**Just Follow Me!**

***20****Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them, the one who also had leaned back against him during the supper and had said, “Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?”****21****When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, “Lord, what about this man?”****22****Jesus said to him, “If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow me!”****23****So the saying spread abroad among the brothers that this disciple was not to die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he was not to die, but, “If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?”*

***24****This is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things, and who has written these things, and we know that his testimony is true.*

***25****Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. (John 21:20-25, ESV)*

 More than curiosity, we believers need to obedience to the Lord. Greetings in Him dear brothers and sisters as we talk today about our obedience unto the Lord as Christians. The Scripture passage is taken from a post-resurrection appearance of Christ, which shows a simple but important truth. Today’s topic, therefore, is going to be exactly about that truth, which is obedience. May God push us to self-examination through this message, so that our focus will be only on Christ. Again, as Christians, what we need most is not curiosity about God, but obedience unto Him. Let’s go to the passage for a bit…

 When we follow the Risen Christ, we need to avoid unhelpful curiosity about others. Peter the Apostle had just learned that he would be martyred for the Lord. He was told that he would go somewhere that he didn’t want to go, and that his hands would be bound by others (instead of by himself). Historians tell us that Peter was crucified upside down in the 60s AD in Rome. In the Scripture passage, however, he had already begun to follow Jesus literally when his curiosity suddenly peaked regarding the Beloved Disciple, John specifically, according to most Bible scholars. Peter asks, “What will happen to him?” and Jesus answers, “What business is it of yours?” In a way, we come back to the scene of the wedding of Cana in Galilee, where Jesus is telling his mother, “What is that to you and to me?” It was as if he was saying to Peter, “Whatever my will is for him, it is none of your business – you, especially you, follow me! Do not look elsewhere or at someone else, or at another situation. Just follow me. Don’t let your eyes wander here and there.” In other words, Peter needed to focus on his restored ministry and not on a curious desire to know information. “Just follow me,” said Jesus. Peter had not understood that he wasn’t just being asked to physically walk after the Lord – because Jesus was going to disappear anytime now, since He had already risen from the dead and no longer needed to stay on earth. Rather, Peter was being called to follow Him in faith, with all his being (and not just with his feet).

 A pastor once told the following story: a man wanted to sell his house for a certain sum of money. Someone responded and wanted to buy the house, but could not afford the full price, say $100,000. After some negotiating, the house was sold for half of what the man was offering, but with one stipulation – that the original owner could own one nail sticking out above the front door of the house. Years later, the original owner wanted to re-purchase his old house. The new owner didn’t want to sell, however. So, the first one found a dog carcass and came and hung it from the one nail that he still owned from the house, right above the front door. In a short time, the house became unlivable, and the family was forced to sell the house to the owner of the nail. What can we learn from this? That if we withhold even one portion of our life from Christ, the devil returns and can hang his garbage on that portion, which would make living a Christ-centered life impossible.

 When Jesus has called us to follow him, we cannot keep a nail for ourselves (as the old owner of our lives). We cannot say “my life belongs to the Lord,” but also “I can keep this or that addiction,” for example. We cannot say that we follow Jesus, but then be comfortable with being a gossip, or tolerate it from others. We cannot make life such that we have one foot in darkness while we declare that we walk and live in the light. If we follow Jesus Christ, then it is none of our business what other peoples’ plans are going to be for the Lord. What is important is the ministry that the Lord has called us to. What is priority is the holy life that Jesus desires us to live – the effort to build up His Body, the church. What is key is a life that is lived under the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit.

 Therefore, let us focus on obeying God’s will for our lives, living one that is holy, rather than killing our time with endless curiosities about things that don’t matter. When we follow the Risen Christ, we need to avoid unhelpful curiosity about others. More than curiosity, we believers need to obedience to the Lord. The Lord bless you all. Amen.