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## **“FOLLOW AND SERVE ONLY JESUS!”**

"For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only, you shall serve'"  
(Jesus spoke in Matthew 4:10)

"You shall fear the Lord your God; you shall serve Him, and to Him you shall hold fast, and take oaths in His name." (Deuteronomy 10:20)

"Now therefore, fear the Lord, serve Him in sincerity and in truth," - - (Joshua 24:14)

"Only fear the Lord, and serve Him in truth with all your heart; for consider what great things He has done for you." (1 Samuel 12:24)

Let the very words of JESUS sink into your heart and take root there.

### **"HIM Only You Shall Serve!"**

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This writer cannot over emphasize the importance of our Lord's words, as He calls us to serve Him and Him alone! Now before you respond to these words by saying; "I agree and I am already serving Him", please listen to what the Spirit of God would say to you on this matter of serving Him.

As this message began to rise up in me, I turned to the English dictionary to see what the full meaning of the word "serve" was. Here is what I found in Webster's Dictionary Copyright 1999:

1. To work as a servant.
2. To render obedience and worship to God.
3. To comply with the commands or demands of the one you serve.

I then referred to Young's Literal Translation of the Holy Bible to see if the word meaning "serve" was used in the Greek and Hebrew – it was. I then searched out the word "Only" and found it to mean "Sole" or "Solely": - Single, Only. Young's Literal Translation also confirmed the use of the Greek and Hebrew word for "Only". The message is clear, it is not a gray area, there is no confusion and we have no excuse if we fail to serve only the Lord JESUS CHRIST! This command of GOD applies to you and to me, and to every man or woman, boy or girl who consider themselves to be "Born Again" children of the most High GOD. This call to serve Him is a personal, One on one call. In other words, it is between you and GOD, and only you will be responsible for your response to His call. It is a matter, not of good Christian works in His name but rather it is a matter of your heart's attitude toward JESUS CHRIST and FATHER GOD. It is quite clear from the Word of GOD that we are to love Him, fear Him and serve Him alone if our heart is to be in unity with His word. There is no provision in GOD'S word that would instruct us who believe, to follow anyone other than JESUS Himself.

When JESUS called His disciples He said, "Follow Me". (See Matthew 9:9 and Mark 1:17) In Luke the fifth chapter JESUS demonstrated His power to four fishermen after which they "forsook all and followed Him." (Verse 11) In Matthew the eighth chapter JESUS told a man to "Follow Me" immediately, rather than to go

and bury a family member. (Verses 18 thru 22) In 1 Peter 2:21 Peter tells us that Christ suffered for us and set an example, that we should follow in His steps. In Revelation 14:4 John described the redeemed of GOD as being those "who follow the Lamb wherever He goes". In John 8:12 JESUS promised the following:

"I am the light of the world, He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

According to Webster, the word "follow" means: 1. To go or come after. 2. To engage in as a way of life. 3. To obey. 4. To pursue. 5. To keep one's attention fixed on.

It is also interesting to note that the meaning of "following someone" is, 1. To succeed. 2. To immediately follow. This denotes closeness, which is exactly what our Lord taught and prayed for. (See John 17:20-26)

If you consider yourself to be a son or daughter of GOD, then you are clearly called to do more than just "believe in" JESUS. You are called to follow Him, believe Him and to serve Him, alone! The demons of hell and Lucifer himself believe in JESUS – more than most of us do because they flee at the mere mention of His name, while we struggle to bend the knee or bow the head before Him. Yes, there is more than just "believing in" JESUS if we are to be found worthy to stand among the redeemed on that day. We must not only "believe in", but we must also "believe Him"! There is a big difference my friends, and if our hearts are not bent toward following and serving Him, then it is almost certain that we do not believe Him and for sure, we do not love Him, except in word only.

"If anyone loves Me, he will keep My words" – "He who does not love Me does not keep My words;" - - - (John 14:23,24)

In Matthew chapter seven our Lord issued a very sober warning to us that indicated that eternal life with Him in heaven was not easy to attain. We have attempted to make it easy, to our shame. The Lord said only a few would find the way. And then He spoke some of the most frightening words in all of the Bible, when He said:

"Not everyone who says to Me Lord, Lord, shall enter the Kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name? And then I will declare to them, I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!" (Read the full account of this warning for yourself in Matthew 7:13 thru 29)

If you believe the word of GOD to be what it says of itself, that it is pure truth, that it is eternal, undefiled, alive and active and that GOD will not alter it – if you believe that, then the issue of who you should follow and serve is settled forever more. If you do not believe that then you are wasting your time to read any further here. You need to stop, pick up your Bible and read the following:

Psalms 119: 1,2,11,31, 33, 35, 72, 89, 128, 140 and 142, also Psalm 89:34, John 1:1 and 14, John 6:63, John 8:31 & 32, 51 and 52, John 14:10, John 14:21, 23 and 24, John 15:7, John 17:17, Mathew 24, 35, Mark 13:31, Luke 21:33, Hebrews 4:12, and finally John 12:48 which reads as follows:

"He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him – the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day."

