods or other gods, as some of them that see Israelites as it is written, the people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play. And so what the New Testament gives us is what we of course see in books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles, is that the nation of Israel ran off and did exactly the opposite of the commandment of God.

But I'll read now to you Matthew chapter 16, verse 24, and show you how Christ re-gives this commandment. This is what Matthew 16, 24 tells us of God. Then Jesus told his disciples, If anyone would

come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

Let us pray. To Heavenly Father, as you have laid out your word before us, we pray that you would give us an understanding of what it means not to worship other gods, that we would understand what it means to follow Christ and to understand how we can walk faithfully after you. We pray this in Jesus name.

Amen. I'll read to you the Lord's day 34, questions 94 and 95. What does the Lord require in the first commandment? Answer that I, not wanting to endanger my very salvation, avoid and shun all idolatry, magic, superstitious rites, and prayer to saints or to other creatures, that I sincerely acknowledge the only true God, trust him alone, look to him for every good thing, humbly and patiently, love him, fear him, and honor him with all my heart.

In short, that I give up anything rather than go against his will in any way. Question 95. What is idolatry? Answer, idolatry is having or inventing something in which one trusts in place of or alongside of the only true God who has revealed himself in his word.

So far the reading of the Catechism. Dearly beloved, we have come to the Heidelberg Catechism where it deals, where it treats the ten commandments, the revealed will of God, summarized in ten easy-to-remember commandments. Now the ten commandments teaches us who God is in his nature and how we are to approach to him and to those around us.

They also teach us how we ought to live. These ten commandments are very easy to remember, but our natural heart makes it impossible to practice them. Even as a believer, you do not have the strength within yourself to do these commandments.

I can place them in front of you. You can write them on your arms. You can have glasses on that have the ten commandments on the glasses, but that doesn't guarantee that you will keep this will of God.

The Heidelberg Catechism places the ten commandments in the section of our gratitude. As though out of gratitude for God's salvation, we respond by doing what he desires. Not as a payback, of course, but a sort of appreciation for God's great salvation for us.

But here is the difficulty. If we do the ten commandments out of gratitude to God, it may make us think that we do not do them out of the free desire of our heart. In other words, we're thankful for your salvation, and now, out of a sacrifice, I will do what you want.

But that kind of indicates that you do not desire to do what he wants, but you kind of give it as a sacrifice, as a painful thing that you offer God now. And a lot of people look at it this way. I hear people wanting to keep the Sabbath day, and they, out of pains in their lives, they say, I wish I could do other things, but out of my sacrifice to God, I'll do this for God.

But the problem is, if you don't do the will of God out of the bottom of your heart, you're still guilty before the law of God. That works in the same way in our family, doesn't it? If you're a husband, and you tell your wife, you tell her, the Bible tells me I should love you. I don't want to, but I have to, so I sacrifice myself to love you.

What would your wife say? That's not the way I want to be loved. Love needs to come from the bottom of the heart. It needs to spring up from the bottom of your soul.

It's not a sacrifice. It's a new way of life. So I do not think that we should look at the Ten Commandments as something of a sacrifice or a burden that we now bring to God, as God gave me something, now I need to give something to Him.

In fact, Paul writes in Romans 7, verse 4 and verse 6, he says this, Likewise, my brothers, you also have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to Him who has been raised up from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God. Verse 6, but now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in a new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code. Paul says, we are no longer following the law or trying to live righteously through the law, but we now walk by the Spirit.

You notice the difference? We're no longer being captive. This is how you should live. This is how you have to live, and if you don't live it, you'll be punished, but we now serve God in a new way.

You see the difference? The righteousness is the same. The difference is this, before it was written on the law in front of your face, and now it's written on the tablets of your heart, and so your standard has elevated far higher. You no longer look it in front of you, but it's now written by the Holy Spirit of your heart, and by the nature of your new heart, you serve the Lord.

We did not read the written code, but we follow the writer of that written code. We follow by faith the author of the Ten Commandments. We fix our eyes upon the Lord Jesus Christ and follow Him through this life.

It is not something He has done, and we need to do something, and hopefully when we get to Him, it's all good. No, no, no. Salvation is this.

