Who Do You Follow

Sermon Title: *Who Do You Follow*
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Speaker: Nathaniel Bronner

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Nathaniel Bronner: Everybody has a valley experience sooner or later and you will go through some things but there’s a difference in going through some things and staying in the valley.

Female: You are listening to BrothersoftheWord.com. This is the sermon titled, “Who Do You Follow” by Nathaniel Bronner. This sermon is number 5867.

(Music Playing: 00:00:20 - 00:00:35)

Nathaniel Bronner: Welcome to Brothers of the Word because brother you need the word. And I have been in the midst of a series called the Plagues of Egypt and the week before last, I took a deviation as I was being led and I am going to do that same thing today. This message comes from the seminar that Pastor C. Elijah and I attended last week.

I was there in the seminar and we had 50 minutes of training followed by a 10-minute break, 50 minutes of training a 10-minute break, 50 minutes of training a 10-minute break. So every hour, they took a 10-minute break all day long. And right around the middle of the seminar during the break, one of the attendees just walked over to me. I didn’t know him. I don’t think he knew me. And he just started talking and he asked me two questions that stunned me and that I did not have a ready answer for. The first question that he asked me, I want all of you all to internally ask yourselves the same question and even ye the second question.

The first question that he asked me was, and remember we’re in a ministerial setting. So he was asking me in relation to other ministers and he asked me the question, “Who do you follow?” And that took me back for a minute? He said, “Who do you follow?” And I have to stumbled on it because I knew what he was asking; he wanted a minister’s name. But I didn’t have a ready minister, so I had to stumble over that. When I had to think back on who the closest somebody I would like to follow, I would follow here but now in here. But I didn’t have a real solid answer that was just a 100% true. So I gave him a name and then he went to talking about systems and some of the things.

He asked me, it’s the second question, which was again a question that I stumbled with. He said, “How is that working for you?” And these two questions, God just laid on my heart to
just teach on in the middle of the series of the Plagues of Egypt because often our plagues, they’re tied in to those two questions, those two simple questions, “Who do you follow?”, and “How is that working for you?”

AV Department, if you would, I want you to play this video. This is a video, these are what’s called Processional Caterpillars. Now, these are caterpillars and they follow behind each other and they don’t deviate. Wherever the lead caterpillar goes, all the rest of the caterpillars follow right behind it. And sometimes a string of processional caterpillars can be hundreds of feet long and it can be thousands of caterpillars and they all would just stay in a straight line. The one behind got his nose and face right up and the other ones behind and if somebody’s facing his behind, right behind it. This is the way they are for hundreds of feet, and they’re called processional caterpillars and sometimes as humans, we like that.

We’re following behind somebody and we don’t even know where they’re going. So that question that shook me, that is so relevant for all of us, that simple questions of who do you follow? Who, who, who do you follow? Mark Batterson said in his book called All In, he said this, he says most people in most churches think that they are following Jesus. They may think that they are following Jesus but the reality is this, they have invited Jesus to follow them. Who do you follow? How’s that working for you?

See the first question that you need to ask yourself is, which God do you follow? Now, that may sound like an obvious question for any Christian, but do you know the children of Israel had a major problem with this and they saw way more miracles than we do. They had a major problem with it throughout the Old Testament God continually had problems with the children of Israel following other gods.

In Deuteronomy Chapter 31 beginning at the 16th verse; and the Lord said to Moses, you are going to rest with your father and these people will soon prostitute themselves to the foreign gods of the land they are entering. They will forsake me and break the Covenant I made with them. On that day I will become angry with them and forsake them. I will hide my face.
from them and they will be destroyed. Many disasters and difficulties will come upon them and on that day, they will ask have not these disasters come upon us because our God is not with us and I will certainly hide my face on that day because of all that wickedness and turning to other gods.

Little bit further down in Deuteronomy 31:27 Moses says this to the people he said, “But I know how rebellious and stiff neck you are. If you had been rebellious against the Lord while I’m still alive and with you, how much more will you rebel after I die? So, God had told Moses he was getting ready to bring him home to heaven and Moses just went, “Look, I was up on the mountain for 40 days. When I came off the mountain you all had made a calf. You all had turned after God who delivered you through all this stuff. You don’t turn away from God that fast.” He said, “You did that while I was living. I can imagine what you’re going to do as soon as I die.”

