

*People Who Have Followed God*  
Wedgewood Baptist Church  
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Rev. Debbie Kidd

When I was in Savannah a couple of weeks ago, I was walking one night and ended up behind this blue truck with a big white sign on the back that said, *Follow Me*. Below those words were lights and arrows that went to the left and to the right. So I guess that blue truck would lead people to where they needed to go and the light would come on for the direction needed.

This morning, my hope, my prayer is that a light may come on for you and for me if we are in need of some direction in following...not a blue truck on a military base...but following God.

Directions are important...in anything, everything, particularly if you want to go somewhere. Believe me I know...try living with a person who has to say *driver's side* or *your way* for left, depending on whose driving or passenger side for right. This can be a problem when there is not a passenger side.

Or if we are not clear about directions we might find ourselves as confused as the woman who wanted to lose weight so she went to her doctor and asked her to put her on a diet. The doctor said, *"eat regularly for 2 days, then skip a day, and repeat these two steps again, and you'll lose 5 pounds in 2 weeks.* The lady returned in 2 weeks and had lost 20 pounds and the doctor was amazed, but asked, *"was it hard,"* to which the lady replied, *"I thought I was going to drop dead the 3<sup>rd</sup> day."* *"What from hunger,"* The doctor asked. *"No, from all that skipping."*

Different kind of directions...but nevertheless a good joke.

While in Savannah that blue truck and a passage in Matthew had me thinking, contemplating what it means for you and I to follow God. I did some reading, in the Bible of course, and you know, sometimes the Bible is so hard to understand. So I decided to email heaven and ask a couple of people to just tell me what it was really like for them when they followed God.

My email went like this: *To my fellow followers, lately I have been wondering what it means to follow God. So, I decided to email heaven and see if I could get someone there who has followed God in the past to email me back and share your story...in your own words. P.S. Please don't tell me it's in the Bible, this I know. I want to know what it was really like for you. And please, if you would, when you reply, hit 'reply to all' so we all can learn from one another.* [HmMMM, what a concept!]

Well, lo, and behold, I got some replies.

The first was from Abraham, listen to what he said, *Dear fellow follower, glad to hear of your interest in following God. It will be a decision you will not regret. I understand the need to know more when it comes to following God, believe me I do. Here is what I can tell you happened to me.*

*One day, out of nowhere, God told me to "Go from my country, my relatives and my father's house, to the land that God was going to show me." Not much in terms of directions, huh? Then God said, "I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great." So, I went and I only took my wife and my nephew, Lot. And the rest as they say is History...Biblical history that is.*

*Well, of course there is a little more...you probably know all of that, but anyway there was that one part of following God that I just did not get. As a matter of fact, I laughed when God told me I was going to be a Father of many nations. I could not even have one child. My wife, Sarah laughed too. But you know what, God came through, made me feel kind of bad for laughing at God. Bottom line...my advice...trust God! Abraham*

That was the first email I received, then came one from Matthew. His story was a little bit different...listen...It started off with, *Wow! I don't know if I could have done what Abraham did...leave my house, my relatives, my country? I just don't know. I guess I ought to thank God, and I'll do that as soon as I finish this email, thank God that I was not asked to leave anything. I was just sitting at work one day in my tax office and Jesus came by and said, "Follow me". And I got up and followed him and we ended up at my house and I had a few friends/colleagues over. Let's just say there were a lot of people there, like me, people most people did not, would not associate with and Jesus did. Of course I would follow this guy. And you see, I was not asked to leave anything, not really. Hope this helps... Matthew*

The emails continued to come, but this one, this next one was different...*Hello down there, my name is Peter. I hesitated to send you my story, well actually there are 2 stories, about following God, but I thought maybe, maybe it could help somebody. Mine kind of started like Matthew's. I, too was working, fishing, and Jesus saw me and told me to follow him, and I did. It was an amazing experience, being one of his chosen, one of his closest, one of his confidants (yeah, right!).*

*But I was what you might call wishy-washy. At times I was declaring Jesus as the Messiah, declaring my faith, and even fighting for him. (I even cut a guy's ear off) Then at other times I am arguing with him, thinking I know better...like that time Jesus got in my boat and told us to 'try again' after we had been fishing all night, well...he was right...oh, and remember that time I thought I could walk on water.*

*This next part is really hard to write about, but near the end of his life Jesus told all of us, all of his followers that we would desert him and I promised I wouldn't. He predicted I would, I guess he knew me better than I knew myself because I did, I denied I knew him, I denied being one of his followers...three times I denied him.*

*But you know what, this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> time Jesus told me to follow him, but Jesus gave me a second chance.*

*He showed back up after he was resurrected and I was with the other disciples, hmmm, now that I think about it, I guess those other disciples gave me a second chance too, well anyway Jesus shows back up and we end up in this back and forth conversation. He kept asking me if I loved him. I kept telling him I did, and he told me again... 'follow me'.*

*I could not leave well enough alone. I almost blew it again. Right after Jesus told me to follow him and looked and saw Jesus' beloved disciple and I, I don't know why, but I asked Jesus, 'hey what about him?' Boy and did Jesus ever put me in my place...he said, "if I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you, you follow me." You better believe that from then on out...I did just that.*

*Sorry, did not mean to be so long winded. My email is a lot longer than Abraham's and Matthew's. Sometime it just feels good getting all of this stuff off of your chest...and I hope you learn from my mistakes...good luck.*  
*Peter*

Well there you have it, 3 fellow travelers, 3 people who followed God and 3 different stories. That is what I like about the Scriptures...a reminder that one thing is the same yesterday, today, and forever...GOD. But how God deals with each of God's children can be oh so different.

I cannot tell you or myself for that matter, that God will deal with whatever issues you and I may have when it comes to us following, when it comes to us being obedient, like in Abraham's story. But I can tell you that God has and that should give us hope.

You know what else I can tell you this morning? I can tell you that we have a God who lets us laugh, we have a God who accepts us and those around us, and we have a God who gives wishy-washy people who sometime want to deny any relationship with God a second chance...this same God calls all of us this morning to follow.