

Not All Can Follow (Mt 8:19–22; Lk 9:57–62)

Luke 9:57 - 62 (NASB)

⁵⁷As they were going along the road, someone said to Him, "I will follow You wherever You go."

⁵⁸And Jesus said to him, "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air *have* nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."

⁵⁹And He said to another, "Follow Me." But he said, "Lord, permit me first to go and bury my father."

⁶⁰But He said to him, "Allow the dead to bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim everywhere the kingdom of God."

⁶¹Another also said, "I will follow You, Lord; but first permit me to say good-bye to those at home."

⁶²But Jesus said to him, "No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

Harmonizing Luke 9:57–62 with Matthew 8:19–22 {MT = Matthew}

⁵⁷ As they were walking along the road, a man {**a teacher of the law**^{MT}} said to him, "{**Teacher**,^{MT}} I will follow you wherever you go."

⁵⁸ Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."

⁵⁹ He said to another man {**disciple**,^{MT}} "Follow me."

But the man replied, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father."

⁶⁰ Jesus said to him, "{**Follow me, and**"^{MT}} Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God."

⁶¹ Still another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say good-bye to my family."

⁶² Jesus replied, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."

Man 1:

The first man was a scribe (Matt. 8:19) who volunteered to go until he heard the cost: he had to deny himself. Apparently he was accustomed to a comfortable home. Following Jesus is about service and sacrifice, not greed and comforts.

(The Rich Man - Luke 18:18-30)*

Man 2:

The second man was called by Jesus (what an honor!), but he was rejected because he would not take up the cross and die to self. He was worried about a future funeral. Jesus is not suggesting here that we dishonor our parents, but only that we not permit our love for family to weaken our love for the Lord.

Jesus means, “Let the spiritually dead take care of the mundane affairs; you have more important business to attend to.”

Man 3:

The third man also volunteered, but he could not follow Christ because he was looking back instead of ahead. There is nothing wrong with a loving farewell (1 Kings 19:19-21), but if it gets in the way of obedience, it becomes sin. Jesus saw that this man’s heart was not wholly with Him, but that he would be plowing and looking back (see Gen. 19:17, 26; Phil. 3:13-14).

Summary:

- No wonder the laborers are few! (Luke 10:2)
- They lacked power, love, and discipline, and they grieved His heart. If we today lack these spiritual essentials, we can never truly be His disciples, but they are available to us from the Lord. “For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but of power, of love and of self-discipline” (2 Tim. 1:7, NIV).
- Jesus allows no excuses for not following: desire for security, secular duties, or even family ties.

1 Kings 19:19 - 21 (KJV) The Call of Elisha

¹⁹So he departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing *with twelve yoke of oxen* before him, and he with the twelfth: and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him.

²⁰And he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and *then* I will follow thee. And he said unto him, Go back again: for what have I done to thee?

²¹And he returned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen, and slew them, and boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and gave unto the people, and they did eat. Then he arose, and went after Elijah, and ministered unto him.

- *The picture of a person putting a hand to the plow and looking back can be compared with Elijah’s call of Elisha in 1 Kings 19:19-21. Elisha was called to be a prophet right in the middle of plowing a field—and he never looked back. In fact, he slaughtered the oxen so that they would not even be a temptation to return. Elisha then*

Questions to ponder:

1. Are we a joy to Jesus Christ, or are we breaking His heart?
2. Are we following Jesus without strings or conditions?
3. Jesus was a polarizing individual. Are we polarizing or do we try too hard to blend in?

Monday Morning Moment:

“Jesus does not want to be number one, he demands to be the only One!”

Luke 9:62 (NLT) But Jesus told him, “Anyone who puts a hand to the plow and then looks back is not fit for the Kingdom of God.”

***The Rich Man**

¹⁸Once a religious leader asked Jesus this question: “Good Teacher, what should I do to inherit eternal life?”

¹⁹“Why do you call me good?” Jesus asked him. “Only God is truly good. ²⁰But to answer your question, you know the commandments: ‘You must not commit adultery. You must not murder. You must not steal. You must not testify falsely. Honor your father and mother.’”

²¹The man replied, “I’ve carefully obeyed all these commandments since I was young.”

²²When Jesus heard his answer, he said, “There is still one thing you haven’t done. Sell all your possessions and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”

²³But when the man heard this he became sad, for he was very rich.

²⁴When Jesus saw this, he said, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the Kingdom of God! ²⁵In fact, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of God!”

²⁶Those who heard this said, “Then who in the world can be saved?”

²⁷He replied, “What is impossible for people is possible with God.”

²⁸Peter said, “We’ve left our homes to follow you.”

²⁹“Yes,” Jesus replied, “and I assure you that everyone who has given up house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the Kingdom of God, ³⁰will be repaid many times over in this life, and will have eternal life in the world to come.”