

CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT THE RELIGION®



## Walking With Jesus

By Greg Albrecht

**D**uring Jesus' earthly life, walking was the primary and popular form of transit. Most people traveled from point "A" to point "B" by walking. If they needed food, they didn't walk out the front door and get in their car, nor did they step out the front door and hop on their donkey and go to their local Super-Sol/Super-Sal (the largest supermarket chain in Israel today). They didn't call Door Dash, Grubhub or Uber Eats for a home delivery. They walked.

There are of course times when the word "walk" is used in the Bible in a literal sense, describing how people moved their bodies on foot from one place to another.

But the Bible also uses the word "walk" in a metaphorical or symbolic way—when used in this manner, the word "walk" has to do

with *following a course of action or a way of life.*

Older versions of the Bible like the King James Version of 1611 use the word "walk" in such a way while a modern version may speak of living a "way of life."

- **Walking With Jesus** is a life-long commitment—a way of living. **Walking With Jesus** is not a short leisurely stroll through our neighborhood, but a long-term endeavor. It is not a "walk in the park" or a "day at the beach." It is not a hobby we try and then discard when we lose interest.

As Christ-followers, we often think of the Old Testament example of the nation of Israel when, having left the nation of Egypt where they were enslaved, started a 40-year journey in the wilderness as they were on their way to the Promised Land.

Many of the adult Israelites who left Egypt did not have 40 years of life left on this earth. Their journey in the wilderness was a lifelong commitment—all but two (Joshua and Caleb) never crossed the Jordan River into the Promised Land.

To this very day, we live in desert places—spiritually parched places—on this earth.

Through our risen Lord who lives within us, we are given the kingdom of God in our hearts and souls even while we struggle to live and eventually die in the wilderness, still longing for the Promised

Land—the fullness of the kingdom of God.

The Christ-centered journey we are on, as we walk with him and he with us, does not find its goal in our temporary sojourn here on earth—but in a new heaven and a new earth.

Like Abraham, we seek for and travel toward a city whose builder and maker and architect is God (Hebrews 11:8-16).

Do not be deceived! **The road toward the kingdom of heaven is not defined or laid down by religious construction crews—the road is Jesus and the destination is Jesus.**

- **Walking With Jesus** means that we walk by faith, not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7).

Our physical vision is not an accurate navigational device in **Walking With Jesus**. Employing human logic, cognition, vision and

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all our senses, we would often choose another direction and think we are following Jesus.

So many people who dogmatically claim to speak for God and know exactly how God wishes for them to order their lives are actually speaking out of their disordered desires and dressing them up as “God’s will.”

There is nothing easy whatsoever about walking with Jesus—it means walking the narrow and difficult road, not the broad and easy four, six or eight lane highway. More often than not, the Jesus Way is not the path we would naturally choose.

- **Walking With Jesus** implies movement and it implies progress. By definition, following Jesus is a non-sedentary spiritual life. It means we are going somewhere, even when we don’t fully see or appreciate our destination. When we walk with Jesus we know we are going to wind up in the right place. We will not get lost if we walk with him.

- **Walking With Jesus** does not imply ease or pleasure, for it is a dynamic tension in which the life of our risen Lord lives in us, even as we are mortal flesh, filled with anxiety, doubt and fear.

- **Walking With Jesus** is not an endless sightseeing vacation where we live on this earth as tourists, expecting Jesus to pay our bill at

the best hotels, providing us with delicious food and expensive accommodations.

- **Walking With Jesus** means we pick up our cross and follow him. When we accept Jesus’ invitation to walk with him, our cross of illness, affliction, addiction, family difficulties, financial hardship or persecution is not automatically taken away or healed and resolved.

Jesus knows when we carry our cross and learn to carry “our own water,” we will more deeply value every drop.

As we follow Jesus we realize that storms do not only disrupt our lives, sometimes they clear our path helping us to see Jesus as we never have before.