So this is what Moses told the people, “Who do you follow?”. I mean, these people had seen Miracles that we can only see in the movies. They saw all of the 10 plagues, they sold the red sea parted, they were led by a pillar of fire and by a cloud and they saw water come out of rock, these all fall from Heaven. These are all the miracles. So they saw all these Miracles. None of them got sick, their clothes didn’t wear, they saw all these miracles and still, the minute Moses got away from the people, they turned and started worshiping other gods.

Who do you follow? Jesus says; “Follow me”, so many times in Matthew 4:19. “Come follow me”, Jesus said, “and I will make you Fishers of Men”. Matthew 8:21; another disciple said to him Lord first. Let me go out and bury my father, but Jesus told them, “Follow me and let the dead bury the dead.” Matthew 9:9; as Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector’s booth. “Follow me” he told him and Matthew got up and followed him. Matthew 10:38; “And anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.” Matthew 16:24; “Then Jesus said to the disciples, if anyone would come after me, he must deny himself, take up his cross and follow me. Matthew 19 21; Jesus answered if you want to be perfect go sell your possessions and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven then come follow me.
So Jesus said over and over, “Follow me.” But I’ll tell you right now, following Jesus is not easy. If it was easy, all of the 70 disciples that he had would have stayed with him, but out of the 70 only 12 stuck with him, 80% of them left. So following Jesus, it wasn’t easy and they had Jesus there in the flesh just like they had Moses in the flesh. It wasn’t easy for them to follow Jesus back then, how much more difficult is it now, you don’t see Jesus. Now there have been a few folks who had a brief glimpse of Jesus, but the disciples, they saw Jesus on a regular basis. They saw his miracles and still they would not follow Jesus. And I know how difficult it is.

I was driving last night and I’m on a -- one of those God-mandated fast right now, so I won’t eat for the next couple of days. And I was driving last night and then like, I wasn’t hungry, but I just wanted to eat. I’m not even hungry. I’m not hungry now. I wasn’t hungry at all but I’m driving and you see all these places and you kind of know what the menu and it did like they’ve just brighten up and they’re just calling you. See, a lot of times when the people turn to other gods, it was not out of need because God had satisfied all their needs. They just wanted something else. It wasn’t they were hungry. Whether they were hungry, they had manna and while they eat the manna nobody got sick. The manna was the healthiest thing in the world. They just wanted something else and sometimes it is the want and the desires of the flesh. They just take us away from God’s Will and God’s command. So I understand it’s not easy, it’s not easy to follow Jesus.

In the Old Testament when they went to follow the other gods. There were three major gods that drew the children of Israel away. The first and the number one god was a god called Astaroth. And that’s where you got the Astaroth poles and they would make these poles. They would worship the god, Astaroth. Well Astaroth was a god of fertility. Astaroth would bless the crops and Astaroth would bless the womb and Astaroth was a god of fertility.

The second god that they followed was Baal, and Baal was also a god of fertility. Matter of fact, the way you worship Baal is you went to the temple and you had sex with the temple prostitutes. Can you imagine a crowd you could get right now in church? If
you could go to church and get something more than the Holy Spirit, can you imagine? The crowd you would have in church if folks could just come to church. Do you understand that? So they were going into the temple to worship Baal and the way that you worship Baal was to have sex with temple prostitutes. So you had Astaroth, a fertility god. You had Baal, a fertility god and the third most prominent god that the people turned away from, they turned to the god Mammon. And Mammon was the god of riches. So you had these three gods and I don’t necessarily know whether it was the gods or it was what the gods and the way they worship the gods offered. And those same three gods are putting people away from Christ today. The god of sex and the god of riches, it hadn’t changed a whole lot. Them gods are still powerful.


So the first question is, what God do you follow? The second question in that same question is what person do you follow? You see in life, all of us will have people that we admire that we associate with and as a result, we have a tendency to gravitate and move where they are. See on the earth, my earthly father had the greatest influence on me of any single person. It was my father even right now and I quote most of his quotes. My behaviour right now has been so influenced by my earthly father. So my father had a great influence on me, but the man asked me the question, he said, “Who Do you follow?” I want you to think about that question just in the earthly realm. Who do you follow?

For most of you, is not really the preacher, it’s somebody else. Who do you follow? Even on Instagram, you know the measure, the count by how many followers you have? So who do you follow? I follow less than 12 folks on Instagram. I just won’t follow a whole lot of folk, just won’t do it. So, who do you follow? And I had to think about the question, in the earthly realm, right now the person I most follow, to be honest, that is the
minister. But he’s not a big, famous minister on the outside, the person I’ve listened to and follow most act is my younger brother, James. A whole lot of my stuff I can look at and see he has influenced one way or the other.

