Following Jesus From A Distance

II Corinthians 6:16-7:1

Peter's Night Of Extremes

- Declared absolute allegiance to Jesus
  - Matthew 26:31-35 – "Even if I must die with you"
- Then fell asleep in Gethsemane
  - Matthew 26:40-41 – "So, could you not watch with me one hour?"
- He drew his sword to defend Jesus
  - Matthew 26:51-52 (John 18:10-11) – "… drew his sword and struck the servant …" ("… Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck …")

Peter's Night Of Extremes

- Then, with the others, left Jesus and fled
  - Matthew 26:56 – "… all the disciples left him and fled"
- He followed Jesus to the High Priest's courtyard
  - Matthew 26:57-58 (John 18:15-16) – "Peter was following him …" ("Simon Peter followed Jesus")
- Then he denied Jesus three times
  - Matthew 26:69-75 – "Before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times"

We Must Follow Jesus, Not Go Another Way

- He is the light of the world
  - John 8:12 – "… the light of life"
- And we must be like Him
  - Ephesians 5:8-14 – "Walk as children of light"
- Jesus is the good shepherd
  - John 10:14, 27 – "I am the good shepherd"
- He watches over us to keep us from straying
  - I Peter 2:25 – "… the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls"

We Must Follow Jesus, Not Go Another Way

- He is the Lord (Master) of us
  - John 12:26 – "If anyone serves me, he must follow me"
- We serve Him by respecting His authority
  - Matthew 28:18 – "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me"
  - Colossians 3:17 – "do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus"
- Going ahead of Jesus
  - II John 9 – "does not have God"

When We Follow Jesus From A Distance

- We are unprepared to resist sin and error
  - Matthew 26:69-70 – "I do not know what you mean"
- We are not separating ourselves from the crowd
  - II Corinthians 6:16-7:1 – "… be separate from them"
  - Luke 9:23 – "let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me"

When We Follow Jesus From A Distance

- We are closer to the enemy than to Jesus
  - John 18:17-18 – "Peter also was with them, standing and warming himself"
- We become friends with the world and its hostility toward God
  - James 4:4 – "… makes himself an enemy of God"
- We love the world
  - I John 2:15-17 – "If anyone loves the world"

When We Follow Jesus From A Distance

- We are spectators rather than participants
  - Matthew 26:58 – "… he sat with the guards to see the end"
- We are not putting on God's battle armor
  - Ephesians 6:10-13 – "that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil"

Following Jesus From A Distance …

- Tempts us to believe that moral purity is unnecessary
  - I John 3:2-3 – "And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure"
- Tempts us to give heed to the world's distorted moral values
  - Romans 13:11-14 – "… make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires"
  - I Corinthians 15:33-34 – "… do not go on sinning. For some have no knowledge of God"

Following Jesus From A Distance …

- Tempts us to believe that truth is not absolute
  - John 8:31-38 – "… you do what you have heard from your father"
  - Believe in gray areas of compromise
- Tempts us to doubt the final authority of the Scriptures
  - I Thessalonians 5:21 – "… test everything; hold fast what is good"
  - II Timothy 1:13 – "Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me"

Let Us Draw Near To God

- For His mercy and grace
  - Hebrews 4:15-16 – "… with confidence draw near to the throne of grace"
- To ensure we have His continued favor
  - Hebrews 10:19-23 – "… he who promised is faithful"
- To guarantee our continued fellowship with Him
  - James 4:8 – "Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you"
- To return for forgiveness and renewal
  - Luke 22:32 – "… when you have turned again"

How would you answer if someone said to you …

"You also are not one of this man's disciples, are you?"

Obeying The Gospel

Hear the Word of God

- Romans 10:14 – "… how are they to hear without someone preaching?"

Believe the Gospel message about Jesus

- John 8:24 – "I told you that you would die in your sins, for unless you believe that I am he you will die in your sins."

Obeying The Gospel

Repent of your sins

- Luke 13:3 – "… unless you repent, you will all likewise perish."

Confess that Jesus is the Son of God

- Matthew 10:32 – "Every one therefore who shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven."

Obeying The Gospel

Be immersed in water

- Mark 16:15-16 – "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved"

Remain faithful

- Matthew 7:21 – "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven."