

Follow me, follow me, follow me.

But Jesus – we did follow you, we do follow you, we will follow you, wherever you go.

How come Jesus doesn't get it? We are following – even if we have other things to take care of.

We need to stay in relationship with our families, we need to finish our work, we need to say good bye, we need to make a plan.

See, for years now I have been following Jesus. Ever since he came to me and my brother, with our father Zeb– and asked us to drop our nets. I've heard him preach, seen him heal, questioned the people with whom he kept company. I was with John and Peter there on the mountain, and saw his face. God, I wanted to stay up there. But Jesus kept moving, and we followed back down the mountain. And he took off for Jerusalem. I had no idea why.

For years, I have felt completely out of control. Trying to learn from this Messiah Prophet Son of God, but mostly left in the dark. Do you hear how he talks? It confuses me. I feel that all we have been doing is following blindly...why does Jesus keep correcting us? It isn't a bad life, but it isn't always easy or great – being a disciple.

I guess I love Jesus. I don't know. I am in the inner circle. John really loves him, and Peter kind of has a love/hate relationship – but Peter is the favorite. The rest of the disciples are trying to figure out what to do. Judas – seems a little bit disconnected, but probably just my imagination.

But – yeah – I love Jesus – why else would I try to protect him? Or take revenge on those dang Samaritans who refused to give Jesus a place to stay. Fire coming down to consume them – would have been pretty cool to see. But Jesus wasn't happy with me and John for that. Whoops. So we kept walking.

Jesus always had a way of reversing things. Hate to love, doubt to faith, exclusion to acceptance, revenge to forgiveness, death to life. I didn't always understand, or agree, but Jesus was consistent. Always seeing the best in people, always lifting others off the ground, always reframing our perception of the world, always teaching, always loving.

Try and follow that example! Follow me, follow me, follow me. Impossible!

Especially this whole life from death business. Jesus has been talking a lot about death – even his own death. It creeps me out.

Let the dead bury their dead? What does that mean?
What happens when I die? Will I be forgotten?

I can't ignore death, ignore mourning and grieving, and just move forward. I want to hang on to my loved ones. Death seems like such a failure. Being buried back into the dirt of the ground, feels like the end. I don't want to give up. I want to visit their sacred grave sites. I want to make sure they are clean and safe, and honored. I want to make sure the graves are kept up forever. That is where my family is buried! I'm not leaving them behind. To do what? Follow?

But – Jesus' words ring in my years – let the dead bury their dead. Follow me. Don't hold onto the death. They are not in the grave. Well, where are they?

Are we just, supposed to accept death, walk away? If we just do that, what do we look forward to? What do we celebrate?

I suppose we just focus on life. What life? Jesus talks about life...but life cannot exist after death. I am certain.

We cannot be saved through death, the world isn't blessed because of crucifixion, one man cannot change the world.

Following Jesus – I am no closer to understanding this world.

I wish I had answers for my dozens of questions.

I guess I will just continue to follow.

Because I know one thing...following has changed me.

Hanging out with Jesus changes things.

I don't follow as I should, but Jesus picks up where I fall short, gives me second, and third chances.

When I have failed, Jesus has given me redemption

Though I wished fire would rain down on my enemies, Jesus was gracious. I have learned to love those Samaritans.

Jesus has made something out of me, even though I fail.

And when death comes...and I become dirt again, I will hold out for that promise that I do not deserve, that I question, the promise that is so hard to believe....

The hope, the life that Jesus promises after death.

From life to death to life again.

I hold to that...because I know, nothing would be better.