

Subatomic Faith

Simply Job-Shadowing Jesus

August 3, 2025

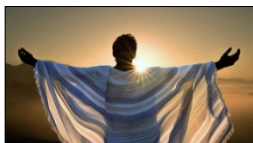
Today we're counting the cost to follow the One who paid the price!



Have you seen the latest *reader board* on the *potato shed* in Burlington? It says: “Life is like a *game of chess*. I don’t know *how to play chess*.” What I love about Noah’s “Atomic Faith” series is that, 1) he gave us Bit-O-Honeys, and 2) it’s *helping us to see that life can be lived like a game of checkers, with **simple, small moves that lead to big spiritual wins***. We must *become as little children*. (Mt 18:3) And, *little kids can’t rely on willpower to change their behavior*.

So we must also *count the cost*, (Lk 14:28) and **take solid, sacred, baby-steps to mold our identity**. And then, **patiently wait for spiritual muscles to gradually grow** as our *new nature* takes its course. Thing is, we *write off* – even *laugh off* – **the potential spiritual power of sustainable subatomic steps**. For months, I rebelled against a *post-it* I wrote that says: start using *pullup bar*. Cuz I don’t want to. Cuz it’s a *commitment*. But I want to want to. Cuz I want to be *fit*. So, *three weeks ago*, I *counted the cost*; and *now, every morning*, I *faithfully go to the garage and say hi to my pullup bar*. Cuz **we underestimate the cost of consistency**. But now, I’m *slowly becoming a guy who goes to a pullup bar*. I don’t want to *brag*, but I’ve even *hung on it a few times, and pulled myself up once or twice* – cuz I wanted to. That’s *subatomic success*!

So, the *question* today is: **Do you want to be just like Jesus?** Cuz I didn’t! But I wanted to want to. So I *took it smaller*. And *first* I had to *figure out what that even means*. I mean, you gonna *move to Israel*; *learn Aramaic*; *speak in parables*; and *wear a tallit and tzitzit*? “I don’t know what a *tallit and tzitzit* is.” Then you *can’t be just like Jesus*! So the *load* got a whole lot *lighter* when I realized: **I want to be what Jesus would be if He was me**. Cuz *that’s what He wants*. Cuz He’s *not into clones or carbon copies*. But He’s *big into unity* – but *not the stamped-out, cookie-cutter kind you find in cults and boy bands*. Cuz *that’s uniformity*. And the Lord is *all about the unity of distinctly different disciples forming one body*. Cuz *that’s harmony*. Which requires **living relationships** rather than **dead religious works**, wherein *each part can accomplish our uniquely created-purpose*. And suddenly I could clearly see what He meant when He said:



“Can a *blind man lead a blind man*? Will they not *both fall into a pit*? A *student is not above his teacher*, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher. [In what way? Not *identical*. Just *not blind*! So] “Why do you *look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye* [before you’re *fully trained*] and pay no attention to the *plank* [that *remains*] in your own eye? ... first [let the teacher *fully train you to*] take the plank out of your eye, and then you will see clearly [like your teacher] to [humbly, lovingly, gently help] remove the speck from your *brother’s eye*.” – Luke 6:39-42 NIV

So, *how do you remove the plank in your own eye?* ... *One speck at a time.* That's why they call them *spectacles!* So, what would Jesus be like if He was raised in a wrecking yard, went to film school, and loved the Marx Brothers? *He'd be all that but without the plank in His eye.* In other words: *He'd be me at my best and most blessed self.* But, what if He were you? *He created your uniqueness with purpose;* so, why would He change it? *He just wants to remove whatever prevents it from becoming its best self.* Which is why, as Paul reminds his Ephesian congregation:



You were taught, with regard to your former [selfish] way of life, to put off your old [self-centered, self-serving, self-absorbed, self-destructive] self, which is being corrupted [NKJ: "which grows corrupt"] by its deceitful desires; to be made new [speck by speck and bit by Bit-O-Honey] in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new [self-aware, self-controlled, self-sacrificing, self-disciplined] self, created to be like God [would be if He were me] in true righteousness and holiness. – Ephesians 4:22-24 NIV

