

ON FOLLOWING JESUS // Luke 9:57-62

Morning message from the series, The Gospel of Luke

What does it mean to follow Jesus? As Jesus explained in Luke 9:23, it means denying oneself and taking up the cross; it means **saying what he says, doing what he does, going where he goes**. Truly following Jesus is more about quality of life than quantity of life. This difference in quality means that someone could observe that there is something distinctively different about the life of a Christ-follower.

This passage is like a public service announcement to Jesus' would-be disciples. Followers should learn how to count the cost, asking the question: am I going to make it as a Christ follower? As we look ahead in our lives, do we know what we are getting into? It's going to be a hard road. When the final analysis comes in, will we have been found faithful in following Jesus? In Luke 9:57-62, three different individuals are in divine dialogue with Jesus. The way Jesus responds to each of them reveals characteristics of a Christ-follower.

1. A Radical Separation from the World. (v. 57-58)

Do we realize what it means to follow wherever he goes? There is probably a place Jesus is going that we will not want to go; we may think we are excited about "charging hell with a water pistol" but we will often find that we are not comfortable cutting ties with the world.

2. Personal Consecration to the Lord (v. 59-60)

For this individual, following Jesus means not only cutting ties with the world, but also with his own family issues. If this man's father has died, Jesus' statement is radical, even harsh; but he makes clear that a preoccupation with kingdom advancement trumps family concerns. He is not saying we should neglect a dying family member, but this individual's identity is so tied up with family that he has to detach himself in order to attach to Jesus. This is a calling to be about a heavenly agenda; a call to be about your Father's business. This man puts a timetable on responding to Jesus' calling. Jesus doesn't wait on our timetable for us to give him our undivided attention.

3. Total Dedication to the Mission (v. 61-62)

A follower cannot be hesitant, divided, with one foot here and one foot there. Some individuals may be more concerned about parental permission than going where Jesus has called. We may be called places we don't want to go geographically, or it may be a spiritual location--leaving a Muslim or Buddhist family life. Jesus doesn't need a half-hearted follower, looking back over his shoulder. Ultimately, we have to ask if we have been faithful in following Christ.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What concern are we most tempted to put before following Jesus? Ties with the world, personal comfort, even our family?
2. How does this passage help us to align our priorities with Jesus' calling on our lives?
3. How does this passage help us to distinguish between "quality of life" and "quantity of life"?