Christ has come and paid the price for you. Now you follow Him through the rest of your life, a risen, new, living way. And so as your pastor, I cannot bring you back under the law and make you focus on the written code, as though when I make you focus on the written code, somehow that will become a reality in your heart.

You can try that. I can tell you if you struggle with lust, I can tell you, you must not lust. Write it on your doorstep, write it on the tablets, or write it on your car, write it anywhere around you.

Do not lust. Do not lust. You know what's gonna happen? The whole day you're thinking about not to lust, and so every time you're gonna lust, and then say, I shouldn't lust, and so the whole day you're dominating your thoughts by the rules.

And still, you're not pure in your heart. You're still lusting, but now you're spending a whole lot of time extra of trying not to lust. And step through the whole Word of God, including the Ten Commandments.

I must point you to Christ Himself, because that is the way of righteousness, following Jesus Himself, following Him in the fullness of His Word by the Spirit. Let me put it to you this way. Would you like to read the law of God, or would you like to live according to the righteousness of the law of God? Which one would you choose? Would you rather read it day and night and say, I must live like that, or would you rather live day and night according to the righteousness of the law? Now, the written code can make you know it in your mind, but only the living Word can make you live it day by day.

This is a spiritual walk of Christ. And so, if you're following the law of God, and we have a tendency to do this. Paul writes about this in Galatians, that we run after the law.

What's going to happen is, either of two responses. You're going to be proud, or you're going to be depressed. You're going to be proud, because you look at the law, and you look at your neighbors around you, and you say, I am doing it better than them.

We're both Christians, but I'm walking better than my neighbor. And so, what you have, you have churches looking at other churches, and one wears suits, and other wears, drives black cars, and the other one has this, that, and the rest, and everybody is proud of how well they think they've kept the law. The other possibility is, if you're a different person and character, is you'll be depressed, because you realize you can never keep the law.

You're going to look at it every day, and you're going to hit your head against it, and you're going to try it, and fail, and fail, and fail. You know why? Because the law cannot give life. The law cannot give you new life.

Only Christ can. And so, we don't just look at the Ten Commandments as, that is how we should follow. We look at God's Word in its entirety, and we understand the only way that we can walk in the righteousness of the law, because that is the will of God, is when we look at Christ, and follow Him completely.

So, let me use the law tonight to point you to Christ. Exodus 21st three, You shall have no other gods before me. You shall have no other gods before.

In other words, the way you relate to God, you cannot relate with anyone, or anything else. You cannot worship, serve, adore, or revere anything else except God. So, we are to relate to God as Jesus related to the Father, for everything else is idolatry.

If I would just give you that without Christ, you would utterly fail. Because as soon as you walk out, you forget these words, and you're gonna try to live in this world, look at everything around you, and somehow try to do this. But then you see the things around you in this world, they have an attraction on you, and before you know it, you're dragged into them, and you're running after different idols.

Now, I need to give you something more. Something far better, to make sure that you never have idols in your heart. Something that so fills your heart, so fills your mind, that every idol loses its attraction, and loses its power.

I need to show you Christ. You see this way of Christ? We don't cancel the law. Jesus says, we don't cancel.

We're not gonna take away the law. Every jot and tittle will stand until the last day, because the whole law is God's perfect will. But Christ gives us a new way of how to walk in the way of Christ, in the way of God.

We follow in the footsteps of the only man on earth who has ever kept the law of God. We follow Jesus Christ. So, we will ask tonight the following questions.

What is idolatry? What is the power of idolatry? How can I be freed from idols, and how can I live without idolatry? What is idolatry? Well, the most basic form of idolatry is a man-made statue, or idol, where you would bow down. If you remember this, in the Old Testament, Moses went up on the mountain. He stayed away too long, according to the people.

What did they do? They got all their gold together. They cast it in the fire, as Aaron says, and out came this calf. That's an idol.

When you worship a statue, and you say, that is my God, that is in whom I put my trust. Paul tells us in Romans 1 verse 23, they exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man, and birds, and animals, and creeping things. That's idolatry.

