

Luke 9:57-62- The Uncommitted Follower

TSK, GreekLexicon, Reinecker, JFB, Geneva, Gill, Robertson, Poole, Clarke, Spurgeon, Trapp, Henry, Geisler, Calvin, Barnes?

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: **There are those who like the idea of looking spiritual around other Christians, and maybe they are Christians, but they have little interest in holy living when no one is looking.**

They are a mile wide and an inch deep.”

I see this among young people who are baptized, who have the catechism memorized and sing with gusto in the worship service, but their lives do not reflect full Christian living.

These are uncommitted followers.

The fact that some people who are in the church are “a mile wide and an inch deep” is not new.

Hear today about 3 types of uncommitted followers of Jesus!

Our headings are:

I will follow, but my Comfort comes First

I will follow, but my Father comes First

I will follow, but my Relatives comes First

Our goals are: **That you will be moved to be a truly committed follower of Jesus Christ and do your part in his kingdom!**

I Will follow, but My Comfort come First

57 Now it happened as **they journeyed** on the road, that someone said to Him, "Lord, I **will follow You wherever You go.**"

1. Someone walking with Jesus proclaimed he would follow Jesus wherever he went.

It is possible this man was emotionally moved by what he saw and heard, but he was not moved to the depths of his soul.

(This is like when **a man promises to do everything for a woman because he is emotionally drawn to her.**)

It is possible he saw the crowds that came to Jesus and wanted to be part of the movement! Many were following Jesus and he wanted to do so too. (**This is like kids who say they like a singer simply because others say they like him.**)

It is possible he wanted to look spiritual, for people to think highly of him, like a politician who calls on God to bless the people, even though he does not believe in Jesus.

It is possible **he wanted the free food!**

It is likely there was a combination of reasons for his bold, **but shallow claim.**

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

2. Jesus' response was significant: He rebuked the man for his statement because he knew the heart of man.

The language here does not seem like a rebuke, but when you look at the context you can be sure of this. **This rebuke parallels 2 other rebukes that follow.**

Jesus did not tell him that "all will be well." How did Jesus rebuke him?

3. Jesus rebuked this man – a Scribe (Matthew 8:19) by saying:

a. He was expecting too much of the world's grandeur and wealth – and he wouldn't get it. As a Scribe, he would have felt entitled to comforts of life by virtue of his position.

b. Jesus was implying he would eventually abandon the Lord. Jesus knew that **when he was going to suffer all his disciples would abandon him.**

Jesus knew **his disciples would do this when they realized that he would not set up an earthly kingdom and put his disciples in prominent positions.**

Jesus knew that his disciples' cravings for creature comforts were too strong!

4. Lesson:

a. God sees and hates hypocrisy.

b. The one who loves himself hurts his own cause.

c. Those who follow Christ must be prepared in body and soul to suffer discomforts! You must be willing to fully separate from the cravings on this world....like Moses and other the saints of old!

Hebrews 11:26 esteeming the reproach of Christ **greater riches than the treasures in Egypt;** for he looked to the reward.

Hebrews 11:37 They were **stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented** — 38 of whom the world was not worthy. They **wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves** of the earth.

1 Corinthians 4:11 To the present hour **we both hunger and thirst,** and we **are poorly clothed,** and **beaten, and homeless.**

If you lose your job for following Jesus, it must not drive you into depression.

If you have broken glass put into your food like the Vietnamese police did to a pastor, you would not be surprised!

d. Don't be close to a person who loves himself so much. Don't marry him.

e. Comforts in this life can be fleeting!

I will follow, but My Father comes First

59 Then He said to another, "**Follow Me.**" But he said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." 60 Jesus said to him, "**Let the dead bury their own dead,** but you **go and preach the kingdom of God.**"

1. Jesus then challenged another man to follow him, and, according to Matthew, to go and preach the Gospel.

Jesus did this to expose another non-committed follower – a mile wide, but an inch deep!

2. But the man responded that he wanted to go and bury his father first before following Jesus.

a. This doesn't mean the man's father had died and he needed to go for a funeral. The Jews buried their loved ones the same day they died. So if his father had died the same day, he would have stayed at home and not come to meet Jesus.

b. What this man meant was he wanted to go back to his home, nourish his father while he was alive, wait until his father died, and whenever that happened, bury him, and then follow the Lord.

3. Jesus' response was significant: Let the dead bury their own dead...and you go and preach the kingdom of God.

"Bury their own dead" meant the Lord knew the man was making an excuse and he rebuked him unequivocally.

We know Jesus was treating this as an excuse because the **Lord was not against attending funerals.** He went himself.

4. But what does "let the dead bury their own dead" mean?

The Lord meant those who were "spiritually dead" are the ones who could and should become preoccupied with the dead.

