

Maple Springs Baptist Church

Series: Red Letter Living—Living the Words of Jesus

Week 7: What's the Win?

People can believe they believe something that they may not actually believe.

The truth is that beliefs that have no connection to reality, even if they're sincere, aren't beliefs at all; they're delusions.

Following Jesus is what happens when our lives align with what we say we believe about Him.

Society is extremely goal oriented. We have goals for everything ... And because of this we expend a great deal of effort toward achieving our goals. But what are the goals of the Christian life? We know our ultimate target is to live as devoted followers of Jesus, but **What is the win?**

"The goal of the Christian life is to obey God!"

Meaning this: **the more I live for God through obedience, the closer I get to hitting the target of being a good Christian.**

Problem: **Building your life around the goal of obeying God is a step toward religion, not relationship.**

We can't do it: **pursuing a goal we know we can't achieve leads to guilt and condemnation.**

Jesus gave a clear picture of His goal for His disciples all the way back at the beginning of His public ministry: **MARK 3:13-19.**

Jesus had called specific individuals to follow Him ... He promised to make Simon Peter and Andrew "fishers of men" (Mark 1:7) ... He commanded Levi (Matthew) the tax collector, "Follow Me!" (Mark 2:14). But here in Mark 3, Jesus had gathered all His would-be disciples on a mountain. And from among them, He chose twelve men and personally invited them to walk with Him, live with Him, and teach with Him as disciples.

With that in mind, look again at **MARK 3:14.** Why did Jesus call these men as disciples? **So they would be with Him.** Jesus didn't say their purpose was to live for Him. He didn't say He was calling them to obey Him or honor Him or please Him in some way. He called them so they could be with Him and He could be with them.

Don't miss this truth: **this Scripture clearly teaches that following Jesus is not about doing, it's about being.**

Jesus did send the disciples out to preach. But notice the "they" and the "He" in that verse. "They" were to be with Him. "He" would send them out to preach. The Greek word translated "preach" means to announce publicly or to make public. "They" the disciples, were first called to be with Jesus. And then, out of the overflow of their being with Him, "He" would make His life public through them. Jesus would accomplish His mission through the disciples as an overflow of their spending time with Him.

We need to understand that being with Jesus is the ultimate pursuit of our lives. Being with Jesus always comes before doing anything. Doing flows from being, not the other way around.

This is a crucial principle for anyone who wants to live as a devoted follower of Jesus: the primary call on my life is not to do something for Jesus; the primary call on my life is to be with Jesus.

We are called to Live with the One who Died for us. This is a paradox—a seemingly absurd or self-contradictory statement or proposition that when investigated or explained may prove to be well founded or true.

3 Principles of Paradox Living – Matthew 19:13-30

Principle #1: Your Victory is Found in Your Surrender Not Your Self-Sufficiency (Matthew 19:13-15)

Principle #2: Your Reward is Determined by Your Pursuit (of a relationship) not Your Progress (of keeping the rules) (Matthew 19:16-22)

Principle #3: Your Sacrifice for Christ will be Rewarded with Christ. (Matthew 19:23-30)

TRUTH: Red Letter Living Requires Living with the One who Died for Us.