

KIRBSTONES

ALONG THE NARROW WAY

curb-stone (kûrb'stôn') - *noun* - one of the stones or a range of stones forming a curb, as along a sidewalk or roadway. Historically, the curbstones were placed vertically along the edges of the roadbed, and the paving material was backfilled against the row of curbstones. The curbstones served ¹to hold the material in the roadbed, ²to prevent the scattering of the material along the edges, and ³to define the road itself from all the adjoining areas.

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¹³ "ENTER THROUGH THE NARROW GATE. FOR WIDE IS THE GATE AND BROAD IS THE ROAD THAT LEADS TO DESTRUCTION, AND MANY ENTER THROUGH IT. ¹⁴ BUT SMALL IS THE GATE AND NARROW THE ROAD THAT LEADS TO LIFE, AND ONLY A FEW FIND IT." - MATTHEW 7:13-14 - NIV



One of the lessons that becomes clearer the longer we walk with Christ is that discipleship always involves both obedience and trust. We may say we believe in Jesus, but belief alone is not the final measure of faith. The real measure of our faith is seen in whether we respond when the Lord calls us to act.

Over and over again in Scripture we see that the degree to which we answer a call to action is directly related to our level of commitment to the caller. When we trust the caller, we obey the call. When trust grows, obedience grows with it.

Three powerful passages of Scripture illustrate this truth: the healing of an unnamed man born blind, the raising of Lazarus from the dead, and the final moments of Jesus on the cross.

Example #1 is the unnamed man who had been blind from birth. Earlier in the story, Jesus placed mud on the man's eyes and told him to go wash in the Pool of Siloam. The man obeyed. As the account unfolds, his understanding of who Jesus is grows stronger until he finally recognizes Jesus as Lord.

³⁵ Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" ³⁶ "Who is he, sir?" the man asked. "Tell me so that I may believe in him." ³⁷ Jesus said, "You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you." ³⁸ Then the man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him.

John 9:35-38 - NIV

Notice how this man's faith unfolds. First, he simply obeys the instruction to wash. Then he defends the One who healed him. Finally, he confesses Jesus as Lord and worships him. Obedience caused a deeper faith.

Example #2 is the story of Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha, and a dear friend of Jesus. By the time Jesus arrived in Bethany, Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Yet Jesus called for the stone to be rolled away, and then Jesus spoke a command that must have startled everyone present.

⁴³ When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" ⁴⁴ The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face.

Jesus said to them, "Take off the grave clothes and let him go."

John 11:43-44 - NIV

Imagine hearing your name called from beyond the boundary of death itself. Lazarus responded to that call. Lazarus came out of the tomb trusting the voice of the one who called him.

Example #3 is the most profound of all. This illustrates the obedience and trust of Jesus himself. On the cross, Jesus fulfilled the mission for which he had come into the world—to bridge the separation between humanity and the Father that was caused by our sin.

⁵⁰ And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit. ⁵¹ At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split. ⁵² The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. ⁵³ They came out of the tombs, and after Jesus' resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many people. ⁵⁴ When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were terrified, and exclaimed, "Surely he was the Son of God!"

Matthew 27:50-54 - NIV

We see perfect obedience and perfect trust, as Jesus trusted the Father's plan even unto death. Through that obedience, the temple curtain was split, symbolizing the removal of the barrier between God and humanity.

These three passages reveal a simple pattern. A blind man obeys Jesus' order, grows in faith, and worships him as Lord. Lazarus hears Jesus' voice and walks out of the tomb after four days. Jesus himself obeys the Father completely, even to the point of death on the cross.

In every case, the response to the call reveals the depth of the relationship with the one who calls. The same principle applies to us. The Lord still calls us—to faith, to service, to compassion, to forgiveness, and to a life shaped by the gospel. Our willingness to respond to that call is closely tied to how deeply we trust Christ. The question for each of us is simple: When the Lord calls your name, will you answer with obedience and trust?

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