**Following Christ**

Regarding justification by faith alone, Martin Luther wrote, *“If this article stands, the church stands; if this article collapses, the church collapses.”* Justification by faith alone is certainly prominent in Paul’s letters (Romans 3:27-28), but if it is so important why didn’t Jesus say more about it? The short answer is that the fuller revelation of some doctrines depended on the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (John 16:12-15). Nevertheless, when Jesus summoned people to follow Him, He was not saying something essentially different from what Paul meant when he said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved” (Acts 16:31). The theme of message this morning is this: **Following Christ is the same as having faith in Christ. Do you have a following faith?**

**1. The rich young ruler** (Luke 18:18-27)

a. Jesus *rejected* the value of his *works*.

b. Jesus *revealed* the emptiness of his *worship*.

Luke 16:13

c. Jesus *required* that he follow *wholeheartedly*.

Luke 9:57-62

**2. The meaning of saving faith**

a. The explicit focus of faith – *Christ alone*

Romans 3:21-30

b. The essential action of faith – *unite us to Christ*

John 1:12; 6:35, 54-56; Romans 7:1-4

c. The inevitable result of faith – *living for Christ*

Romans 6:1; 10:9; 12:1-2; Luke 9:24-25

**Conclusion –** Is your faith a *following* faith?

**For additional study or family discussion**

1. Did the Lord speak to you today about Himself and His ways? Did He show you a duty you need to perform or a promise you need to claim? What was either encouraging or challenging in the sermon?

2. Jesus frequently called people to follow him. What might (or did) keep people from following Him in these passages? What keeps you from fixing your eyes on Jesus and following Him?

Luke 9:23-25

Luke 9:57-62

3. How did Jesus place Himself at the center of faith—where only God belongs—in the following passages?

Matthew5:9-11

Matthew 7:21-23

Matthew 10:37

Matthew 11:28-30

Matthew 23:37-39

Mark 2:1-12

The only way to drive a wedge between Jesus and Paul is to turn Jesus into a legalist and Paul into an antinomian, neither of which is faithful to the text of Scripture.