

# CHRIST DIRECTED

By

Curtis Dickinson

*“What is that to thee? Follow thou me”* (John 21:22).

Peter had been given his instructions by the Lord, then seeing John, he asked, “And what shall this man do?” Christ's answer was, “If I will that he tarries till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me.” It is easy to become so concerned about the affairs around us that we fail to see our own responsibility to obey Christ's commands.

As absolutes are discarded and the democratic process advances in its natural course to mob rule, we tend to look more and more to the group for directions. In the words of Rousas Rushdoony, “Man is other-directed rather than inner-directed, and the group has taken the place of God as authority”.

Ultimately this results in following satanic devices, for where men abandon the rule of God they are open prey for the devil. “And even as they refuse to have God in their knowledge God gave them up unto a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not fitting” (Rom.1:28). Those things “which are not fitting” abound on every hand. Paul wrote that men are deceived by the “working of Satan . . . because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God sends them a working of error, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness” (1Thess. 2:9-12). When man rejects Christ so that he does not have the God-given absolutes upon which to establish his life and direct his mind he will be regulated by the actions and philosophies of those about him.

During Christ's earthly ministry the Jews followed just such a corrupt religious system. Jesus asked them, “How can we believe who receive glory one of another?” (John 5:44). Indeed, how could the Rabbi believe Jesus and still receive the honor of those who followed the traditions (now known as the Talmud) which were contrary to Bible commands? It is sadly recorded that many would have received Him but they loved the glory of men more than the glory of God (John 12:43).

How can the business man stand on the truth of Christ and at the same time seek the acclaim of his non-Christian associates? And if he receives the honor of the world, how then can he ever learn what it is to follow in the “narrow” way of Christ? How can the preacher believe and make the teaching of Christ his only guide and at the same time receive the glory of men who reject portions of God's word?

The church, instead of being Christ-directed, is too often other-directed by the world. The ministry must be certified by an accredited school which receives its endorsement from an agency operating on majority opinion. Sunday school teachers rely upon literature from the publishing house, certified by majority acceptance, if not the official

denominational organ. If anyone gets around to teaching the Scripture, he must be careful to interpret it in harmony with these recognized representatives, or he is suspect.

While proclaiming “We speak where the Bible speaks and we are silent where the Bible is silent” many are never able to consider what the Bible teaches without first getting the views of the leading lights of the group. Individual thinking and study is taboo. The church, even while claiming to be non-denominational, may be just as tightly bound to human views as the most highly structured denomination, because the members are other-directed. It is rare to find a Christian who makes a personal study of the Scriptures, 'who searches them to learn what God has to say.

Yet this is the meaning of 2 Timothy 2:15 “Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God.” The object is to know the mind of God and thus be approved by Him; not to meet the approval of men, the denomination, the college or the convention leaders, but to receive the approval of God. This is not to say that teachers and religious literature are to be discarded. We are commanded to teach and to edify one another. We may guide each other to under standing, as Philip guided the Ethiopian Eunuch in understanding the writing of Isaiah. But the object of a sincere Christian teacher is for the pupil to come to the place where he no longer looks to the teacher but to Christ, even as the Ethiopian went on his way rejoicing, to see Philip no more but to follow the leading of Christ (Acts 8:39).

Men look to the group because often they have joined the group, rather than Christ. Particular religious groups hold to peculiar teachings which are opposed to those of other groups, and members have a sense of loyalty to the group-doctrine to the exclusion of any pursuit of truth.

A Christian is directed from above. He considers the propositional truths of Christ, not the slogans, traditions and taboos of men. God is the Creator and it is His purpose that is to be fulfilled. Indeed, it is ONLY His purpose that shall be fulfilled, for He promises immortal life only to those who are in harmony with His purpose. This purpose is fixed (hence called eternal) and so are the rules by which it is accomplished. A believer doesn't argue with the rules. He learns them, and makes them a part of his own character, his very mind, so that Christ directs him from within. Therefore the Christian stands in opposition to the world because he is inner-directed by Christ and the world is inner-directed by others.

The command is “Follow thou me.” Peter did not argue. He was present when Jesus said, “All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth” (Matt. 28:18). He was the first to preach that Jesus had ascended to David's throne and that “God has made him both Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:29-36). If Christ is King, then He is in command, and Peter never forgot it.

Those who seek an earthly Utopia insist that Christ is not really in command, yet. Men presume that IF Christ were in power He would not allow war, sin, suffering and violence. They reason that if they had total power. They would put an end to everything

that stands in the way of pleasure and happiness. This was the mistake the murderers of Jesus made. Since Christ refused an earthly kingdom and declared that His kingdom is NOT of THIS world, they who wanted a temporal society of carnal pleasure put Him to death.

They refused to be Christ-directed unless Christ was going their way. They have their followers today who insist on building a Utopia where their carnal ambitions may be realized, and if Christ's teaching stands in the way they are prepared to get rid of Him.

They refused, and still refuse, to accept the purpose of God. For God's express purpose is not to be fulfilled in this present world, but to redeem men FROM the world and transform them to His own image, not for mortal life here, but for life in a new creation as immortal and glorified man.

For this cause He entered the stream of human life, took upon Himself the sin and guilt of man, then died under the just punishment for that sin. Each individual is baptized into His death (Romans 6:3) so that, regardless of the numbers who are baptized, each one is personally subject to Christ as his Savior and King. Therefore I am called to follow Christ, and no one else. You are called to follow Him, and He is the one to direct each of our paths. When we begin making comparisons we are soon measuring our discipleship by what other imperfect Christians do rather than by the perfect standard to which Christ calls us. Is John to escape persecution and hardship? What is that to thee? It is Christ who calls you to follow Him through persecution and crucifixion. Is John to enjoy popularity and fame? What is that to thee? Christ calls you to forsake all and follow Him alone to Gethsemane. Is John to prosper? What is that to thee? Christ directs you to sell all, to give it up and to follow Him.

When we answered the call of Jesus it was understood that we were to deny all, even self, and to trust Him completely for direction; and for the reward. But when the way grows difficult we look around for a means of escape, and it is then we see John, with no apparent problems. It is easy to forget that we set out to follow Jesus who called us to self-denial, suffering and a narrow way. We do not follow the law of averages and equality, but the law of discipleship which puts each individual at the disposal of Christ.

There are always those who desert the faith, bask in worldly luxury, and yet find approval for their religion. Others may live in sin while claiming God's grace, prosper materially and never suffer one minute for the name of Jesus. "What is that to thee? Follow thou me." We need to stop looking at John, and look to Jesus.

We' must stop looking to the human experts. Following trends, changing styles and measuring life by the most popular evangelist or best-selling author, and examine the directives of our King, Jesus.

We must not let world conditions frighten us into seeking some new "life-style". We must show the world that we are founded on The Rock, that Christ's truth is absolute and eternal, and that it will direct us through the crisis to the only worthwhile goal.

The Christian is one who has ceased playing the game of “follow the multitude”, and is busy following one, Christ Jesus. “And the Lord Direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patience of Christ.”

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