

*CALLED
TO*

ACT

FOLLOWING JESUS IN TODAY'S CULTURE

*CULTURE FOLLOWING
JESUS IN
TODAY'S*

As followers of Jesus in today's culture, we
assume we have the options to:

- Pretend
- Ignore
- Hope

Instead, the Savior Called us to ACT

Followers of Jesus are Called to ACT as...

- Subjects of the King (Leviticus 19)
- Fishers of Men (Matthew 4)
- Makers of Disciples (Matthew 28)
- Citizens of Heaven (Philippians 3)
- Ambassadors for Christ (2 Corinthians 5)
- Persons under Authority (Romans 13)

Last week...

Devoted to Prayer

First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. 1 Timothy 2:1-2

Don't Stop Living Even In Exile

“Take wives and become the fathers of sons and daughters, and take wives for your sons and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; and multiply there and do not decrease. Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf; for in its welfare you will have welfare.”

Jeremiah 29:6-7

“ ‘Then [when you are in exile and feel lost and hopeless] YOU will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. I will be found by you,’ declares the Lord, ‘and I will restore your fortunes and will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you,’ declares the Lord, ‘and I will bring you back to the place from where I sent you into exile.’”

Jeremiah 29:12-14

This week...

People of Gratitude

Psalm 136

Grateful people know their history

Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good,
for His lovingkindness is everlasting.

Psalms 136:1

הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי-טוֹב כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ

A very general statement of gratitude

“for His lovingkindness is everlasting”

“ki L’olam hasdo” לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדְךָ

Lovingkindness חֶסֶד hesed

Everlasting עוֹלָם olam

- His lovingkindness is “everlasting” or “forever”
- *olam* also means “infinite” – God has no dimension, He is infinite in all dimensions (unmeasurable)

We Serve The One True God

Give thanks to the God of gods, for His lovingkindness is everlasting. Give thanks to the Lord of lords, for His lovingkindness is everlasting. To Him who alone does great wonders, for His lovingkindness is everlasting;

Psalm 136:2-4

כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ “ki L’olam hasdo”

to Him who made the heavens with skill, for His lovingkindness is everlasting; to Him who spread out the earth above the waters [Genesis 1:2], for His lovingkindness is everlasting; to Him who made the great lights [Genesis 1:14-18], for His lovingkindness is everlasting: the sun to rule by day [Genesis 1:16], for His lovingkindness is everlasting, the moon and stars to rule by night, for His lovingkindness is everlasting. Psalm 136:5-9

כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ “ki L’olam hasdo”

To Him who smote the Egyptians in their firstborn
[Exodus 12:29], for His lovingkindness is everlasting,
Psalm 136:10

- Why does verse 10 only mention the death of the firstborn?
- Where are the other 9 plagues?
- Jewish commentaries say, “We don’t celebrate the suffering of the Egyptians, we only celebrate the salvation and redemption God performed for His people.”

כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ “ki L’olam hasdo”

and brought Israel out from their midst

[Exodus 12:51-13:3], for His lovingkindness is everlasting,

with a strong hand and an outstretched arm

[Exodus 6:1,6], for His lovingkindness is everlasting.

Psalm 136:11-12

*Strong hand and outstretched arm... Thanks to God's intervention, the Jews left Egypt with their heads held high. God could have taken them out during the plague of darkness (9th plague - Exodus 10:21-29), but that would have been sneaking out like thieves.

כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ "ki L'olam hasdo"

To Him who divided the Red Sea asunder [Exodus 14:21],
for His lovingkindness is everlasting, and made Israel
pass through the midst of it [Exodus 14:22], for His
lovingkindness is everlasting; but He overthrew
Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea [Exodus 14:27], for His
lovingkindness is everlasting. Psalm 136:13-15