But then, isn't that *literally* the oldest temptation in the book? When:

The serpent said to the woman ... "When you eat of [the tree] your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God," – Genesis 3:1-5 NIV

So, were we created to be or not "to be like God"? Yes. To be *and* not to be. Notice Paul's qualification: "in true righteousness and holiness". Paul is telling the Ephesians *to imitate God's nature by submitting to His authority.* Whereas the enemy tempts us *to usurp God's authority by succumbing to our nature.* So don't fall for *literally* the oldest trick in the book!

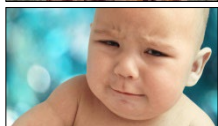
Be imitators of God, therefore, [Paul tells his Ephesian friends] as dearly loved children [because, as a rule, dearly loved children sincerely imitate their parents] and live a life of love, [be like that] just as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us – Ephesians 5:1-2 NIV



Paul planted and pastored the church in Ephesus for three years. And the theme of his later letter is to simply imitate Jesus like little children.



So, for our Route 66 video (14.5 years ago!), we had everyone imitate Jesus. And there was a bit of a backlash. Because some found it offensive.



How do we expect massive, mature, character changes to occur in dearly loved children? *Gradually. Incrementally. consistently.* And then, *Exponentially.* And ultimately, *permanently.* If a toddler stops walking and goes back to crawling we'd rightly be concerned. As is our heavenly Father.

For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come [again] to need milk and not solid food ... [being] unskilled in the Word – Hebrews 5:12-13 NKJ

So it's crucial that we become like little children, and count the cost of consistency, and *take solid, sacred, sustainable, subatomic, baby steps toward our true Christ-like self.* Cuz Jesus said:

"Anyone who has faith in Me will do what I have been doing." – John 14:12 NIV

What's *that*? *Miracles*? Speaking in *Aramaic*? Wearing a *Tallit* and *Tzitzit*? "I've gotta find out what that is!" **A disciple is just another way of saying an apprentice. And an apprentice is just a novice who job-shadows a master.** And Jesus is quite clear as to *what* He came to do:

"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." – John 10:10 NIV



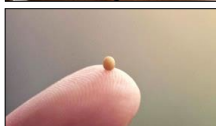
"And for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth." – John 18:37 NIV

[And for this] *"I have come into the world as a light"* – John 12:46 NIV



"For I have come down ... to do the will of Him who sent Me." – John 6:38 NIV

[And] *"I now send you ... to turn them from darkness to light"* – Acts 26:17-18 NKJ



And, like *Rome*, **a disciplined apprentice isn't built in a day.** However, **they are built in a daily routine.** And that routine needs to start out subatomic in scope to give it the staying power to last long enough to change your identity. For instance, if you *don't* read your Bible, just **be someone who opens their Bible.** Literally. Just *that*. But every day. Till your nature takes it course and you're tempted to start reading. But then, *don't flood the engine!* Because, **Mount Everest moments don't define our faith.** But, **dinky, daily, deliberate disciplines do.** Because, *they* become *habits*. Which is *why* Jesus said:

"If you [actually] have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can [eventually] say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and [if it's God's will] it will move. [Cuz mountains are moved one teeny-tiny seed of faith at a time; and] Nothing will be impossible for you." – Matthew 17:20 NIV

That's not just poetic. It's *procedural*. Subatomic faith doesn't focus on the mountains you need to move tomorrow. **It's focused on the microscopic seconds you need to make sacred today.** Years ago, I did what Noah suggested: I put a Bible in my bathroom. But I *didn't* read it. So I got an audio Bible. But I *didn't* play it. So I wired it to the light switch! So, **whatever you do, just do something!** However small. Cuz you *can't* leave that little seed to fend for itself. Because:

The one who *received* the seed that *fell* among the *thorns* is the man who *hears* the Word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it – Matthew 13:22 NIV