And in our day today, you have a lot of Buddha statues. That's a form of physical, plain, earthly, idolatry, exaltation of that which is not God. And so, at its core, it is replacing the living God with something that is created, something powerless before God.

But now, as the Catechism hints to us, idolatry goes much deeper than physical worship of man-made idols. It is a sin that begins in the heart. It is a disposition of the heart towards anything or anyone in this world other than God.

Let me give you a verse that helps this. Colossians 3 verse 5, put to death therefore what is earthly in you, sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Covetousness, which is idolatry.

Paul is saying, when you covet something, when you desire something that is not yours, and you want to have that, and that is your, it has possessed your heart with a desire, you must have that to be happy, to be joyful, to be safe. You are as much an idolater as worshiping down for Baal, or casting your children in the fire for some ancient God. The reason that this is idolatry is quite clear.

Covetousness had as its root to believe that possessing this other thing, or this other someone, will somehow make you happy and not God, instead of God, or will guide you or give you a safety instead of God. In other words, it is desiring happiness from something outside of God. That's why Jesus in the New Testament tells us, whoever wants to follow me has to deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.

That's a life free from idolatry, to follow the Lord Jesus Christ in this life. In other words, if we look at idolatry, it's a happiness from pleasure, and happiness from safety, and happiness from honor, or respect, all these things, when you covet them, you are an idol worshiper. This is, there's only one way to flee from this idolatry, and it's the way of love, the law of Christ, to love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and all your strength.

In other words, if you don't love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, you are worshiping idols in your heart, because you are loving other things than God. So, why is idolatry so powerful? If we know this morning, as we look at God, and Him being so awesome, and glorious, and powerful, and loving, why do people turn to idols? What causes a man or a woman to act in idolatry? Well, Ezekiel 14 verse 3 says this, Son of man, these men have taken their idols into their hearts, and set the stumbling block of their iniquity before their faces. The problem is an open heart for idols.

We have a heart, an Adamic, sinful heart, that loves other things than God. There's an attraction in our heart that attracts idolatry. God told Ezekiel that the people had taken these idols in their hearts.

They secretly worship another God. They say, God, you're the one, you're the one. We love you.

We follow you. We trust in you. We rely upon you.

We have our happiness on you. It's what they said in public, but in their heart, when the doors was closed, they looked at other things, at idols. They really trusted that these other things in their lives was going to make them happy.

You see, children can become idols. Insurance can be idol. Pension, retirement can be an idol.

Anything can become an idol if you think that is going to give you happiness, and it replaces the place of God in your heart. Now, all these things, none of these things are bad or evil in themselves, but you and I can make them evil when we set our hearts upon it. Do you see that? Before the tree was made into an idol, there was nothing wrong with the tree, but as soon as the man cut him down and carved him up and placed a little head on him and a little belly on it and some little feet under it, and it went to his knees and bowed and says, you're my God, then the tree became evil.

See that? If you look at the things in your life, and they're just things that you use for living and in the service of God you use these things, there's nothing wrong with them. But as soon as you begin to look at them and trust in them for happiness, for joy, for safety, for protection, behold, you have carved that which was perfectly normal and a gift from God into an idol that you now worship. It can be anything in your life that blocks your heart to see God because you're looking in the wrong direction.

I think it's somewhere in Ezekiel where it says that the priest had their backs turned to God and their face towards the idol. It's a beautiful picture or a horrific picture, but a very realistic picture. As soon as something enters your heart and you begin to love it, you begin to fixate upon it.

You turn your back to God, and you want that thing at whatever cost. You're no longer thinking about how to serve Christ, how to please Him. If a brother or sister around you is in need, you don't care because you're fixated upon that thing, and that thing must make you happy.

So for the sake of that thing, which would not be bad in itself, but because it has become an idol to you, it has made your heart cold. You're no longer looking at Christ, and you're now fixated upon this, and the way you notice is that it's constantly in your mind. It's constantly in your mind.

Your own health can be an idol. When you're constantly being anxious that something would happen to your precious health, and you're no longer looking at God and trusting in Him, but soon you'll find yourself making every possible way to make the whole environment safe, and that you could protect your precious health. Behold who you serve.

It happens so often, doesn't it? A young man gets a job. He's praising God. He elevates God's name.

