

- B.** Suffering for Christ is the badge of discipleship! Christ had to suffer to enter into his glory. We who follow “in his steps” and live godly will also suffer. Paul came to terms with this the day he was saved (Acts 9:16) and, with Peter, taught this “the normal Christian life” (Phil. 1:29; 3:8; 1Thess. 2:14; 1Pet. 2:21; 3:18; 4:1). If we minister to sufferers we will never lack an audience.

Application: Jesus is our Wonderful Counselor, Wounded Healer and Burden Bearer *par excellence*. We can #Jesus, follow Him and minister to members in our church in 3-4 ways:

- Aim to restore and comfort one another (2Cor. 13:11).
- Encourage or exhort one another everyday (Heb. 3:13).
- Bear one another’s burdens due to life’s hardships (Gal. 6:2).
- Show solidarity with the suffering saints globally (1 Pet. 5:9).

Discuss in what specific ways do we do this? Determine to start here and now!

## CONCLUSION:

### “FOLLOW ME”

The Gospels record Jesus making this statement 19 times.  
Are You Following Christ?

## #JESUS Following Jesus In Ministry Dr. Chris Gnanakan

### INTRODUCTION

- A.** In today’s society, we “follow”, post and tweet nearly everything, but are we pursuing the only One who calls us to follow him with our entire lives?

*“6 As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him,  
7 rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.”  
Colossians 2:6-7*

Jesus plus nothing equals everything!!

- B.** In #Jesus, Following The Life Of Christ, we will explore the Bible book of Colossians and what it means to follow Christ both today and for eternity. This nine part series features the following messages:

April 5	Becoming A Follower Of Jesus
April 12	Why Follow Jesus
TODAY	Following Jesus In Ministry
April 26	Following Jesus In Truth
May 3	Following Jesus In Habits
May 10	Following Jesus In The Home
May 17	Following Jesus In The Workplace
May 24	Following Jesus In Prayer
May 31	Following Jesus In Relationships

This series is for everyone!

- C. TEXT:** Colossians 1:21-2:3 (Pew Bible/Pg. 205/New Test.)

## FOLLOWING JESUS IN MINISTRY

Paul uses the conclusion of a **hymn** to address believers at Colossae. Once they were outsiders, strangers, evil doers and God's enemies (1:21). "But now" because of Jesus' death (the **Cross**) and resurrection (Easter) they are reconciled to God *and* to **one another** (1:22). They are to be holy, **blameless**, beyond reproach and minister to and **serve** one another in **love**.

The proof that God reconciled them (past tense) was evident in their **continuing** in *the* faith (present tense). The **faith** necessary to reconcile them, by nature is "steadfast" causing them to cling to and persevere in "the hope of the Gospel" (future, 1:5, 23). So, genuine faith *in Christ* leads to **faithfulness** to Christ. Every member is meant to be a **minister** serving Christ and one another! This is only possible when we **follow** *Jesus!* Why and how must *Christians* minister?

### I. FOLLOWING JESUS IN MINISTRY = SELFLESS **SERVICE** TO OTHERS:

- A. The word "minister" means to "serve" others. Jesus is the **Head** of his body, the church. He is her sovereign Lord and the **supreme** authority over every member. Yet Jesus did not come to be served but to serve and give his life a ransom (Mk. 10:45). Jesus went about **preaching**, teaching and healing so these three aspects of ministry must characterize his followers (Matt. 9:35-38).

- B. Paul was "made a minister" (1:23, 25) and exhorted people to imitate him even as he **imitated** Jesus. At conversion, he was assured of his **call** to serve Jesus by being a **witness** to people (Acts 9:15). This service involved taking Jesus' name to the Gentiles, proclaiming of the Gospel. Like Jesus and Paul, all followers are anointed and sent to **evangelize** the lost and **edify** the saints.

- C. What Paul did (ministry) for others **stemmed** from who Paul was (a servant of Christ). Many had not seen Paul's face in the **flesh** (physical, no Gnostic ideology). Yet he took a personal interest in their welfare (4:7-18). He hoped to see Philemon (1:22) then visit believers in Laodicea. His ministry, a **stewardship** from God, was "for your sake/ **benefit**". Epaphras, the founder, he called a fellow-servant and faithful servant (1:7-8). Every **member** must be a **minister** in their church!

### II. FOLLOWING JESUS IN MINISTRY = SHARING IN JESUS' **SUFFERINGS**:

- A. Note words that describe Paul's work (1:29). Ministry is hard **labor**, toil, struggle, a lot of **energy**. Yet in this he discovered Jesus' **purpose** and the Spirit's **power**. He rejoiced in his **sufferings** for taking the Gospel to the Gentiles, now part of a "mystery"— *church!* (26, 27). He considered this, "filling up what was lacking in Christ's afflictions" (1:24). So, was Christ's suffering **insufficient** for our salvation? No! Christ suffered on the cross once-and-for-all as the Lamb of God to take away sins. Believers like Paul share in the persecutions of Jesus' body, the church.