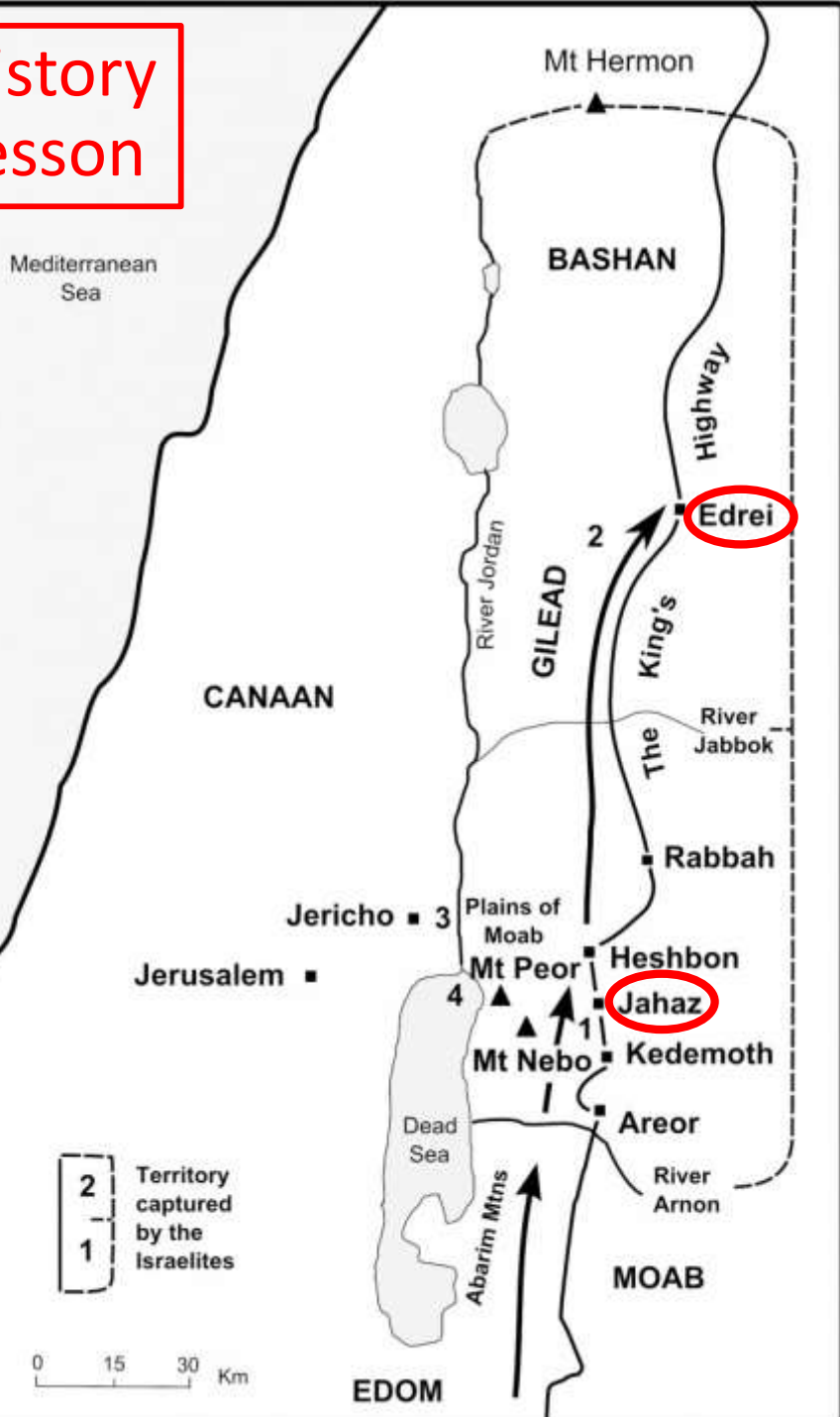
*Verses 13-15 could have been reduced to a single verse... when
there is elaboration in scripture, there is always a reason. We are to
thank God for everything He does, not just the results.

כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ “ki L’olam hasdo”

To Him who led His people through the wilderness [Exodus 13:18, 15:22], for His lovingkindness is everlasting; to Him who smote great kings [Psalm 135:10-12, 136:17-22], for His lovingkindness is everlasting, and slew mighty kings, for His lovingkindness is everlasting: Sihon, king of the Amorites [Numbers 21:21-24], for His lovingkindness is everlasting, and Og, king of Bashan [Numbers 21:33-35], for His lovingkindness is everlasting, and gave their land as a heritage [Joshua 12:1], for His lovingkindness is everlasting, even a heritage to Israel His servant [Isaiah 41:8], for His lovingkindness is everlasting. Psalm 136:16-22

כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ “ki L’olam hasdo”

History Lesson



- Numbers 21:21 When the Israelites reach Kedemoth, they send messengers to King Sihon of the Amorites who is occupying the northern area of Moab requesting safe passage through his territory (see also Deuteronomy 2:26-28).
- Numbers 21:22 They assure him that they will travel along the King's Highway, and they promise not to plunder the fields and vineyards alongside the road.
- Numbers 21:23-24 King Sihon refuses and attacks the Israelites at Jahaz. The Israelites defeat the Amorites and occupy the land of northern Moab from the River Arnon to the River Jabbok.
- Numbers 21:25-32 All the Amorite cities, including Heshbon and Jazer are captured.
- Numbers 21:33-35 As the Israelites continue to move north, King Og of Bashan is defeated at Edrei. The Israelites then occupy all the land of Gilead and Bashan from the River Arnon to Mount Hermon (see also Deuteronomy 4:48).
- Lesson: Sihon and Og were both very powerful kings. When God does something particularly significant, mention your thanksgiving specifically.

