

Reasons to Follow Pt. 4

Pastor James Foley – Sunday, October 2, 2022

COMMUNION

- 1) The Wafer Symbolizes the BODY of Christ – Broken for Us**
- 2) The Juice Symbolizes the BLOOD of Christ – Shed for Us All**

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (NIV)

23 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.” 25 In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.” 26 For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

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INTRODUCTION

Thank you for joining us! Whether you are here in person or joining via the livestream you are most welcome! Please have a Bible at the ready and be prepared to take notes as you like. We have much to cover in a rather short space of time.

SUMMATIONS

NOTE 1 – In recent days, my three-year old foster daughter initiated the following conversation (re: baptism)...

Q1. “Daddy, why did you put people under water?”

A. “Because Daddy is a Pastor and I baptize people.”

Q2. “Daddy, what is baptism?”

A. “Baptism is something people do when they choose to follow Jesus.”

Q3. “Why do people follow Jesus?”

Q4. “Why do YOU follow Jesus, Daddy?”

NOTE 2 – I found that I was not able to quickly answer this question (i.e., at least not in a way that our three-year old could readily understand). Yet as was noted, this question has stuck with me in recent days, stirring my heart and mind...

Q. Why have I chosen to follow Christ?

NOTE 3 – In recent weeks I have offered the following responses...

A1. He Calls Me to ‘Walk on Water’ w/ Him

A2. He Remains Both Able & Willing to Save

A3. His Provision for Me is Holistic in Nature

A4. The Ways of Christ Work (‘Healthful’ End)

A5. He Provides Meaningful Purpose/Direction

NOTE 4 – Check out recent sermons and notes online at www.NewLifeBarre.org.

NOTE 5 – This morning I want to conclude this series with the following replies to the Q...

Q. Why do I follow Jesus?

KEY – It is my hope that these remarks inform and impact your own walk with Him! Let us delve in...

REASON #1

Q. Why do I follow Christ?

A. He is and has been found to be FAITHFUL...

FYI – Scripture unceasingly testifies to His faithfulness...

Deuteronomy 7:9 (ESV, Emphasis Mine)

9 Know therefore that the Lord your God is God, the **faithful** God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations,

Psalms 119:90 (Emphasis Mine)

90 Your **faithfulness** endures to all generations; you have established the earth, and it stands fast.

Lamentations 3:22–23 (Emphasis Mine)

22 The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; 23 they are new every morning; great is your **faithfulness**.

1 Corinthians 1:9 (Emphasis Mine)

9 God is **faithful**, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

2 Thessalonians 3:3 (Emphasis Mine)

3 . . . the Lord is **faithful**. He will establish you and guard you against the evil one.

2 Timothy 2:13a (Emphasis Mine)

13 If we are faithless, he remains **faithful** . . .

Hebrews 10:23 (Emphasis Mine)

23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is **faithful**.

Revelation 19:11 (Emphasis Mine)

11 I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called **Faithful** and True.

Q. What does it mean that He is “faithful”?

A1. Firstly, it means that He is trustworthy, reliable and dependable; true to His commitments and promises...

Numbers 23:19 (NIV)

19 God is not human, that he should lie,
not a human being, that he should change his mind.

Does he speak and then not act?

Does he promise and not fulfill?

Luke 1:37

37 . . . no word [i.e., promise] from God will ever fail.

A2. Secondly, it refers to the reality of God's abiding presence; He is present with us in the midst of living...

Hebrews 13:5 (cf. Deut. 31:6; Josh. 1:5)

5 Never will I leave you;
never will I forsake you.

Psalms 23

1 The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.
2 He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters,
3 he refreshes my soul.

He guides me along the right paths
for his name's sake.

4 Even though I walk
through the darkest valley,

I will fear no evil,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.

5 You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies.

You anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.

6 Surely your goodness and love will follow me
all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord
forever.

REASON #2

Q. Why do I follow Christ?

A. He alone offers the way to ETERNAL LIFE...

NOTE 1 – All of the points I have offered thus far connect to the work of Christ in THIS life...

- 1)** He Calls Me to ‘Walk on Water’ w/ Him
- 2)** He Remains Both Able & Willing to Save
- 3)** His Provision for Me is Holistic in Nature
- 4)** The Ways of Christ Work (Healthful End)
- 5)** He Provides Mean. Purpose & Direction
- 6)** He Is & Has Been Found to be ‘Faithful’

NOTE 2 – This reply connects to His work and promise for the life to come (i.e., ETERNAL life)...

NOTE 3 – Please take note of the following moments from the life and ministry of Christ (cf. John 6)...

1) John 6:1–15

Christ feeds the multitudes (5,000 men) with a miniscule amount of both fish and bread. The masses were so moved by this mir. provision, they sought to make Him king by force! Christ, however, dismisses His disciples by boat and seeks His Father in isolated prayer, knowing His kingship would only come through the Cross.

