

# FOLLOW ME

Luke 9:57-62

The Philistines, a group of people some believe migrated from the Mycenae region of southern Greece, inhabited a significant portion of the coastal lands God gave to Israel and proved to be long-standing enemies of the Jewish people. God warned the Israelites about the dangers posed by people like the Philistines and, consequently, commanded them to drive those people out of the land He was giving to them (*Deuteronomy 7:1-5*). Yet the Jews' failures in their relationship with God resulted in the Philistines' ongoing presence in their lands. Israel's failure to obey God's direction eventually led God to appoint Saul as Israel's first king and to give him a special mission – he was to save God's people “from the hand of the Philistines” (*1 Samuel 9:15-16*). The Bible's story of king Saul, however, quickly reveals his disobedient and inept rule. For example, 1 Samuel 14 tells the story of a foolish vow king Saul made that endangered his soldiers while they were battling the Philistines. Even though the text emphasizes the foolishness of Saul's vow, the people he led nevertheless submitted to it, which reveals an important truth – kings command obedience.

The New Testament reveals that, like Saul, Jesus is a king. And, as king, Jesus commands obedience. But two important differences exist between Jesus' rule and the rule of kings like Saul:

- Following Jesus' rule looks different than one might expect; it certainly differed from his disciples' expectations (*Matthew 20:20-28*).
- Jesus possesses the truest, fullest wisdom (*Colossians 2:3*) – he possesses unparalleled intelligence and knows what is best for us in every aspect of our lives.

Given Jesus' identity as king, consider the following passages that outline some of the things he taught about his rule and its relationship to peoples' lives:

## Luke 9:57-62

Following Jesus has both an urgency and a high cost

## Matthew 10:34-39

Following Jesus involves losing one's life

## Matthew 4:23-25; 9:9-13

Following Jesus involves associating with sorted people

## John 1:43-51

Following Jesus is experiential, not merely intellectual

## John 8:12, 31-36

Following Jesus provides clarity and freedom

## John 14:1-7

Following Jesus takes us to God

God has given Jesus “all authority in heaven and on earth” (*Matthew 28:18*) and he invites us to submit ourselves to his rule. But both his rule and his kingdom within which he exercises his rule often differs from our expectations. Committing ourselves to submit to his rule, however, helps us begin to see the wisdom of his rule and the blessings it offers to our lives, which raises an important question – does your life reveal your submission to Jesus’ rule?