

## FOLLOWING MEANS LEAVING- LUKE 9:57-62

Delivered: March 13, 2016 | Steve Husch

**Background:** Jesus is having tremendous popularity with the people because of His **power** and **authority** over demons and diseases (Luke 9:1). Everyone is “**astonished**” and “**amazed**” at what He is doing. The 12 are having success as well, and in chapter 10 Jesus is launching a mission involving many others beside the 12. In spite of His popularity, Jesus has recently begun to feel **rejection**, starting with the **Samaritans** (v.51-53). This rejection will eventually come to a head in Jerusalem, His destination.

### I. The “**WHEREVER**” disciple:

- A. According to Matthew’s account this man was a **teacher** of the Law (a scribe).
- B. Matthew tells us he approaches Jesus by calling Him “**teacher**”-want’s to be a **student**.
- C. He “**volunteers**” to follow Jesus, but look at the preceding chapters. (Jesus is enjoying **popularity** and his disciples are having **success**). He is **eager to learn** from such an **amazing** teacher. He wants to **soak –up** all he can from Rabbi Jesus!
- D. Besides, what **better candidate** could Jesus hope for than another teacher?
- E. This man is focused on **where** he would be **willing to go** (assuming of course that Jesus would provide his every need...like He had just done with feeding the 5,000).
- F. But Jesus’ focus is on what a person is **willing to leave behind in order to go**.
- G. So when this man refers to “**following**” Jesus, he likens it to “**accompanying**” Jesus.
- H. He’s “**along for the ride**” ... but doesn’t realize the road is about to get bumpy.
- I. Jesus is already beginning to experience **rejection** (the Samaritan’s rejected Him and denied Him lodging and a place to sleep – vs.53) and it will only become worse.

### J. **Assessment of the 1<sup>st</sup> man - Following means leaving... A GOOD REPUTATION.**

### II. The “**WHENEVER**” disciple

- A. This man is **personally invited** by Jesus to follow (the same terminology as the 12).
- B. He most likely **just watched** Jesus tell the 1<sup>st</sup> man that there will be no comfort in following Him. This man acts like he wants to follow, but needs to **post-pone** it. **Why?**
  - 1 This delay, at first glance, seems to be not only **reasonable**, but it is **honorable**.
  - 2 **Clarify**-This mans **father was not dead**. If so he wouldn’t be there with Jesus.
  - 3 He would, as a son, be expected to **honor** his father by burial & mourning (30 days).
  - 4 After this he would then receive his **inheritance**. Needed to be there to get it.
- C. He **assumes** because of his **obligation** to his family (and **to himself**), he can wait for more convenient “**timing**” in his life.... which is at some point down the road.
- D. He truly believes that it is reasonable and that **Jesus can and will wait** for him.
- E. Jesus tells him to **leave to others** what any of the **others could do** (Bury the dead).
- F. His focus should be on **good news** (the kingdom), not bad news – death of loved-one.

**G. Assessment of the 2<sup>nd</sup> man - Following means leaving...  
CONVENIENT CIRCUMSTANCES.**

**III. The “HOWEVER” disciple:**

- A. He might be considered the “**but first**” disciple.
- B. He too had probably witnessed how Jesus had handled the previous two, and is ready to go. He doesn’t need the **inheritance** from his household...just their **blessing**.
- C. His request seems **reasonable**, but draws a **harsh** response from Jesus.
- D. A few **points to consider**: about this man:
  - 1. **Notice**- Jesus had not asked him to follow. Neither did he ask Jesus if he could follow.
  - 2. He **assumes** that he can follow, but has one term (which Jesus denies).
  - 4. Maybe Jesus knew that he would be going back to a family that would never understand this.
  - 5. The blessing of his family seems to **trump** the call of Jesus.
- E. The expression “**looking back**” does not mean a return to the world or his family, but the reluctance to **break** with them in the first place. His heart would always be at home. This reluctance is what Jesus deals with.
- F. Jesus says you cannot follow me by looking **backwards**.

**G. Assessment of the 3<sup>rd</sup> man - Following means leaving...  
A DIVIDED LOYALTY.**

**IV. Observations:**

- A. Each of these 3 men’s commitment to Christ was **nullified or minimized** by some **previous allegiance** already existing in their life.
- B. Each wanted to follow...**on terms** that allowed them to keep their **current priority**.
- C. What’s more- every **excuse** for not following Christ whole-heartedly is related in some way to an existing **higher level of commitment** given to the **home or family!**
- D. Every excuse seems **legitimate** and even **noble** at first glance...especially in the culture of the day, until Jesus **EXPOSES** the real reason behind the inability to follow.
- E. Notice that Jesus doesn’t **modify** His condition for anyone that would follow, regardless of whether they volunteered or were specifically called to follow.
- F. **The “Takeaways”:**
  - 1. **Following means LEAVING WHAT WE TREASURE MOST**
    - a. Jesus knows that following and leaving are **inseparable**. What does it mean?
      - 1) Leaving doesn’t mean we **abandonment or neglect**.

- 2) Example- **Marriage** ...need to **leave** parents before you can **cleave** to wife. Doesn't mean we disown our parents...but now a secondary priority.
  - 3) Means we can't give **primary** attention to **two things** at the same time.
  - b. Jesus is always far more concerned about what we are willing to **leave** than what we are expecting to **gain**. We need less to distract us (**Simplify**).
  - 2. **Following means NO "DISCLAIMERS"** (even reasonable ones).
    - a. There is no place for "**somewhere**", "**sometime**" or "**somehow**" disciples.
    - b. We never **dictate** the conditions by which we will follow.
    - c. If we try to dictate the terms **we are not "following" as Jesus would define** it...we are merely "**observing**" Jesus (often with **admiration**).
  - 3. **Following means NO "SUPPLEMENTS"**
    - a. The first man viewed Jesus as a supplement to his 1<sup>st</sup> priority-his **resume**. (**Following Jesus was a means to an end**).
    - b. The next man saw Jesus as a supplement to his 1<sup>st</sup> priority-his **responsibility**. (**Following now would be irresponsible**).
    - c. The last man saw Jesus as a supplement to his 1<sup>st</sup> priority- his **relatives**. (**Following would be better with a blessing to go with it**).
- G. **Consolation:** Though it seems like Jesus is **discouraging** "followers" He is really **sparing** them from a **frustrating situation** they aren't prepared or equipped for.
- 1. Notice **Luke 10:1**. Jesus sending out 70 others to preach ahead of Him.
  - 2. **THE 3 DON'T FIT.**
  - 3. The text never says that Jesus said **NO**.
  - 4. **After talking with Jesus they know THEY ARE NOT READY.**
  - 5. **They also know now that they would have been in a miserable situation.**
- H. Jesus will **continue to challenge** anything/one challenging the Kingdom.
- 1. He welcomes anyone to follow that is **equipped** to follow.
  - 2. When He has special plans (as with sending the 70) he desires those He uses to be fit for the task.
  - 3. He is actually dealing mercifully with these 3 men ...and with us as well.
- I. FOLLOWING MEANS LEAVING. We have just looked at three scenarios that challenged the call to LEAVE and FOLLOW.**
- J. What is the priority in your life that trumps Jesus?**
- K. Are you ready to leave it in order to follow Him?**
- 1. There are those that "**ACCOMPANY**" Jesus.
  - 2. There are those that are "**STUDENTS**" of Jesus.
  - 3. There are those that "**FOLLOW**" Jesus...

**and FOLLOWING MEANS LEAVING !**