

Fortify Your Following

Pastor Dan said,

[In the New Testament] a disciple is essentially a learner, but not just someone who immerses themselves in books and classes to gain knowledge. No, the learning is far more comprehensive. In our culture today, we might use words like *apprentice* or *protégé* or *resident*, where the learning comes from time spent with a mentor and expert. So the learning happens not just in mastering a curriculum, but also in imitating a person—imitation that leads to personal growth and life-change.

FOLLOW JESUS
Mission series

Learning from and imitating Jesus—that’s what it means to follow Him. How are you doing? What can you do to fortify your following?

- **Make the most of Sunday’s messages.** Take notes in YouVersion or on the front of *Connections* (in the bulletin each week). Note your questions and ways you can live out what you’re learning from God’s Word.
- **Get in a group.** No one reaches his or her full potential in Christ without a group of Christian friends. Talk about the message with other believers, share your victories and struggles, deny yourself and serve others in practical ways.
- **Pursue a personal walk with Jesus every day.** Read the Bible. Talk with God. Listen to good Christian music. God will speak to you and lead your life in ways you never experienced before!
- **Serve selflessly.** Help others in your group. Serve in a Hopevale ministry. Get involved with a family member or neighbor who needs your support.

Mark Bailey writes in *Follow Him* that Jesus invites us in Matthew 11:28-30 to yoke up with Him as an experienced trainer. In this mentoring relationship, we walk alongside Jesus in His mission, and our priorities and passions and practices change. We become like our Master! That’s what God intends for everyone who knows Jesus.

Dads and Moms, you can help your children follow Jesus every day! Following Jesus is about so much more than going to church on Sundays. It means to say “no” to ourselves in order to do what Jesus would do. For your kids, that could be sharing a toy or giving up the last cookie or letting a friend play Xbox first. Recognize and celebrate the times your children deny themselves for the sake of others. Point out that, as they do, they’re following Jesus and pleasing God!

Be a Follower

We are a community of grace and truth inviting people to know and follow Jesus.
Hopevale mission statement

1. Think of one plan or team that you're following right now. *Examples:* Zumba, the Lions, the Paleo Diet, or Child-Wise. What are some things you do every day that demonstrate that you're a follower of this plan or team?
2. In what ways do you think following Jesus is like adhering to the plan or team you described in Question 1?
3. Say our church mission statement together aloud. How is following Jesus different from knowing Jesus? Do you think one is possible without the other? Why or why not?
4. Read Luke 9:18-26 then the verses below. What is involved in following Jesus according to these Scriptures? What does this mean for us today?
 - Matthew 4:18-22—
 - Luke 9:57-62—
 - John 21:17-22—

5. According to a standard New Testament dictionary, *deny* means “to refuse to focus on what we want for ourselves” or “to put ourselves at the bottom of the list.” How will your life be different as you deny yourself and follow Jesus versus focusing on yourself? Choose 2-3 areas below and note what will change.

	Focus on Myself	Deny Myself
My time		
My money		
My things		
My hobbies		
My house		
My retirement		
My relationships		

6. What more do these verses teach about denying ourselves in order to follow Jesus?
 - 1 Timothy 5:3-8—
 - Titus 1:15-16—
 - Titus 2:11-14—

Then Jesus said to them all: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.” Luke 9:23