

**A STEP
IN
FAITH**

Lesson 13 for September 26, 2020



Setting the pace: Jesus



First steps: Peter, John, Matthew



Reaching the goal: Paul



Resetting the pace: Do you love me?



Steps of love: The joy of sharing

A step in faith is necessary in order to discover the joy of being part of the mission and bringing friends to Jesus.

Jesus showed us the way by His example. This is a way other people have already taken.

Joy is not reserved only for the final reward, but it's also part of the way. We feel joy as we see how others accept Jesus as their personal Savior.





SETTING THE PACE

“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 2:5)

Jesus is God, but He decided to “leave” His dignity aside when He abandoned His place in Heaven as the King of the Universe and became human (Phil. 2:6-7).

He wasn’t born an eminent man, but a humble servant. He went even further: He was totally submitted to God’s will, being willing to die on a cross because He loves us (Phil. 2:8).



Because of that selfless love, God “has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name.” (Phil. 2:9). However, His greatest joy wasn’t His recovered exaltation, but that “He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied.”

(Is. 53:11)

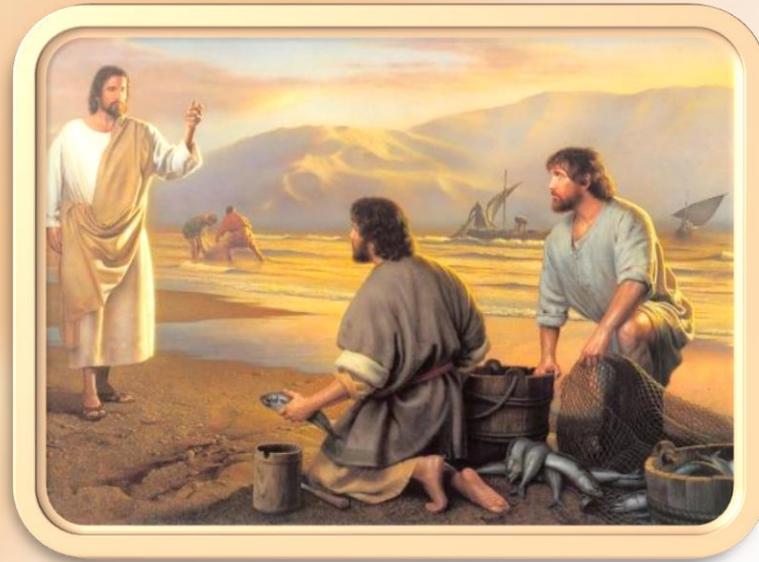
As we follow the steps of faith of Jesus, our greatest joy will be seeing people surrendering their lives to our Savior, and living an eternal life with Jesus.



FIRST STEPS

“They immediately left their nets and followed Him.” (Matthew 4:20)

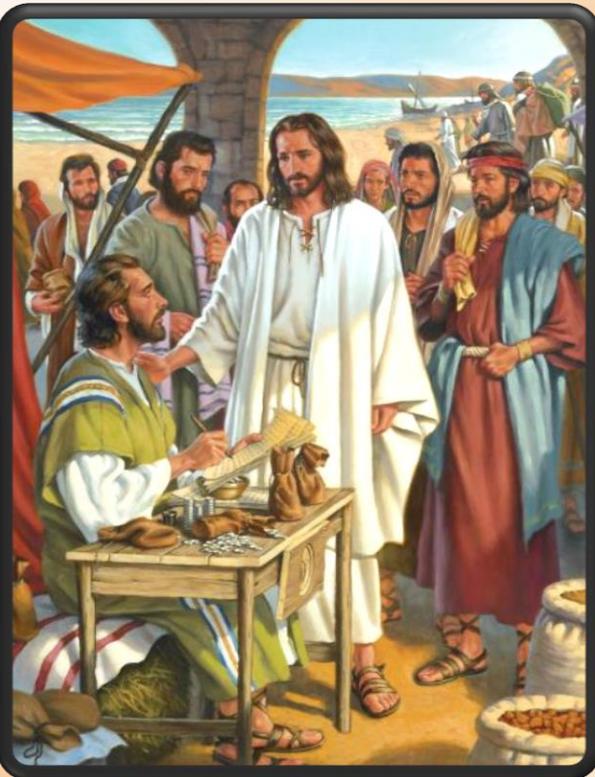
Andrew, Peter, John, and James had followed Jesus for some time. Then, they were called to do it “full-time.” Jesus encouraged them to stop fishing fish and become “fishers of men.” (Mt. 4:19).



