

“Faith Matters” 29 – “What Jesus Did” – January 21, 2018

Very often, we focus on Jesus’ death on the Cross, as we should. His death is absolutely essential, and for two reasons: one is that by dying, Jesus totally identifies with you and me; since we all die. He’s one of us. The second reason that his death is essential is that he is also one **for** us. He is one **of** us, and he is one **for** us. His death-and-resurrection offers eternal life for you and me.

We focus on his death so frequently that we are tempted to bypass his life, and to consider what he *did* to be of lesser importance. And that’s too bad, because what he did is not only teach and heal, but resist temptation, recruit followers, do acts of civil disobedience against injustice, and pray. He forgave people, fed the hungry, challenged unjust authority, and instituted the Last Supper.

What he *did was* so important that he trained his disciples to follow in his footsteps and do much of what he did. Matthew reports that he gave his disciples authority to heal every sickness, to raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons and proclaim the Good News.¹

Especially when we sing again and again, “I will follow Jesus”, ask yourself: what does he want **us** to do, as his 2018 disciples? Are we to be content to sit in pews and think that is all that is required of Christians? In Luke’s version of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus chides his followers: “Why do you call me Lord, Lord, and do not do what I tell you?”²

So as we focus on what he died for, let us not forget what he lived for, and what he now wants us to do as we follow in his steps.

¹ – Matthew 10:1, 5. ² – Luke 6:46