He's thankful for the job that he has, but four years later, he is so sucked up into it that he cares not about the will of God or the way of God. He just thinks about the next step, and a little higher, and a little more, and a little bigger this, and a little bit more shiny that, and he is fixated upon these things. He has left God, turned his back towards God, and now worships idols.

You can be as poor as the man down the street holding up a sign and be possessed with idolatry. They can be fixated with hardly any money in the bank, but just want to have that next shot, or that next whatever it is, and be idolizing the little things in life. I'm not just speaking to rich, or poor, or whatever culture you come from.

You can be an idolater in every stage of life. You can be 95 years old and be fixated upon one thing rather than God. Now, this is how idolatry infiltrates the heart.

The way this works is very crafty. Satan uses the desires of our heart for the good things of God, such as beauty, honor, and pleasure, and elevates them to worship, and as a result, it becomes corrupt in our heart. God gives us a gift.

He gives us some possibility, or something beautiful, and as soon as we grab it, Satan begins to tempt us and suggest evil things, what we can do with this, or how we can look at ourselves now that we have this thing. And that which was a good gift from the beginning is corrupted, because Satan has taken something good and elevated it above what it's supposed to be. A desire for beauty becomes lust, a desire for honorable things becomes pride, a desire for pleasure becomes self-seeking, and now our heart has a natural desire for the things of God, for true things that are beautiful, honorable, and pleasurable.

But then, when Satan crafts this in our heart, makes this into an idol, suddenly, we become corrupted by them. For they take their seating on the throne of our hearts, and the place where God should be. Do you have anything in your heart like that? Are there things in your heart that you care about more than God? Or let me put it differently, are there things in your heart that you think about more than God? That's idolatry.

If you no longer love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, but you love other things in your life with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, that's idolatry. And it binds you, and it never gives you happiness. It's a corruption of Satan.

You see that? That which settles in your heart in the place of God can never make you happy. I know that when I see a person just always talking about some specific thing in this world, and he sets his whole life upon it, I know that when he has it, or continues to have it, he will never be satisfied with it. He can say, this makes me happy, but it's a fake smile behind a corrupted heart.

Nothing and no one except the living God can satisfy our hearts. And women, if I may speak, you can be idolizing things, not just wanting it, but becoming anxious about it, of losing it, or getting a distance between it, and it could corrupt your heart, that all you think about is keeping that relationship, or keeping that thing, or keeping it safe, or keeping everybody healthy, and all you think about all day long is your mind fixated upon keeping something the way it is, and then your mind is filled with anxieties, and worries, and cares, and you're stressed out, because you're fixated not upon God, but upon other things. And God says, give these cares to me.

Cast your cares upon the Lord, and He will care for you. But you cannot give those cares away if it becomes the number one thing in your heart. If it becomes the idol of your heart, how can you cast these cares? This is the main thing in your life.

You see that? Idolatry is binding. It's a bondage of darkness. So how can I be freed from idols? Well, the Bible really gives us two instructions, so I've divided this in two points, which is really point three and four in your outline, but it's really this, how can I be freed from idols, that initial bondage that needs to be broken from idolatry, and then secondly, how can I continue to live without idolatry, which then would just not say is the answer to how we should follow the law of God, or how that righteousness should be in our heart.

How can we be free from idolatry and live without idolatry? Let us begin with the first question, how can I be freed from idols? The Bible is very clear that you cannot free yourself from idols. You know why? Because your heart's desire is for the idol. And so you cannot free yourself, because you don't want to free yourself from it, because your heart has already fixated itself upon this idol.

Your heart, your desire is what causes you to make decisions, and if your desire is stuck upon this particular idol in your life, you're never going to desire to break that chain. You cannot kill your own heart, because you do not want to kill your own heart. You cannot get rid of something you love, because you love it.

The reason why most people in this world live in total idolatry is because they love their idols and hate God. It's the simple reason. They love their idols, and so they hate the God who should take that place.

They have a heart that desires evil, and it's as simple, as plain as that. If you think about worldly stuff all day long, it's because you love the worldly stuff. What you love is what your mind thinks about.