2) John 6:16–21

Interlude wherein Christ walks on the water and comes to His disciples in the storm-tossed ship.

3) John 6:22–24

The crowds seek Christ out, as they hungered for further earthly provision(s).

4) John 6:25–66

Jesus speaks to the crowds who pursued Him. Herein, He offers an extended discourse on the truth that He is the “bread from heaven” that brings life (v. the multiplied loaves), and that humanity must “eat his flesh” and “drink his blood” to appropriate life eternal. Of course, this teaching, which ultimately serves as a call to faith, was misconstrued, leading to a mass rejection!

NOTE 4 – I would like to consider a selection from this text and beyond...

John 6:53–58, 60, 66

53 Jesus said to them, “Very truly I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. 54 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day. 55 For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. 56 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in them. 57 Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. 58 This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your ancestors ate manna and died (cf. Exod. 16), but whoever feeds on this bread will live forever.”

60 On hearing it, many of his disciples said, “This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?”

....

66 From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.

NOTE 5 – What takes place next is of utmost significance...

John 6:67–69 (Emphasis Mine)

67 “You do not want to leave too, do you?” **Jesus asked the Twelve.**

68 **Simon Peter** answered him, “**Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.** 69 We have come to **believe** and to **know** that you are the Holy One of God.”

NOTE 4 – There was much that Simon Peter did not know in this moment, and I am sure he had serious questions or doubts concerning this teaching of Christ. Yet he knew that Christ was the only way to eternal life, and he chose to not shrink back or turn from Him in kind! This same Peter would later proclaim the following in the Book of Acts...

Acts 4:12

12 “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.”

Q1. To what degree do we believe Jesus Christ is the only way to life?

Q2. To what degree does this inform our commitment and dedication?

KEY 1 – Let us take seriously the claims concerning Christ...

John 3:16

16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

KEY 2 – Let us take seriously the claims of Christ Jesus Himself...

John 14:6

6 Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

KEY 3 – Let us not shrink back despite momentary doubt(s), adversity or affliction?

Q. To whom shall we go for eternal life if NOT Jesus?

QUOTE – “We know very little about heaven, but I once heard a theologian describe it as ‘an unknown region with a well-known inhabitant,’ and there is not a better way to think of it than that. To those who have learned to love and trust Jesus, the prospect of meeting him face to face and being with him forever is the hope that keeps us going, no matter what life may throw at us.”

2 Corinthians 4:17–18

17 For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. 18 So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

Q. To what degree do we understand the scope and scale of the gift of life we have been given?

ILL. – Thinking of the fullness and duration of this wonderful life, W. B. Hinson, a great preacher of a past generation, spoke from his own experience just before he died. He said, “I remember a year ago when a doctor told me, ‘You have an illness from which you won’t recover.’ I walked out to where I live five miles from Portland, Oregon, and I looked across at that mountain that I love. I looked at the river in which I rejoice, and I looked at the stately trees that are always God’s own poetry to my soul. Then in the evening I looked up into the great sky where God was lighting His lamps, and I said, ‘I may not see you many more times, but Mountain, I shall be alive when you are gone; and River, I shall be alive when you cease running toward the sea; and Stars, I shall be alive when you have fallen from your sockets in the great downpulling of the material universe!’”

FYI – I do not believe we think upon the wonders of eternal life and heaven enough (v. our sp. forebears).

REASON #3

Q. Why do I follow Christ?

A. He takes or receives me “just as a I am”...

READ – *No Wonder They Call Him Savior* (Lucado) p. 157–159

This story is illustrative of the heart of Christ. No matter who you are or what you have done, COME HOME...

SUMMATIONS

NOTE 1 – Sometimes the simplest question(s) yield the most profound of answers...

Q. “Why do I follow Jesus?”

- A1.** He Calls Me to ‘Walk on Water’ w/ Him
- A2.** He Remains Both Able & Willing to Save
- A3.** His Provision for Me is Holistic in Nature
- A4.** The Ways of Christ Work (‘Healthful’ End)
- A5.** He Provides Meaningful Purpose/Direction
- A6.** J. Christ is and has been found to be faithful
- A7.** Christ alone offers the way to everlasting life
- A8.** Christ receives and/or takes me “just as I am”

Q1. Why do YOU follow Jesus?

Q2. Have you decided to follow Him?

NOTE 3 – There are temporal and eternal implications to your response(s).

CONCLUSION

NOTE 1 – Feel free to give either in person or online at www.NewLifeBarre.org.

NOTE 2 – Please join us for our weekly Sunday School (9:15am) or Mid-Week Study (6:30pm).

NOTE 3 – Small-Group Ministries resumed in September. Please check the website for particular info.

NOTE 4 – Special thanks to those who gave to our missionary last Sunday! Nearly 2k was given to him!

NOTE 5 – CORI & Background Checks for ALL who serve with the youth and children of this church.

2 Corinthians 13:14

14 May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.