

06.08.22 – A Weekly Word for Covenant Church

Title: “Staying Around; Moving Out”

Scripture Reading: [John 21:18-25](#)

Reflection: Pastor Henry

We often compare and contrast ourselves with others, don't we? Whether we are hanging out with friends, or we are in a meeting at work, or practicing with the team on the field, or scrolling through social media on our phones, or simply walking in our neighborhood, so often we compare ourselves with those around us. Am I smart enough? How do I look? Do my house and yard and car look ok? Are my teammate's skills better than mine on the field? We spend a lot of time comparing ourselves with others.

Peter in our text for today does this very same thing. While Jesus is talking to Peter about what it's going to mean for Peter to follow Him, Peter starts looking around. Peter notices John. Peter compares himself to John. Peter wants to know if John's experience is going to be the same as his. “Lord, what about him?” Peter wants to know if John's experience is going to be better, worse, or the same thing as his.

However, Jesus will not allow Peter to do this. In fact, Jesus doesn't want Peter to do this. Instead of allowing Peter to deflect, redirect, or compare himself to John, Jesus shuts down Peter's attempt at comparison quite quickly with a simple question: “What is it to you?” (What is to you what I do or don't do with John?)

With this simple question and his command that follows, Jesus brings Peter's focus right back to where it needs to be. Peter's focus needs to be on Jesus. Instead of worrying about how you measure up to other people, instead of comparing your experience with theirs, Jesus says to Peter: “You must follow me!”

In our text for the week, Jesus does the same thing for you and me. Jesus brings OUR focus right back where it needs to be. Our focus needs to be on Jesus. Instead of worrying about how we measure up to other people, instead of comparing our experience with theirs, Jesus says to us: “You must follow me!”

Pastor Doug reminds us in his sermon from this past Sunday that “Following Jesus demands our (each disciple's) full attention. There is no time or benefit to speculate on or compare ourselves to how others are doing. We are to keep our eyes solely on Jesus. (John 21:22) The minute we start making comparisons, we lose our focused obedience on Jesus' words and life for us. Each one of us is uniquely gifted and called. We can't be concerned with another person's assignment; we must be fully focused on our own calling. Nothing good happens when we compare and compete. God does not judge us according to the talents and abilities of others but according to the talents and abilities he has given us.”

What are you doing with your invitation from Jesus to follow him?

Prayer:

Jesus, you invite each one of us to follow you. Spirit of God, help us to accept our invitation to follow Jesus and

everything that goes with it without comparing it with someone else's invitation. AMEN.

Action Item for the Day/Week:

Reflect on your own invitation from Jesus to follow Him without comparing it to someone else's invitation. What does YOUR invitation entail? Require? Involve? Who is Jesus asking you to be? What is He asking you to do? Where is He asking you to go?

Songs for today:

[I Will Follow](#)

[Take My Life and Let It Be](#)

[Follow Me](#)

[I Have Decided to Follow Jesus](#)