The scripture listed above only scratches the surface and if that doesn't persuade you as to who you are to believe, follow and serve, there would be little hope for you. But thanks be to GOD, I choose to believe that you do not fall into the category of the many who will find themselves in the pit of hell because they refused

to believe JESUS and set their hearts to follow Him only. Though I may not know you, I pray in the name of JESUS CHRIST that you will be counted among the few that chose, as an act of your own free will, to believe Him, and to embrace His word as truth, as you follow Him alone. Glory to GOD – may He take pleasure in you as you present to Him a willing heart. A heart that He will transform by the renewing of your mind. (See Ephesians 4:23 and Romans 12:2)

From this point on, I pray that we, you and I, are in agreement as far as who we are to follow and serve in this life – that being JESUS CHRIST alone! However, I must now share the burden of my heart and issue a warning that I pray will be heard.

"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." (Ephesians 6:12)

As true followers of our Lord JESUS, we are not free from the battle that rages in the spirit realm. In fact Paul warns us that we will need to be "strong in the Lord" (Ephesians 6:10) and that we would need the whole armor of GOD (Ephesians 6:11 and 13 thru 18) to make it through the battle. This spiritual battle between Lucifer and his demons, and the GOD of all time and eternity, the GREAT I AM, JESUS CHRIST of Nazareth, is as real as any battle that takes place on the physical earth, and the souls of men and women hang in the balance. For us here on earth, it is all about heaven or hell, life or death. That's all! There is no other issue to be decided, only that of where you and I will spend eternity. This is not a game, nor a fairy tale and it is high time that some of us stop being so religious and get real before a holy GOD. Many of us are not even aware of how deceived we really are. We were warned that this would happen by the Lord Himself in Matthew the 24<sup>th</sup> Chapter. So strong would the deception be that even the elect would give in to it, except the Lord spare them.

"And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works." (2 Corinthians 11:14,15)

Can you imagine, Lucifer himself disguises himself as an angel of light and the demons of hell transform themselves into ministers of righteousness. This should be a cause of alarm for all of us who seek to follow Him who is light. (John 8:12) We must understand that this false light and false righteousness shows up wherever there are believers, especially in what we and the world call the church. After all, Lucifer already has the unbelievers and now his desire is to do as much damage as possible to those of us who call ourselves Christians and especially those who claim to be true followers of JESUS.

Now while this writer would quickly admit that he does not have a full revelation of the enemies' plans in their entirety, there are a few things that I feel compelled to share with you. Please listen, prayerfully and test them by the Spirit and the Word.

Above all things we are to love GOD, more than even life itself. JESUS said in Matthew 22:37, 38 – "You shall love the Lord your GOD with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment." Our Lord went on to say that from this first and great commandment would come a love for our neighbor and that the whole of GOD'S law hangs on this truth.

Now if we love Him as we are called to do, we will follow Him, and if we follow Him, we will believe Him, and if we believe Him, we will serve Him and if we serve Him, He will do the works of FATHER through us. This is the very thing that Lucifer desires to hinder, to slow down and if possible to stop us from doing. This false angel of light is delighted to have us follow anybody or anything as long as it is not JESUS. And he knows how to disguise himself so that only the spiritually discerning can know the difference. He uses

GOD'S word and will allow us to use the name of JESUS as he leads us away from the Lord of Glory. This ancient foe of our Lord, who so easily deceived Adam and Eve who actually walked with GOD, finds most of us today to be easy marks for his deception. May GOD have mercy! The demons of hell rejoice as we consume ourselves in busy activity in the name of JESUS. Much of this activity is directed by the agents of Lucifer who are disguised as righteousness. Most of this activity would appear to agree with FATHER'S word. Remember Lucifer's words to Eve in Genesis 3:1, "Has God indeed said - - -?" As we step into this snare of busyness and service we are made to feel good, and the religious ones call us one of their own. The only problem is, that now we find ourselves covered up with world wide works for JESUS, and virtually no fear of Him. His glory has departed from our assembly and His power, as described in His word, is almost non-existent in the western world. Spiritual discernment on the part of leadership, has become a thing of the past. Even a public bloodletting such as occurred on September 11, 2001, did not bring us who believe to repentance. And now, drought, locusts, fire, financial ruin and the plague of cancer still have not brought us to repentance. This writer would suggest that much of this death and destruction is due to our not following the only One who has the power to save, deliver, heal and restore us - JESUS CHRIST! Sadly, we who say we believe, no longer accept as truth FATHER'S word to us as outlined in 2 Chronicles 7:13, 14.