- **Walking With Jesus** is all about faith and trust wherein we surrender control of our lives (human “control” of life is only a perception, a mirage) and follow him, where he leads.

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*Think about control in the history of our lives. We start as babies in charge of nothing whatsoever: everything is done for us, nothing by us. But then*

***Walking with Jesus is not an endless sightseeing vacation where we live on this earth as tourists...***



*come the “terrible twos,” and we begin a lifetime of putting whatever arm we can on everybody we run into. Next come our teens, when we despise all control except our own. After that come our own offspring, whose helplessness tricks us into controlling them as we were once controlled. Then come their teens, in which we find ourselves out of control all over again... And during all those years of trying to manage our lives, we lose control more and more until our death—when we have none at all. Yet all the while we go right on thinking that one more effort at muscling things and people into religious order will make our identities come up roses. It’s a wonder God even puts up with us.*

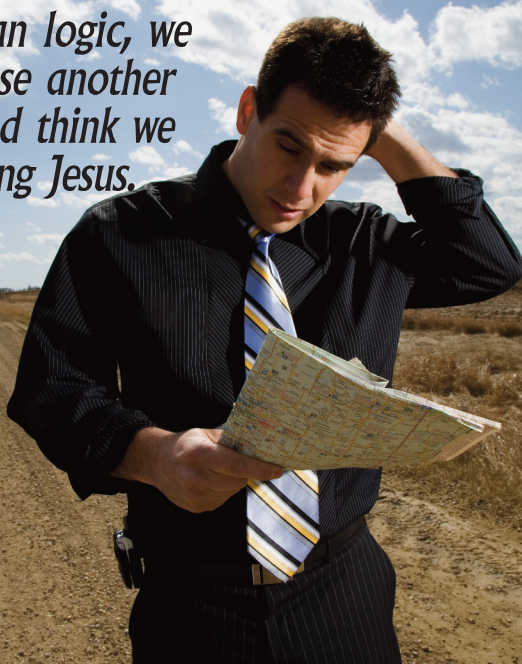
(From “The Foolishness of Preaching” by Robert Farrar Capon, pages 39-40).

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As much as we long to be out front, walking with and following Jesus means he is in the lead. Jesus’ invitation is not for us to take the lead and set the pace but for us to follow him. Following Jesus means going where Jesus wants us to go at the pace he determines.

- **Walking With Jesus** means not being too far behind him, nor daring to go ahead of him as if Jesus should follow our lead. We adjust our speed to match his—when he pauses and stops for rest, then we do so. We follow him at his pace, emulating his gait.

***Using human logic, we would choose another direction and think we were following Jesus.***



• **Walking With Jesus** is all about spiritual vision, not physical eyesight. It is all about his goodness and how he enables us rather than our goodness and the virtues we attempt to produce.

• **Walking With Jesus** means we don't decide what Jesus should do, how he should behave, and what direction he should take.

• **Walking With Jesus** means yielding our lives to him—we don't try to make him over into our image, but rather we seek to be transformed into his image.

• **Walking With Jesus** defines the meaning of life as receiving the free gift of God's grace and serving others by passing on the grace we have been given.

• **Walking With Jesus** is a life of joy and gratitude, wherein we do not wait for the road to be clear of all obstacles and the weather to be perfect. Christ-followers know that life will always be filled with challenges and struggles and therefore embrace the present with Christ-centered joy regardless of road conditions.

*...fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith...* (Hebrews 12:2). □

*Christ with me, Christ before me,  
Christ behind me, Christ in me,  
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,  
Christ on my right, Christ on my left,  
Christ when I lie down,  
Christ when I arise,  
Christ in the heart of every man who speaks of me,  
Christ in every eye that sees  
Christ in every ear that hears me.*

(Saint Patrick's Breastplate, an old Irish hymn dating to the 5th century).

*Walking with  
Jesus means  
we pick up  
our cross  
and follow  
him...*

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