Right? Is that not true? If you love safety in this world, all you think about is making sure everything is safe. If you love wealth, all you think about is, how can I get more or contain what I have? If you love honor, all you think about all day is, how can I get up higher so that more people can see me? If you think about God all day long, it's because you love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. The Bible tells us there's only one way to get rid or to get this bondage of idolatry by which you live for yourself and love the things of yourself all day long, and it's through God.

It's through the powerful working of the Holy Spirit. It says in Ezekiel 36, 25, I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleanness, and from all your idols, I will cleanse you. Do you see that? God promises in His Word that anyone who comes to Him and says, Lord Jesus Christ, save me from my sin, which means both the record of sin and the power of sin, God comes in with a mighty Holy Spirit washing and cleanses the heart, binding or setting free the bounded to idolatry.

That's what God does in salvation. He saves us from idolatry. Every human being's heart needs cleansing from Christ to cleanse the idols of the heart.

Do you see that? I think it's very clear in Scripture. You cannot somehow go out of yourself, turn around, and then tell your own self, saying, get rid of those idols, or sometimes get out of yourself and wash yourself or break the chains or anything like that. You need somebody outside yourself who is more powerful than the very idols that you love.

That's Jesus. That's what we call salvation, when He cleanses you from the record of sin and from the power of sin. By the way, we finished Ezekiel today, and I forgot to mention it.

We're going into Romans, and we'll deal with this much more, breaking free from the bondage of sin. By the way, if you ask Him to break the bonds of sin, He most certainly breaks the bondage of sin. He loves to set people, the Lord Jesus Christ loves to set people free from their sin.

That's why He came to die, to break and set you free from sin, to cleanse us holy and pure. The normal Christian life is not running around with all kinds of idols in your heart, and you're just bound in idols, and you just feel guilty all day long about all the different sins you commit, and how you just set your mind upon the things of the flesh all day long. But on Sunday, you need to hear the gospel that you're still forgiven for that.

That's not Christianity. God is more powerful than that. When He saves a person, He cleanses them, and He breaks the bonds of sin, and He sets them on a new course, which is called the narrow way, that fixates upon Christ, and you walk in that way.

That's the gospel. That's what is called in the New Testament, salvation. Liberation from the power and the record of sin.

But let's go on to our last point. How can I live without idolatry? If you've been set free from the initial bondage to idolatry, can you live without idolatry in this world? Do you believe that you can live without following idols, without setting your hearts upon other things in this world as gods? However you answer that question, I will say according to your faith, so be it unto you. If you believe that Christ can set you free from your idols, you trust in Him, He can most certainly do so.

Actually, the Bible tells us, doesn't it, in 1 Corinthians 10, verse 7, do not be idolaters as some of them were, as it is written, the people sat down and ate and drank and rose up to play. If the New Testament tells you Christians do not be idolaters, what does it mean? Two things. Christians can be idolaters because otherwise Paul wouldn't write it to them.

And secondly, Christians don't have to be idolaters because Paul tells them don't be idolaters. You see that? Paul is assured that Christians can be free from idolatry because they have received the Holy Spirit. And by that Holy Spirit, as Paul speaks, the believers hear and walk in freedom.

What Paul is saying is simply this. Do not let your eyes fall on idols. Do not let your heart be attached to them.

And when you experience a temptation to idolatry, don't do it. It's simple. What Paul is implying is different.

Well, it's the same, but it's different than you might think. Paul is not repeating Exodus chapter, the Exodus text that we've been reading. Paul is not saying don't do it.

In the context of Corinthians, what he has been saying is this. Fix your eyes upon the Lord Jesus Christ and not there. That's what he's saying.

In the Old Testament, it says don't do this. Jesus says follow me. And don't do that.

See the difference? He gives us a sight upon which we are to live, to follow and to imitate. As a Christian, you fix your eyes upon Jesus Christ and follow Him every step of the way. Simply following Jesus.

You don't look at the written stones and you say do not commit adultery or idolatry. What does that mean? No. You look at the Lord Jesus Christ and you see that is the way of life.

Not looking anywhere else, but simply looking at the Lord Jesus Christ. Don't stop following Jesus by turning to idols. This is why John tells the disciples in John 5, 21, Little children, keep yourselves from idols.