Who remembered us in our low estate [Psalm 9:12,
103:14], for His lovingkindness is everlasting, and has
rescued us from our adversaries [Judges 6:9, Nehemiah 9:28],
for His lovingkindness is everlasting;
Psalm 136:23-24

*When has God shown up in the middle of your dark
and painful days?

*When has He protected you from evil?

כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ “ki L’olam hasdo”

Who gives food to all flesh [Psalm 104:27], for
His lovingkindness is everlasting.

Psalm 136:25

*For there is no partiality with God. Romans 2:11

כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ “ki L’olam hasdo”

A Final Reminder

Give thanks to the God of heaven לַאֵל הַשָּׁמַיִם

[Genesis 24:3,7; 2 Chronicles 36:23, Nehemiah 1:4], for

His lovingkindness is everlasting.

Psalms 136:25-26

כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ “ki L’olam hasdo”

Lessons from Psalm 136

- One problem with our prayer lives is we lack stamina and patience
- Another problem is that we forget the past
- Truly thankful people remember the past and remember God's goodness

Psalm 136 is a song of gratitude, giving thanks to God for a variety of circumstances and events. Sometimes we give thanks generally (“for He is good” in verse 1), sometimes we give thanks specifically (“divided the Red Sea” in verse 13).

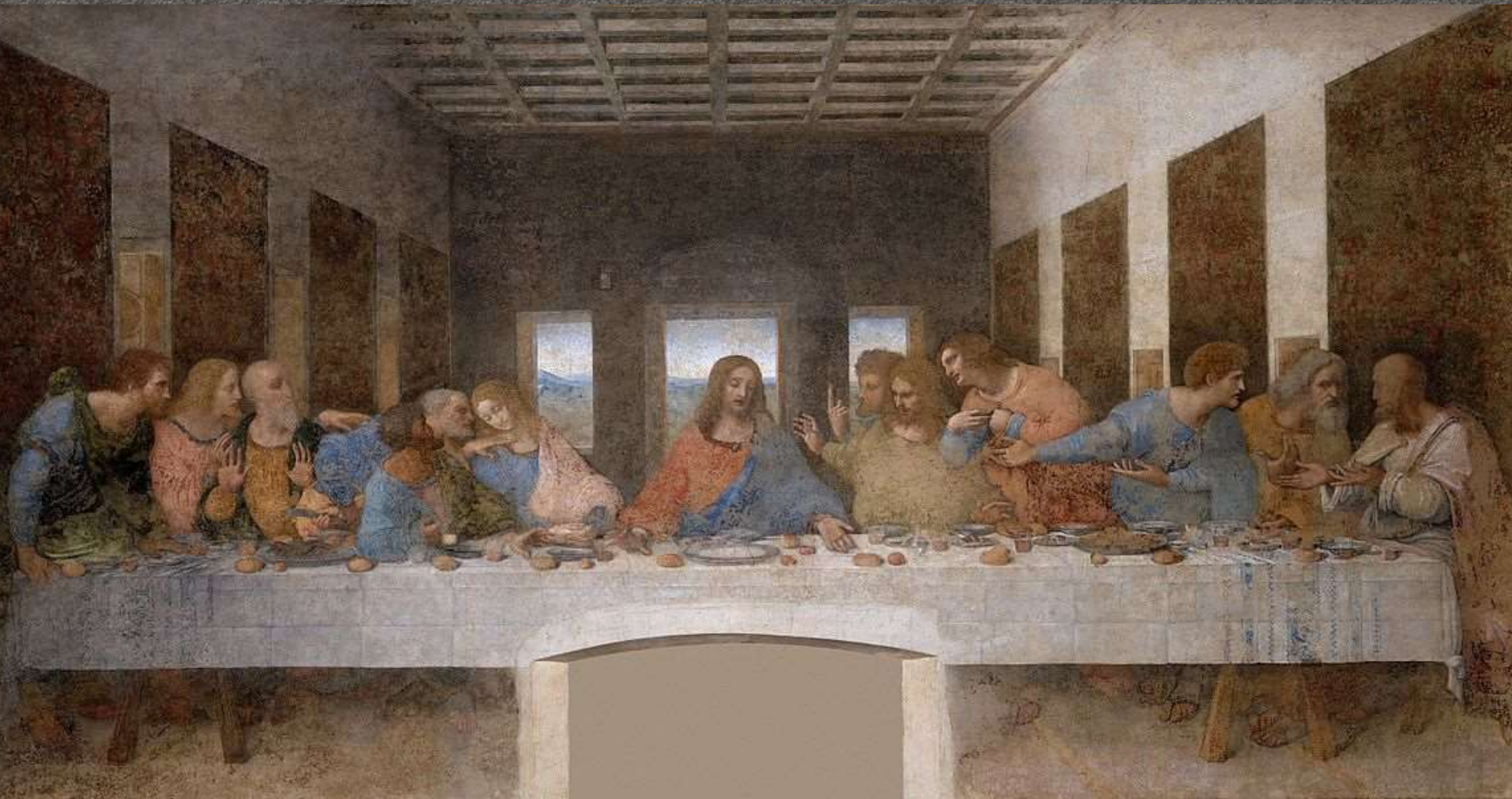
Grateful people understand that God is always at work. Grateful people remember their past.