They left everything then and devoted themselves to share the love of Jesus.

Levi-Matthew was another person that Jesus called to leave everything. Jesus knew his heart’s desire and encouraged him to exchange a comfortable but unsatisfactory life for a life full of with purpose and satisfaction (Matthew 9:9).

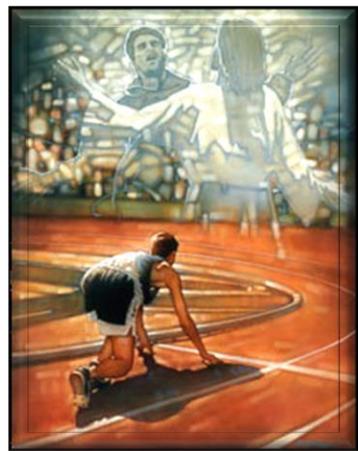
We, too, want to live for something worthwhile, for a grander, nobler purpose. Hence, answer Christ’s call to follow Him.



REACHING THE GOAL

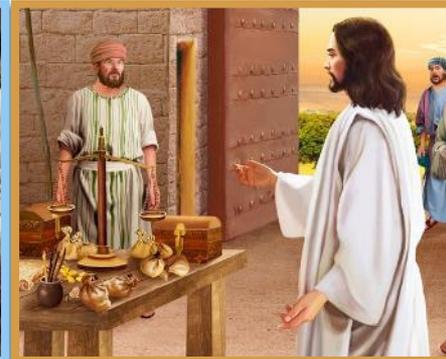
"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." (2 Timothy 4:7)

Who would choose their worst enemy to become their herald?

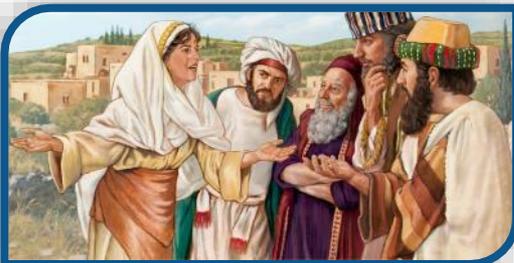
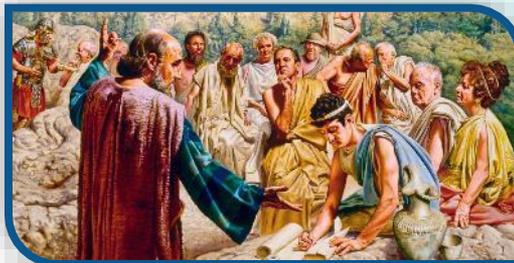


Saul (Paul) is an example of someone who we wouldn't choose to preach the Gospel, but Jesus did. How could unexpected people become great evangelists (a demon-possessed man, a Samaritan woman, a prostitute, a tax collector, "uneducated" fishermen, a pursuer of Christians...)?

The grace of God transformed their hearts. Then they devoted themselves to tell the wonders God had done in their lives.



Paul never stopped running towards the goal since he met Jesus. He devoted HIS ENTIRE LIFE to preaching the Gospel.



RESETTING THE PACE

"He said to him the third time, 'Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?' Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, 'Do you love Me?' And he said to Him, 'Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed My sheep.'" (John 21:17)

Peter had committed a terrible sin: He had denied Jesus (Mr. 14:66-72). He felt unable to tell others about Jesus anymore.