5. Lessons:

a. Don't put anyone before God – not husband, wife, children, boyfriend, or girlfriend.

b. The procrastinator, in not passionately following Jesus, hurts his cause, the Lord's cause, and his neighbor's cause.

c. Find out what you can do for the kingdom, get trained if you need to, and do it. That's what the serious Christian will do.

d. If you have been working faithfully and passionately for the kingdom, don't stop.

e. Warning: Pious words don't fool God. The man might have seemed to be good in the eyes of those around, but the Lord knew the heart. His heart was an open book in front of Jesus. (**A drug user can smile just as sweetly as a fake Christian!**)

I will follow, but my Relatives come First

61 And another also said, "Lord, I will follow You, but let me first go and **bid them farewell who are at my house.**" 62 But Jesus said to him, "**No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.**"

1. Then another person committed himself to following the Lord but asked for some time to go and say goodbye to his relatives at home.

This man wanted to **go home, spend time with his relatives, set his house in order, and then leave.** He had no intention to follow the Lord immediately.

(Many families often lived in the same place.)

2. The Lord condemned this man's lack of commitment to his service.

The Lord was not against saying goodbye to one's family, like when one goes to the mission field.

Elisha asked Elijah to say goodbye to his family when he was preparing to take over from him and Elijah gave him permission to do so. After saying goodbye, Elisha returned.

1 Kings 19: 20 And he left the oxen and ran after Elijah, and said, "Please let me kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow you." And he said to him, "**Go back again**, for what have I done to you?" 21 **So Elisha turned back from him**, and took a yoke of oxen and slaughtered them and boiled their flesh, using the oxen's equipment, and gave it to the people, and they ate. **Then he arose and followed Elijah, and became his servant.**

This man had other distractions. **He could not focus on the pursuit of spiritual things.**

He was distracted as Lot's wife! **She wanted to leave, but her heart was still set on Sodom.** Genesis 19.

3. To illustrate, Jesus said this man was like one who was plowing and looking back.

The man who looks back can never make straight furrows, for he pulls to one side.

(Ever seen people inadvertently change lanes when they look off to the side of the road at an accident? Same thing.)

The one who plows must focus on that which is ahead.

So the meaning is that the one who keeps his trust in Jesus Christ is one who does not stray on lesser things but focuses on Christ and his work.

4. Lessons:

a. Many desire to follow Jesus and to work for him in different areas of service, but they often start with: "Lord, I want to serve you, but...!"

Financial security takes over.

Raising children takes over.

Entertainment and pleasure-seeking take over.

Building the new house takes over. Let me get a little more personal:

Do you want to wait until your children are grown up and go off to college before you work hard for the Lord?

Do you want to wait until you retire before you serve as elder?

Do you want to wait until you have nice furniture before you invite people to your house?

If you have done this, it is time to drop the excuses and totally surrender to and serve the Lord.

The Lord is not fooled by your talk or your good intentions.

He wants to see some depth in your life.

b. While you are not fit to be part of the kingdom because you constantly look back, yet the Lord makes you fit by taking the punishment for all your sins.

Conclusion:

Jesus highlighted 3 uncommitted followers. They are those who **put their comfort, their father (strong love), and their relatives (weaker love) before him.**

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ to be a true and deep follower of Christ:

1. Focus on him – focus on this work of creating and re-creating you in Jesus Christ.

Only when you focus on him you will be more committed to his work.

Psalm 80:17 “Let Your hand be upon the man of Your right hand, Upon the son of man whom You made strong for Yourself. 18 Then we will not turn back from You; Revive us, and we will call upon Your name.

2. Find out if the pursuit of comforts has taken over your life...

or whether success in your close or distant **family takes over your life...**

or whether your **self-promotion takes over your life...**

or whether **pleasures like sports, games, foods, intimacy...take over your life?**

3. If these things are taking over your life, ask the Lord for the grace to see all he has done and fully commit to him – to worship and work for him.

Finally: **Being vaguely familiar with the Lord isn't enough.** Even talking to him and **singing to him aren't enough.**

You have to be fully committed to him.

You can only be fully committed to him **if you know him intimately!**

You can only know him intimately if he changes your heart and takes away your sins.

He will only change your heart and take away your sins **if you ask.**

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27B:1,3,5,8,10

Scripture Reading/Text: Luke 9:57-62

Sermon Title: The Uncommitted Follower

Outline:

I will follow, but my Comfort comes First

I will follow, but my Father comes First

I will follow, but my Relatives comes First

1A

24B:4-5

Luke 9:

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Commitment to the cause of Christ

Leadership

Submission to leadership

Passion

Proper focus