Instead of following JESUS alone some of us are following the Pope. Some are following the T. V. Evangelist. Some are following the Baptist doctrine, some the Presbyterian doctrine, some the Missionary Alliance doctrine, some the Assembly of God doctrine and those of us who are really in the spiritual know, are following the full gospel-charismatic doctrine. You name the doctrine and there is a group assigned to it. Many of us have a greater allegiance to a preacher, pastor or some Bible teacher than we do to JESUS. And while we use His name, we are following someone else, and that someone else has an agenda, and that agenda may not have been birthed in heaven. This writer knows of what he is speaking. I have followed man in the name of JESUS. I have followed the church (little "c") in the name of JESUS. And I have seen clearly how, with the best of intentions, I have personally had my own agenda, all in the name of JESUS. But I thank our GOD that He has set me free to finish my days following only JESUS and I look to Him to protect me, as He will you, from our enemy's schemes. In no way do I intend this statement to be a boast but rather a statement of fact. To so boast would set one up as an easy mark for Lucifer, and I fully realize now how helpless we really are, except that our Lord JESUS hide us in His shadow. Bless His holy name!

If there was no other evidence to support what I have shared here today, the following fact would be more than sufficient to convict us of the charge of "unfaithfulness to JESUS CHRIST".

This writer has experienced first hand, as have so many others, the rejection from the religious ones, when JESUS alone is lifted up above their church, their doctrine, their pastor, etc., etc. Sadly, the one who presents JESUS alone, is rejected as being a troublemaker, a wolf in sheep's clothing, an accuser of the brethren and the enemy of the church. Not to mention that such a person is void of love. JESUS truly brings division (See Matthew 10:34-39) even among those of us who consider ourselves to be believers. Believe me, it hurts when a brother or sister in the Lord breaks fellowship with you because their covenant with their church, their pastor or their doctrine is stronger than their covenant with JESUS. It hurts, and it grieves Him who hung on the cross on that day so many years ago, so that we could enjoy Him as being fully sufficient to bring us together in love and unity. Yes it hurts!

Bro. A. W. Tozer wrote in his book "The Root of the Righteous" (Published by Christian Publications, Inc.) the following warning and it speaks to where most of us are today – listen to Bro.Tozer,

*"Churches and Christian organizations have shown a tendency to fall into the same error that destroyed Israel: inability to receive admonition. After a time of growth and successful labor comes the deadly psychology of self-congratulation. Success itself becomes the cause of later failure. The leaders come to accept themselves as the very chosen of GOD. They are special objects of the divine favor, their success is proof enough that this is so. They must therefore be right and anyone who tries to call them to account is*

*instantly written off as an unauthorized meddler who should be ashamed to dare to reprove his betters. If anyone imagines that we are merely playing with words let him approach at random any religious leader and call attention to the weaknesses and sins of his organization. Such a one will be sure to get the quick brush off and if he dares to persist he will be confronted with reports and statistics to prove that he is dead wrong and completely out of order. "We be the seed of Abraham" will be the burden of the defense. And who would dare to find fault with Abraham's seed?"*

Religious pride and the failure to follow only JESUS was clearly identified by A. W. Tozer some 50 years ago and he warned all who would listen, but few did. Today matters are worse, much worse than they were in Tozer's day. I cannot help but wonder what A. W. Tozer, Charles Finney, Jonathan Edwards, John or Charles Wesley, T. Austin Sparks or the Apostle Paul would think of the church today that calls JESUS their savior, if they came back to observe us. What would they say?

My brothers and sisters, I urge you to center your life on JESUS CHRIST alone and follow only Him. Feed on His word daily – soak in it afresh. Devote more time to Matthew 4, 5, 6 and 7 (the Sermon on the mount), the entire book of John and Revelation Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4. He is our only hope! Stop following the flesh of man and ask the Lord to reveal Himself to you. Devote the balance of your life to developing an intimate relationship with Him. Always remember that our Lord does raise up leaders among His people and you could be one of those leaders. Please remember that a "true" leader in the Body of Christ will always focus on making Disciples for JESUS from those he or she leads. The center of attention should always be JESUS Himself, not the church organization, not good works, not the leaders agenda apart from our Lord's agenda. No! The true leader in the Body of Christ would always remind you that Christ is head of the church and the Savior of the body, and that He alone has been given all authority. True leaders delight in seeing those they lead reach and surpass their own level of spiritual maturity. They delight as they decrease and He increases. If you are following anyone that does not possess these characteristics, and that does not challenge you to press into JESUS alone, you are in danger of being deceived. We cannot serve GOD as we are commanded to do, and serve anyone or anything else at the same time. We cannot!

"No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve GOD and mammon." (JESUS speaking in Matthew 6:24)

Oswald Chambers warned us about serving GOD apart from total loyalty to Him alone, when he said:

"Christian service is not our work; loyalty to JESUS is our work."

"Nothing hoodwinks us more quickly than the idea that we are serving God."

"God does not expect us to work for Him, but to work with Him."

"Any work for God that has less than a passion for JESUS CHRIST as its motive will end in crushing heartbreak and discouragement." (Oswald Chambers, Oliver Nelson Publisher)

We will never go wrong as long as JESUS alone is the center of our life. Not only that, but as we devote ourselves to Him, He will take us to new spiritual heights and reveal Himself to us, in us and through us. And in it all He will be glorified. Isn't it about time that we turned back to Him?

God Bless

Tom