Keep yourselves. Keep yourselves. How do you keep yourselves from idols? Keep it away.

Keep following the Lord Jesus Christ one step at a time. Do you see the power here? In the Old Testament, it was very clear that the people of Israel could not keep the Ten Commandments. In the New Testament, we see keep yourself from idols.

Why is that possible? Because they walk in a new way. Filled with the Holy Spirit. Following Jesus Christ.

I think we have a tendency in our circles as Reformed people to look at justification by faith, sanctification by faith and glorification by faith and we have the idea that it goes something like this. One day I need to accept this truth, this statement that Jesus died for my sins so I go to heaven. That's justification.

Then for the rest of my life I need to do my very best not to live like I used to live anymore and on one day God will finish the work. You see the problem in that? There's no Jesus. There's only a theoretical Jesus.

The Christian's way of the New Testament is this. Justification is this. Jesus, I see Jesus upon the cross.

I follow Him because that is my cross. I'm now crucified with Christ and so I follow Christ upon the cross. I'm now crucified with Christ.

I'm buried with Christ. My old man is dead. But after three days I'm risen with Christ.

I'm now alive by the Holy Spirit that has revived me. And now for the rest of my life I follow Jesus Christ. That's sanctification.

And one day at the time when Jesus has decided I will be walking following Christ and one day I realize I'm in a new world. I have a new body and I'm a new man because I've entered into glorification. It is following Jesus.

Following Jesus all the way. That's what Paul says, be an imitator of me as I'm an imitator of Jesus. We follow Jesus Christ.

That's the way to be free from idols. You see, just to be free from idols is not enough, is it? If I'm just not worshipping other things, I'm not there. What do I need to do? Worship God, love God.

If I read do not commit adultery or do not follow idols, that's not enough. I need to follow Jesus in every way and so by faith I look to Christ and I follow Him. And what I find is that the desires for my idolatry are drying up and are gone out of my heart.

And suddenly I begin to look at other people with the desire to love them as Christ loves them. And suddenly I don't need to go the old, as Jesus says, it used to be said love your friends and hate your enemies but now I can love my enemies. Not because it's written but because I see it in Christ and by faith I follow Him in that example.

It is a life of faith, brothers and sisters. It's not a life of do this and do that and don't do this and don't do that. It's a life of faith and in that way you will walk in a righteousness that Moses never dreamed of, seeing a people living because it's the Holy Spirit and not you.

There's only one kind of Christian life. It is simple. It is a wholehearted following of Jesus Christ.

You don't need to discover new or hidden theological discussions to be more following of Christ. You don't need to know Hebrew or Greek. You simply need to listen to the words of Jesus Christ and follow Him.

When you share the gospel with someone you're not teaching some difficult theology. You're pointing them to what Christ has done and what He has done for them and then you tell them now you must follow this Jesus. You see that? Isn't this much more beautiful? Much more glorious? This is what the Bible tells

us.

Jesus says if anyone wants to come and follow me must first deny himself, take up his cross and then follow me. No longer my will, Christ, because I've seen you. Lord, I'll take my cross which is yours.

Now I follow you. That is the way to be free from idolatry according to the whole Bible. So, beloved, I hope that you see the joy and the freedom and the beauty of how Paul described this newness of life.

It's not a worried, rigid, scared of whatever in this world. No, but the love of Christ I can be happy with much or with little. I'm not going to be an idolater when I have the riches of the world or the poverty of the world.

I just follow Christ and what He gives me the more I have the more I can love other people with what I have and if I don't have I can love people with what I am. I simply follow Jesus. I come to Him and follow Him.

That is the only way that you can walk as God called us to walk like His Son walked. May the Lord give you strength to keep your eyes fixed upon Him and nowhere else. Amen.

Let us pray. Heavenly Father, Your Word is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. Your Word, O God, shows us what we are not.

Shows us who You are and shows us how we can walk in this new way of Christ. Father, we pray that Your Holy Spirit would work this in all of us that we may follow You and rejoice in the new life. This new walk in Christ.

Father, we pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/8UOF-s0vS90.mp4>

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