

At every turn we are hearing about the “new normal.” It includes a future with more facemasks, less handshakes, greater online purchases and relationships, less face-to-face contacts. Will those six foot markers and one way arrows remain on floors for the foreseeable future? And the big question I have: will people come back to church buildings?

The Bible says a lot about the “new normal” that is part of becoming a follower of Jesus Christ. Here are just a few of the passages, just from the book of Ephesians, that address how our old, worldly patterns must give way to a new, godly way of life.

- <sup>13</sup> And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, <sup>14</sup> who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of his glory (Eph. 1:13-14).
- *You were dead in your transgressions and sins, <sup>2</sup> in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient (Eph. 2:1-2).*
- *But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, <sup>5</sup> made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved (Eph. 2:4-5).*
- <sup>14</sup> *Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. <sup>15</sup> Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ (Eph. 4:14-15).*
- <sup>1</sup> *Follow God’s example, therefore, as dearly loved children <sup>2</sup> and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God (Eph. 5:1-2).*
- <sup>15</sup> *Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, <sup>16</sup> making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil (Eph. 5:15-16).*
- <sup>10</sup> *Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. <sup>11</sup> Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes (Eph. 6:10).*

When it comes to the “new normal” of being a Christ follower, we have some options. We can fully embrace this new way of living, we can completely ignore, or we can try to keep one foot in each way of life. Only the first option is acceptable to God. Either you are all in, or you’re not.

Ephesians 1:17 gives us the reason for this: *I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may **know him better**.*

John 14:23 tells us more: *Jesus replied, “Anyone who loves me will **obey my teaching**. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.”*

1 John 4:17 adds to this: *This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world **we are like Jesus**.*

To know Jesus is to love Him.

To love Him is to obey Him.

To obey Him is to be like Him.

It’s our “new normal.” Embrace it!