We can't avoid the worries of this life. But **if that's our focus, they'll choke us.** Plus they'll poke us! So *tend* to your tiny little seed. And it'll naturally grow. The solution isn't *gritting your teeth*. That's the Biblical description of hell! **Just job-shadow Jesus within the existing rhythm of your life.** And maybe use a dry-erase marker to write "PRAY" backwards on the outside of your shower door. Ever hear that STOP stands for *Stomp Toe On Pedal*; or *Spin Tires On Pavement*? Well how about: **Short Time Of Prayer!** And I mean *short*! Instead of *coasting* through and *breaking the law*, take a subatomic break to stop coasting through life, and **take a two-second rest stop to pray: "Let's go!"** The Pharisees had their own apprenticeship program – *straining in vain* to force every adherent to gnash their teeth and strive to become perfectly religious. And Jesus said:

"You travel over land and sea to *win* a single *convert*, and ... [then] you make him *twice* as much a *son of hell* as you are. Woe to you, *blind guides*!" – Matthew 23:15-16 NIV

"You *load* people down with *[religious]* burdens they can *hardly* carry" – Luke 11:46 NIV



[So] "Come to Me, all you who are *weary* and *burdened*, and I will give you *rest*. Take My yoke upon you and *learn* from Me, for I am *gentle*" – Matthew 11:28-29 NIV

But *then* He lays *this biggie* on His *boys*:

"You shall *be perfect*, just as your *Father* in heaven is *perfect*." – Matthew 5:48 NKJ

But [thankfully, we're *also told to*] let *patience* have its *perfect work*, that you may [speck by speck, eventually] be *perfect* and *complete*, [i.e.] *lacking nothing*. – James 1:4 NKJ

[When it comes to] The *fruit* of the *Spirit* [which] is *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness* and *self-control*. – Galatians 5:22-23 NIV

[So just] Walk as [little] *children of light* [who simply *job-shadow* Jesus] (for the *fruit* of the *Spirit* is in all *goodness, righteousness, and truth*) – Ephesians 5:8-9 NKJ

Little *children* ... [don't *freak out*] *Whoever practices righteousness is righteous*, as He is righteous. [Cuz that's *all* He asks] ... *No one born of God makes a practice of sinning*, for *God's seed abides in him*, and [as it *grows* in the *attitude* of his *mind*] he cannot [just] keep on *sinning* [cuz it'll become *less* and *less appealing*; and *more* and *more repelling*] ... By *this [growing seed]* it is *evident [over time]* who are the *children of God* ... [because] whoever does not [even] *practice righteousness* is *not* of God – 1 John 3:7-10 ESV

[So] Choose for yourselves *this day* whom you will *serve* [in whatever *subatomic* way] ... But as for *me* and *my house*, [and *my bathroom*] we will *serve the Lord*. – Joshua 24:15 NKJ



"For My yoke is *easy* and My burden is *light*." – Matthew 11:30 NIV

When you're *doing it right*. Because **He asks us to tend to just one little seed at a time**. Cuz we're a *lot* like *Peter*, when Jesus just wanted to *wash his feet*. First *Peter* said *no*. Until *Jesus* said:

"*Unless I wash you, you won't belong to Me*." Simon Peter exclaimed, "Then *wash my hands and head* as well, Lord, *not just my feet*!" Jesus replied, [Hold on there, tiger] "A person who has *bathed all over* does not *need* to *wash*, except for the [daily bits and specks of dirt on their] feet, to be *entirely clean*. And [rest assured] you *disciples* [who belong to Me; by allowing Me to simply *wash your feet*] are *clean*" – John 13:8-10 NLT

Because in His apprenticeship program, **you become a journeyman the moment you begin**. So, why not *allow* the Master to serve you as His *child* and *friend*, and **simply and consistently begin to practice a moment of His presence**. And do so with the *astonishingly easily obtainable* goal of **gradually forming a sacred habit, one small step of faith at a time**. And just **follow Him by allowing Him to walk in your shoes**. Because, as it *turns out*, the *most real* you will be the *fully trained version*, that's *clearly functioning* in your *created uniqueness* and *purpose*.