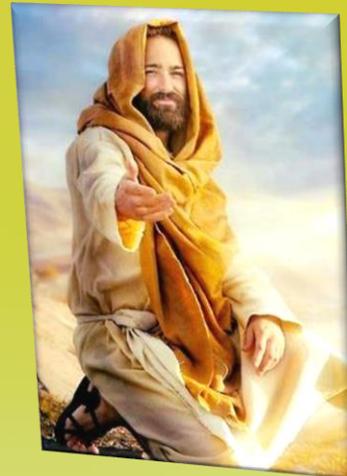
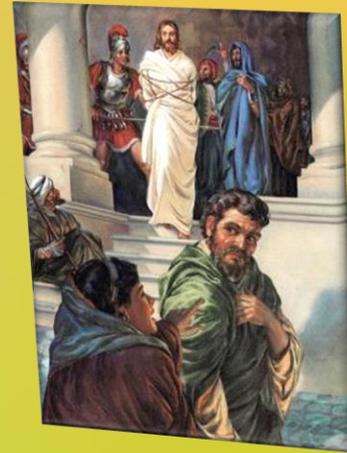


However, Jesus knew Peter's heart. He knew that Peter still loved Him. That's why He asked for a public confession of his love for Him three times.

Jesus restored Peter's self-confidence and gave him a mission: To tend His Church and to preach the Gospel. That is, to show His love in action.

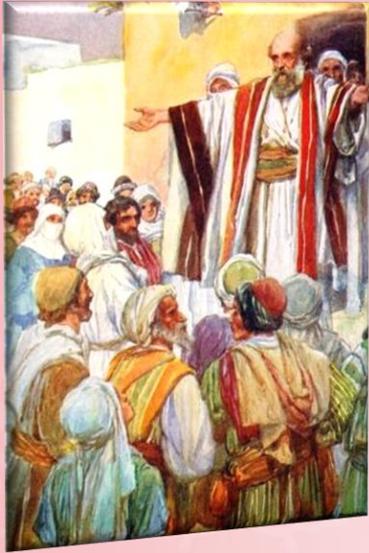


You may have denied Him by your actions more than once. The good news is that grace is still available, and God is not done with you yet. There is still a place in His work for you if you are willing.



STEPS OF LOVE

"By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." (1 John 3:16)



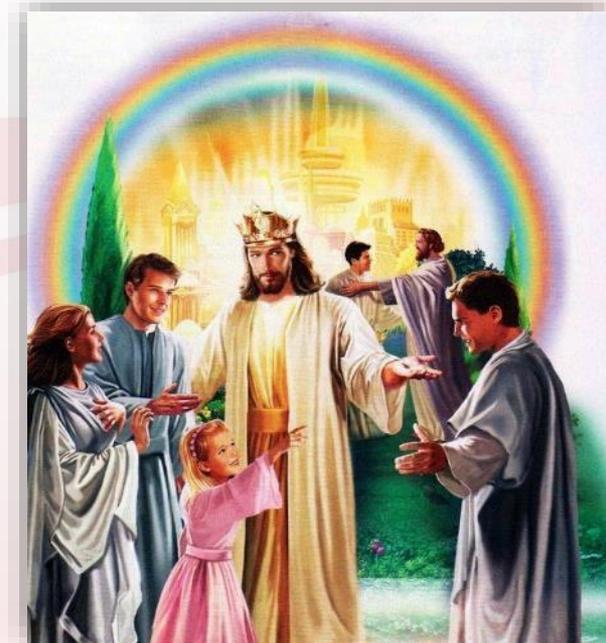
Jesus restored Peter and let him feel the greatest joy in this life: To see souls being won for the Kingdom of God.

Peter saw the first fruits of his sermon on Pentecost (Acts 2:14-41). Peter put into practice the love he had confessed before Jesus and His disciples.



Peter had to pay a price for that love and joy eventually, he lost his life (John 21:18-19). Later John explained that love involves sacrifice, a selfless sacrifice that expects no reward.

Actually, the day we'll live with Jesus and the saved ones (including those who met Jesus through us), we won't consider anything we did on this old Earth as a sacrifice. Following Jesus till the end will be worth it.



“After the descent of the Holy Spirit, when the disciples went forth to proclaim a living Saviour, their one desire was the salvation of souls. They rejoiced in the sweetness of communion with saints. They were tender, thoughtful, self-denying, willing to make any sacrifice for the truth’s sake. In their daily association with one another, they revealed the love that Christ had enjoined upon them. By unselfish words and deeds they strove to kindle this love in other hearts.”

E.G.W. (The Acts of the Apostles, cp. 54, p. 547)