I got a high degree of respect for him. I respect his knowledge. I respect his wisdom. I respect his track record. So who do you follow makes a big difference because who do you follow makes a big impact on your life.

I recently had a study session with my kids on the Seven Principles of Warren Buffett. He had seven things that he told to people. Out of those seven, three of them involve fundamentally who you followed and the first one of his principles he said, “marry the right person.” Do you know whoever you marry you’re going to be following them one way or another? He said number one, marry the right person, and Warren Buffett is the second wealthiest man. He’s been either number one or two or number three all throughout the last 20 years. So he’s super, super wealthy. Warren Buffett is almost 90 years old. I think he’s 89 to be 90 this year and yet he says the, “The number one thing, I’ve got all these billions of dollars, the number thing I want to tell you, all right, number one is marry the right person.” He said that one thing will make a bigger difference in your life than anything else. I don’t exactly agree with that. Now, I do agree that it will make a tremendous impact.

The number one thing is for you to have your internal Spirit, right? Because I know people who are married, they got some really, really, really, really, really good spouses and they aren’t happy. They got spouses everybody else wished they had and they’re still not happy. So if you don’t have your internal Spirit right -- I know some folks who got spouses that I don’t want to have but they’re just as happy as they can be. They’re just as happy as they can be. So often, it’s getting your internal Spirit right is going to be primary over anything. But three things Warren Buffett said, number one he said, “Marry the right person.”

Number two he said, “Hang out with high-grade folk” because whoever you hang out with you’re going to follow what they do.
That’s just no two ways about it. And Warren says if you hang out with folks who are really, really good and really, really positive that thing will pull you up. If you hang out with folk who are really, really bad and really, really negative it’s going to pull you down. There’s no two ways about it. He said it just works that way. Who you hang around makes a Difference it’s who you follow. Birds of a feather, not only flock together, they go to the same destination. Who you hang around with makes a world of difference.

And the third thing he said, dealing with who you follow, he says “Work for someone who you respect”. Now, your boss makes a world of difference because do you know, you’re waking hours, you spend more time under your boss than anybody else because you spend more time at work when you take away sleep and you take away going and coming from work, you spend more time of your waking hours at work than anything else. If you got a bad boss that you don’t respect, that thing messes up your world. So Buffett says even if you have to take a salary cut, work for someone who you respect. See your boss in a very real sense is your king or queen and whenever the people were under a bad king, everybody in the kingdom suffered. So if you go to work every day and you got a boss that’s just bad and you know, they’re bad, I would strongly urge you to start looking for another job because it will be better for you and it will be better for your spirit because if you have to go in every day under an evil person, now, I’m not talking about if they’re strict and tough that’s two different things. I’m talking about if they’re bad. So if you have a bad boss, you need to switch that job because you’re under something and you’re under an anointing. The anointing always flows from the top down. So if you’re under a bad anointing, that anointing is just going to flow on you. So the question of who do you follow is serious for us all.

So how’s that working for you? That’s the second question the man asked me. So how’s that working for you? You know there’s an old statement but it’s got a lot of truth to it. And it said you’re so deep smart why aren’t you rich? That’s a really, really good statement and it doesn’t necessarily have to do with money because that’s not some people’s goal. But it kind of reflects if you got stuff together, how’s that working for you? And sometimes you can just take that one little sentence to analyze some things in your world. It doesn’t necessarily mean that people don’t go through valleys. Everybody has a valley
experience sooner or later and you will go through some things but there’s a difference in going through some things and staying in the valley, big difference.

So when he asked that question, “How’s that working for you?” Whoever you are following, how’s that working for you? Is it improving your life or is it taking your life down? How’s that working for you? And I want you to just think about that for a second and if it’s not working for you good, you need to follow someone, I’ve had to change some of my friends because I could recognize even though they may have been nice, they were not taking me where I knew my divine destiny was set to go. It wasn’t working for me. How’s that working for you?

