

FOLLOWING JESUS IS OUR URGENT PRIORITY!

Luke 9:57-62

What is the most important thing in life? Who is most important to you? Jesus calls His followers to absolute allegiance to Him first above all things.

1.FOLLOWING JESUS IS OUR ONLY SECURITY- Luke 9:57,58

- Following Jesus is what it means to be a Christian – verses 57, 59, 61. There are not two kinds of Christians – disciples and “uncommitted” Christians. The word disciple is the most common word for believers in the book of Acts – Acts 6:1, 7; 9:1,19,26. All real Christians are disciples – learners – of Jesus. Our mission as a disciple is to make disciples – Matthew 28:19,20; 2 Timothy 2:1,2.
- Jesus does not promise earthly security and earthly comfort to His followers. The first would-be follower of Jesus is a volunteer. But he does not seem to understand what following Jesus means. Like many today he seems to think he can follow Jesus on his own terms while keeping his earthly comforts and securities. Jesus bluntly tells him there is no guarantee of earthly security. In fact, following Jesus means we give up clinging to everything else – Luke 14:33. This may include the comforts of home. In fact, following Jesus means this world is not our home anymore – Hebrews 11:8-10.
- Jesus Himself gave up everything to be our Savior. He gave up the glories of Heaven to become human. He left His home in heaven to become homeless here – 2 Corinthians 8:9. Now Jesus calls us to give up everything for Him. Jesus is our refuge, our Home, our security- Psalm 90:1. *“When God is our dwelling place, we can leave everything to follow Jesus, and still be at home.”* – Phil Ryken, Luke. In Christ we have a dwelling place now and for eternity – Hebrews 11:13-16; 13:14.

2.FOLLOWING JESUS IS URGENT – Luke 9:59,60 – “THERE’S NO TIME TO LOSE”

- We cannot delay and follow Jesus when it is convenient for us. The second would-be disciple is told by Jesus to follow Him. But this man makes an excuse for why he cannot follow Him immediately. He wants to follow Jesus on his own terms - later. At first glance, this man’s request seems legitimate in light of the commands of God – Mark 7:9-13; 1 Timothy 5:8. But in the context, Jesus is on his way to Jerusalem for the final time – Luke 9:51. It is now or never. The absolute priority of allegiance to Jesus is first. Others, even the spiritually dead, can take of physical needs and relationships, but not everyone can proclaim God’s saving reign! *“The fear of God is to be set even above reverence and love due to parents.”* – Cyril of Alexandria, A.D. 378-444.
- Let us realize the urgency of following Jesus today. There is only a short time for each of us in light of eternity – James 4:13,14. Let us be urgent in sharing Jesus. Don’t put it off or make excuses. But God gives us each enough time to do His will.

3.FOLLOWING JESUS IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN ANYTHING OR ANYONE ELSE – Luke 9:61,62 – DON'T LOOK BACK!

- Jesus takes priority over all earthly relationships, including family. The third would-be follower is a volunteer who again wants to follow Jesus dictating his own terms. The delay and request seems perfectly legitimate. Consider Elisha and Elijah – 1 Kings 19:19-21. But a greater than Elijah is here – Jesus! The context again is extreme urgency and Jesus demands a higher allegiance than even an Old Testament prophet. Jesus demands allegiance to Him above family – Luke 14:25-27. In putting the Kingdom above family, we follow Jesus Himself in the experience of His own life – Mark 3:20,21; 31-35. We do have a new family in the bonds of discipleship to Jesus. We see this leaving of family behind illustrated today in times of national emergencies or with soldiers. If some leave family to serve their nation, we are to leave allegiance to family to serve Christ. We are soldiers of Christ. We need to follow Jesus without delay.
- We cannot start out with Jesus and then look back to other relationships, treasures, etc – Luke 17:28-33. A life with divided allegiance will be like plowing while looking backward. *“Those who want to look back want to go back...and if we are looking back to anything in this world we are not fit to be disciples.”* – J.C. Ryle, *Luke, 1800's*.
- *“In the same way that Jesus once set His face toward Jerusalem, God is calling us to set our hearts on Jesus and follow Him. Look to Jesus, the Scripture says, ‘who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God’ (Heb. 12:2). Look to Jesus, and never look back.”* – Phil Ryken. The cross comes before glory.

Concluding Applications:

- Is Jesus your #1 allegiance? How is this seen in your life?
- How urgent are you about sharing Jesus?
- Are you living each day for Jesus in light of eternity? DON'T LOOK BACK!
- Do you long for your true HOME? What does this mean for your treasures?
- Are you getting to know and enjoy your true family now?