

God Never Said That

“To Thine Own Self Be True”

Luke 9:18-25,51-62 – May 3, 2026

Our Sermon Series

GOD NEVER SAID THAT		
<i>Examining Common Statements That You Will Not Find in the Bible</i>		
Date	Message Title	Bible Text
April 4/5	God Helps Those Who Help Themselves	Ephesians 2:1-9
April 12	God Wants You to Be Happy	2 Corinthians 12:2-10
April 19	God Won't Give You More Than You Can Handle	1 Corinthians 10:13
April 26	Money is The Root of All Evil	1 Timothy 6:6-19
May 3	To Thine Own Self Be True	Luke 9:18-25,51-62
May 10	Heaven Needed Another Angel	Romans 12:15
May 17	Forgive and Forget	John 2:23-25
<i>Sermon notes are available in Mandarin and Spanish at the Welcome Desk</i>		

God Never Said That

- **Hosea 4:6** – *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.*
- George Barna: “Increasingly, America is biblically illiterate.”
- The purpose of this sermon series is to help train us to be Biblical thinkers.
- **Acts 17:11** (NIV) – *Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.*
- Charles Spurgeon: “Discernment is not (just) knowing the difference between right and wrong, it is knowing the difference between right and almost right.”

Origin of “To Thine Own Self Be True”

- In William Shakespeare’s play “Hamlet” (Act 1, Scene 3), Polonius gives the following advice to his son Laertes, before Laertes leaves for France: “This above all: to thine own self be true, and it must follow, as night the day, thou cannot then be false to any man.”
- **Meaning in Shakespeare’s play:** If you are honest with yourself and live by your own values, you will naturally be honest and authentic with others. **Irony in Shakespeare’s play:** Polonius is a hypocritical and scheming character.
- **Almost Right:** “To thine own self be true.” It is right and biblical to be honest with yourself (Psalm 51:6) and to hold to your personal integrity (Proverbs 11:3; 20:7; 28:6). But that integrity should be based on God and His Word – not on self.
- **Not Right:** “This above all else.” No! There are principles WAY MORE important than self – namely, God. God is supreme – not self.

- **Fully Right:** This above all else: **To God be true.** Give your first and highest allegiance to God and God alone. To do this, you must die to yourself. When you lose your life, then you find your true life.

How To Find Your Life According to the Bible (Luke 9:18-25)

According to the Bible, in order to find your life, you must **deny yourself**, take up your cross, and follow Jesus (Luke 9:23).

What It Means to Deny Yourself, Take Up Your Cross, and Follow Jesus (Luke 9:51-62)

1. Following Jesus means following Him **wherever** He says to go (vv.57-58)

- Matthew tells us that this man was a scribe (Matthew 8:19). Scribes were the modern-day equivalent of a high-ranking religious official or a wealthy lawyer.
- Scribe: “Jesus, I will follow you wherever you go.”
Jesus: “OK. By the way, I’m homeless.”
Scribe: (crickets)
- This scribe was not willing to follow Jesus if Jesus was homeless. He was not truly willing to follow Jesus wherever.
- **Application #1** – I sense God calling me to...
 - Make this prayer declaration: “Jesus, I will follow You wherever You want to go – whether to the overseas mission field OR to my own home, workplace, school, or neighborhood. I release my children and grandchildren for You to lead them wherever You want to take them.”
 - Memorize Luke 9:23
 - Follow Jesus in such a way as to be “covered in the dust” of my Rabbi Jesus.
- There is a Jewish phrase (Mishnah, Avot 1:4) that provides great imagery here: “covered in the dust of your rabbi.” The thought is that if one follows their mentor closely, then the dust from the path stirred up by the mentor’s walking would settle on a follower who was consistently close behind.

2. Following Jesus means following Him **whenever** He says to follow (vv.59-60)

- In first century Jewish practice, a body was placed in a tomb for about a year to decompose, after which the family would return to place the bones in an ossuary (bone box). This man was likely asking to wait one year before following Jesus so that he could manage this “second burial.” Jesus’ response, “Let the dead bury their own dead,” emphasizes the urgent, absolute priority of proclaiming the Kingdom of God over cultural practices.

- Contrast this man to the first 4 disciples whom Jesus calls who **immediately** left their nets and their father's fishing business and followed Jesus (Matthew 4:18-22).
- Kyle Idleman: "On the invitation Jesus gives us to follow Him there is an RSVP date and it reads: 'TODAY.' The word 'tomorrow' is not in the Holy Spirit's vocabulary. When Jesus calls us to follow, He means **right now**. He means **today**."
- **Heb. 3:15** – *Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts.*
- **Application #2** – Jesus, I confess that I have been hitting the snooze alarm in my relationship with You. I am sorry!! I repent!! By the power of Your Spirit, I choose to...
 - SAY YES TODAY to believe in and follow You.
 - SAY YES TODAY to go public with my faith by signing up to be baptized on Sunday, June 7. More information and sign up at WhatIsGrace.org/Baptism including the option to take a baptism class before getting baptized.
 - SAY YES TODAY to stop that habitual, repeated sin in the power of God's Holy Spirit.
 - SAY YES TODAY to get into a small group or discipleship class. More info at WhatIsGrace.org/SpiritualFormation or at WhatIsGrace.org/Care
 - SAY YES TODAY to serving my family, my friends, my neighbors, my co-workers, and my church family. Info at serving in Kids Ministry at WhatIsGrace.org/kids-ministry-leaders
 - SAY YES TODAY to share my faith.
 - SAY YES TODAY to go on that mission trip. More info at WhatIsGrace.org/Missions
 - SAY YES TODAY to begin giving biblically. More info at WhatIsGrace.org/Give
 - SAY YES TODAY to obey that prompting of God's Spirit.
 - SAY YES TODAY to deny myself, pick up my cross daily, and to follow Jesus.

- The stories of Pam, Steve, Stephanie, and Doug
- WHEREVER – WHENEVER – WHATEVER
- Abraham's WHATEVER in Genesis 22
- Elisha's WHATEVER in 1 Kings 19:19-21
- The baptism practice of the Knights of Templar: "Jesus, You can have control of me but you can't have THIS."
- **Application #3** – What is my WHATEVER? Is there anything in my life that I have not been willing to take under the baptism waters with me? Will I surrender THAT today? Will I place it on Abraham's altar? Will I burn it in Elisha's fire? Will I take it under the baptism waters with me TODAY?

My Following Jesus Declaration Today (Application #4)

Jesus, I choose to follow You from this day forward **wherever, whenever, and whatever!** I place my full trust in Your substitutionary death on the cross and Your resurrection from the dead to forgive my sins, give me new life now and eternal life in heaven. Please fill me with Your Spirit and empower me to live out this declaration to follow **wherever** You lead me, **whenever** You lead me, and **whatever** You want. I relinquish control of my life, my ambitions, my family, my possessions, and my everything. Cover me in the dust of Your footsteps. Please show me my next step with You.

3. Following Jesus means following Him **whatever He says to give up (vv.61-62)**

- You cannot plow a field effectively if you are looking behind you rather than looking forward.
- The problem with this man's response to Jesus is the word "but" – Lord, I will follow You, but...
- Kyle Idleman: "It's not that following Jesus wasn't important to this man, but following Jesus wasn't his top priority. Unless this man is willing to leave everything behind, it just wouldn't work. This man wants to follow Jesus but not with everything he has. He's not willing to go all-in. There's something else that has his attention, and he keeps looking back. Jesus doesn't want followers who have a divided affection or a split allegiance. And so Jesus points to what you most value and are most concerned about, and says, 'What about **that?**'"