Grateful people look back and see God’s hand in every circumstance.

Psalm 136 is perfect for the Thanksgiving table...



Consider this table...



Or, more accurately,
this table...



The Last Supper

- Now when evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the twelve disciples. Matthew 26:20
- When it was evening He came with the twelve. As they were reclining at the table and eating...
Mark 14:17-18a
- After singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. Matthew 26:30

What “hymn” did Jesus and the disciples sing?

- Psalms 113-118 are collectively called Hallel הַלֵּל (meaning “praise”). They are also called the “Egyptian Hallel.” In ancient times Jews recited these hymns on the three Pilgrim Festivals, when they offered their sacrifices in the Temple of Jerusalem.
- In modern times, during the Passover Seder meal, when Jews praise God for taking them out of Egypt, they recite Hallel (Psalms 113-118). Some of it is included in “Maggid,” the main recital of the Haggadah (story of the Exodus told during the meal). The balance is said later following Grace After Meals (Birkat Hamazon בִּרְכַת הַמְּזוֹן).
- This Hallel (Psalms 113-118) is said while holding aloft the second and fourth of the four cups of wine drunk during the course of the Seder.
- Psalm 136 is the “Great Hallel” (Hallel HaGadol), sung at the end of the Hallel prayers (Psalms 113-118) which conclude the Passover Seder meal.

- At the end of the Passover Seder, Jews say “The Great Hallel” which is Psalm 136.
- Why is this Psalm “great”? Because it praises God for His great kindness in lowering Himself to feed every one of His creations.
- In Temple times, when all of Israel gathered in Jerusalem to sacrifice their Passover lambs, the entire crowd sang Hallel together.
- In this light, when baking matzah (unleavened bread) on the afternoon before Passover, it is customary in modern times for the bakers to sing Hallel.

Jesus and Psalm 136

- When Jesus gathered with His disciples on Thursday night for the Last Supper, they joined together to sing “The Great Hallel” (Psalm 136) and thank God for His goodness and His deliverance. This is the “hymn” of Matthew 26:30.
- As these Jewish men celebrated Passover with Messiah Jesus, they thanked God for His deliverance of the Jewish people from slavery and bondage in Egypt.
- As the Lamb of God was singing about the Passover lambs of Exodus 12, He knew that He would sacrifice His own body in less than 12 hours to pay the penalty for the sins of all mankind.
- Today, when people recite Psalm 136 as they bake the matzah bread to prepare for the Seder, followers of Jesus understand from Matthew 26:26 that the Savior connected the breaking of that unleavened bread to His own body which would soon be nailed to the cross.
- While all of Israel was gathered in the Temple to sacrifice their Passover lambs, the Lamb of God was preparing for His own sacrifice.

Followers of Jesus and Psalm 136

- We are called to become people of gratitude, thanking God for His lovingkindness (hesed) in every circumstance of life.
- We ought to be thankful for His general goodness and His specific goodness.
- We ought to be most thankful that God made a way to deliver us from the bondage of sin and death... the sacrifice of the Lamb of God on the cross.
- Be thankful for the “little” things.
- Be thankful for the “big” things.
- Be thankful for the “biggest” thing.



Jesus said, “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting (לְעוֹלָם לְעוֹלָם) life”.

John 3:16

Followers of Jesus are Called to ACT as...

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- Fishers of Men (Matthew 4)
- Makers of Disciples (Matthew 28)
- Citizens of Heaven (Philippians 3)
- Ambassadors for Christ (2 Corinthians 5)
- Persons under Authority (Romans 13)
- Devoted to Prayer (Jeremiah 29)
- People of Gratitude (Psalm 136)

Why?

“ki L’olam
hasdo”

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