Now, when I follow Pastor James, I can look at the results. Not only does it affect me it even affect my children. He had a program that his daughter was in the Harvard Debate Council. He called us up and he said look, your son George need to be in this thing. He got us to the workshop. We went to the rally how many kids were in that place? Let’s say 4,000 applicants because Pastor James had contacted us about the workshop. George was there so when the man at the end of the rally, he asked if any students had any comments and George popped up. He was sitting on the front row because he going to the workshop and at workshop I told him, “Always sit down front”. So he listened, he popped right up came down for the whole crowd of students because everybody trying to get in the program. The director said, nope just two. So it was only George and one other girl, but George would not have been there if he hadn’t gone to the workshop and he wouldn’t have gone to the workshop if it hadn’t been for Pastor James. So Pastor James’ children are doing fantastic. Pastor James’ daughter is in the program. She was in the program. She was chosen 25 out of 2,000 applicants. And right now they have to pass an assessment two out of three of them have not made it past the assessment his daughter did. See, how is it working for you?

So before you follow anybody as what my daddy always used to say. My daddy would always use to say, “Look before you give me advice about my business, how your books looking? Before you tell me about my children, how your children turned out? Before you tell me about my marriage, how your marriage doing? Before you tell me about my health, how your health
holding up? So my dad always would say, I enjoyed your folk. I'm just a food inspector. How's it working for you?

So he always had that question before he would take advice from anybody. He wanted to make sure it was working for them because I've just seen this principle in life. The advice that people will give you is the same kind of stuff they be taking, it'll take you to that same place sooner or later. They may start out looking real wise but sooner or later it's going to take you to the same place where they are. How's it working for you?

So I have to analyze those two questions. And as I analyze those two questions, I just wanted to talk to you about it. Who you're following and how is it working for you? And if the second question is not excellent, then you may need to change who you're following. For some of you listening to me right now, you might even need to change churches. Seriously! I'm not for everybody, but sometimes it doesn’t mean that you’re just going to keep bouncing from church to church because no preacher is going to work for you if you're not going to work what they tell you to work. So if you’re not going to do anything, so you could be sitting on the Jesus and you're not going to do anything then what will happen? It’s just not going to work for you.

So you’ve got to be willing to do what whoever you are following and they got the result tell you to do and if you're not willing to do what they tell you to do. I see that so much. Folk come to me for all kind of advice and you tell the neighbours not what they want to do to start with, they aren’t going to do it, they aren’t going to do it. But I ask you this, if you're going to people to get advice and you still going to do what you want to do anyway, how’s that working for you. See what I usually find when they go ahead and do what they want to do anyway, you look at that little bit around the road, it’s not working for him. So that’s why those two questions are very critical for all of us to ask. How’s that working for you?

And as always, two destination that even God has told us there’s always two destinations. There’s the promise land and then there’s dying in the wilderness. How’s that working for you? I'm dying in the wilderness really it isn't working. I'm in the promise land. So how’s that working for you? Blessings or
cursings, how’s that working for you? Are you living in the blessings. Are you living in the cursings? How’s that working for you? Life or death? Do you feel your life is moving towards life and having it more abundantly or can you feel yourself lying on the grave? How’s that working for you? Heaven or Hell, how’s that working for you? And all of that depends on who you really follow. If you follow Jesus it’s going to work for you. But you just can’t proclaim his name. 90% of the folks in prison believe in Jesus. Yeah, that’s absolutely true. 90% or 95% was the last that I read. It may have dropped a little bit now, but the last that I read, 95% of people locked up in jail believe in God and believe in Jesus. But if you don’t follow it’s not going to work for you. So how’s that working for you?

Choose carefully people who you follow. I mean choose real carefully who you follow, who you associate with, who you are going to spend serious time? My brother Dale says it like this, he said “Don’t spend serious time with casual people. If you really have a destiny that you’re really pursuing, don’t spend serious to have a casual people. You hang around folk you get around folk who are going where you want to go. It’s like driving on the highway when you get behind a truck, the draft pulls you. So when you get behind someone who’s going somewhere with the destiny and with the direction, the draft pulls you.

So first, ask yourself that question seriously, who are you following in that second question, how is that working for you? I hope you ask yourself that question wherever you are, whenever you listen to this message because the principle of that will never change. Who you follow determines where you go. Are you like the processional caterpillars that just follow the crowd? But Jesus has said wide is the path that leads to destruction and many thereof shall enter. But narrow is the way that leads onto life and few that be, that find it. In order to find that way to life on this Earth and in the realm beyond, you’ve got to follow Jesus and when you follow Jesus, when you truly follow Jesus that’s going to work.

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