

Teach me your way, O LORD; I will walk in your truth; unite my heart to fear Your name.

(Psalm 86:11)

Follow Him

And Elijah came to all the people, and said, "How long will you falter between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him." But the people answered him not a word (I Kings 18:21, NKJV). Ahab, the seventh king in Israel, was one of the more wicked kings in Israel. While Solomon, king in Judah, tolerated the idol worship of his foreign wives and Jeroboam had set up calves as objects of worship for political reasons, Ahab went so far as to equate Baal with Jehovah and worshipped Baal as such. Ahab called Elijah, the prophet of God, *...a troubler of Israel* (I Kings 18:17). Elijah retorted in I Kings 18:18 by saying, *"I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father's house have, in that you have forsaken the commandments of the Lord and have followed the Baals."*

Many times when it appears that Satan is having a heyday in our lives individually or as a congregation of the Lord's body, it could be that we have overlooked the obvious. Perhaps because some "Baal" has taken over in our lives and sapped all of our time, energy, money, zeal, and enthusiasm, we find that we have gone off and forgotten the commandments of Jehovah. Oh, it is unintentional in most cases, but nevertheless true. Perchance some tragedy slaps us in the face and we realize that we have indeed been following...but the wrong leader.

Following is not as easy as it sounds at first glance. Leading, for sure, is difficult. Leading takes courage, wisdom, foresight, and a willingness to be criticized. But, following means you must give up your own dreams and the freedom to make your own decisions. Following means you must submit your will and your ways to your leader. Children must submit to parents; wives submit to husbands; husbands submit to Christ; Christ submits to God, the Father (I Corinthians 11:3). Jesus was the perfect follower. He said in John 8:29, *And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him.*

A follower must make a deliberate, conscious choice concerning whom he will follow. One who is a conscientious follower will carefully consider the ways and teachings of his leader and the consequences of following his superior. To choose to follow a leader who demands much, requires much self-discipline and resignation to a life of selflessness.

It may even mean giving up some personal possessions and personal relationships.

Following is a very demanding task. A follower must hear, comprehend, and execute the commands of his master. To fail to hear or comprehend or execute commands can result in dire repercussions. Jesus said to each of the seven churches in Asia in Revelation chapters 2 and 3, *He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.* Failure to heed the instructions dictated to those churches would result in the removal of their candlestick, i.e., heaven's endorsement of their very existence!

When all Israel had assembled around Mount Carmel, Elijah challenged them with two actions: (1) **Decide** who is God — Jehovah or Baal; (2) Based on their decision, **follow** the one you decide is God. Jehovah God still calls upon mankind to make that decision daily. Thank God for those dedicated brothers and sisters in Christ who **know** that Jehovah is their God and follow Him daily in their lives! But there are still those who *falter between two opinions*. With such hesitancy God is not pleased. You see, precious time is wasted by those who are trying to make up their minds. Time that could be spent being one of God's spiritual leaders...in their home; in their community; in the church of the Lord. Before dying at the age of 29, David Brainerd said, *"Oh, how precious is time; and guilty it makes me feel when I think I have trifled*

away and misimproved it or neglected to fill up each part of it with duty to the utmost of my ability and capacity.”

In his day, Joshua challenged the nation of Israel to make a choice about who is God. In Joshua 24:14-15 the Bible has a record of Joshua’s challenge: *Now therefore, fear the Lord, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the Lord! And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.*

So, who’s going to be **your** leader? Whom will **you** follow? The god of this world? Or, **the** God of heaven?

You must decide

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Joshua 24:14– 16

King James Version (KJV) And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.