

What Must We Follow?

(1 Peter 3:15)

Introduction:

1. People who are interested in the Lord's church may ask a question such as this: "What do you follow?"
2. According to 1 Peter 3:15, we are to *"be ready always to give an answer"* to such questions, and we are to do so *"with meekness and fear."*
3. In our lesson we are covering passages that answer the question: "What must we follow?"

Discussion:

- I. LET US FIRST DETERMINE WHO WE MUST FOLLOW
 - A. We learn from Ephesians 5:1 that we are to be *"followers of God, as dear children."*
 - B. As we endeavor to follow God we learn that He requires us to hear His Son (Matthew 17:5; Hebrews 1:1-3).
 - C. As we listen to Christ we see that He requires us to follow Him.
 1. Matthew 16:24; 10:38
 2. John 8:12
 - D. The Lord has a special relationship with the church that should cause us to want to follow Him.
 1. He purchased the church with His blood (Acts 20:28).
 2. He alone is the head of His church (Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18).
 - E. The Scriptures teach us to follow God and Christ.
- II. LET US NEXT DETERMINE WHAT WE MUST NOT FOLLOW
 - A. We must not follow "personal opinions" (Proverbs 14:12; 16:25).
 - B. We must not follow "worldly philosophy" (Colossians 2:8).
 - C. We must not follow "the commands and doctrines of men" (Colossians 2:20-22; Titus 1:13-14; Matthew 15:9).
 - D. We must not follow "the practices of other churches" (Revelation 2:20-23).
- III. FINALLY, LET US DETERMINE HOW WE FOLLOW GOD AND CHRIST
 - A. We pointed out earlier that God requires us to hear His Son (Matthew 17:5).
 - B. Many passages relate to hearing Christ.
 1. We must "continue" [abide] in His Word to be His disciples and to know the truth that provides spiritual freedom (John 8:31-32).
 2. Rejecting His Word is a serious offense (John 12:48).
 3. We must allow His Word to dwell in us richly in all wisdom (Colossians 3:16).
 4. We are to say and do the things He authorizes (Colossians 3:17).
 5. We are to look into His Word and practice its teachings (James 1:25).
 6. His Word is the New Testament (Hebrews 9:15).

Conclusion:

1. In John 17:20-21 Jesus prayed that His followers would be *"one."*
2. Unfortunately, a failure to follow the Lord's Word has resulted in the division and confusion that exist today.
3. The key to fulfilling the Lord's request to be one is following Him as He directs us through His Word.
4. Let us close with the appeal for revival found in Psalm 85:6-13.