

IS IT WORTH IT?

Luke 9:57-62 reads almost like a job recruitment interview with three different people wanting to be followers of Jesus. The first person says, "*I will follow You wherever You go.*" Really?

Jesus says to follow Him means leaving security behind, notes RC Sproul. "I don't have a home, or know where my next meal will come from. If you follow Me, then be willing to pay the price."

LA-Z-BOY CHURCH - Jesus is now on the road to Jerusalem to pay the price for sins. Luke doesn't indicate that the man who said "*I will follow You*" actually made a commitment to Christ. It seems he departed, for the comfort of his home. Is this you?

Many people get in the habit of lazy Sunday mornings at home instead of worshiping with their church family. Many hang on to some perpetual excuse to keep them away from the fellowship. Or have you made the Lord Jesus your priority 24/7, and especially the Lord's day, Sunday?

IMPOSSIBLE? - Listen to Jesus: "*With man it is impossible, but with God all things are possible. No one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands for My sake will not receive one-hundred-fold now in this time, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first.*" That's in Mark 10.

Does this give you fright, or hope, strength? Whatever your lack or loss, God will provide. "*God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing, and increase the harvest of your righteousness.*"

That's 2Corinthians 9:8. Follow Jesus and you will have enough to give to others! He says, "*The unbelievers seek after the things of the world, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But first seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow.*" That's Matthew 6:31. Believe it?

FIRST? - To a second person, Jesus said, "Follow Me." He replied, "*Let me first go and bury my father*" (who wasn't yet dead). In Luke 5, the disciples left their livelihood, family and everything to follow Jesus. This man had something he put first. Burying his father would be an important obligation of an eldest son. Even if he was sincere, he put it before answering Jesus' call.

Jesus' reply is controversial: "*Let the dead bury their own dead, but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.*" RC Sproul observes, "The man was procrastinating, not understanding the urgency of Christ's mission. These are not normal circumstances. We are at war, and duty calls."

WARFARE - Jesus had set His face like a flint to work redemption. "The kingdom of God was at stake," notes Sproul. "The war is between the prince of this world and the Son of God. The outcome will be determined in Jerusalem. Right now, in terms of redemptive history, nothing else matters. There is only one place you can be, and that is on the front lines." Period.

"Weeping must not hinder working; mourning must not run to excess" is an old saying. Far from being hard-hearted, it exalts the importance and urgency of Jesus' call, notes RK Hughes. "Let the spiritually dead bury the physically dead. A man alive to God, with the call of God upon him, must do the greater thing for the kingdom of God. On the road with Jesus, life is filled with intense urgency. Life is short. There is so little time, and we have such good news!"

SOLDIERS - In Luke 14 Jesus says "*any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be My disciple.*" Philipians 3: "*whatever gain I had I count as loss, I press on, forgetting what lies behind and straining to what lies ahead, for our citizenship is in heaven.*" Hebrews 12: "*Lay aside every weight and sin which entangles, and run with endurance the race before us.*"

JC Ryle exhorts, "It is impossible to serve Christ with a divided heart. If we are looking back to anything in this world, we are not fit disciples. Jesus will not share His throne with anyone. He must have all our heart or none." And "when love to Christ and love to relatives collide, Christ must have preference." We must be ready to be like Abraham and Moses, leaving all behind.

"A good soldier must give his present duties the principal place," says Ryle, "the training, the marching, the fighting. Let us be willing to do anything, suffer anything, and give up everything for Christ's sake. It may cost something for a few years, but great will be the reward in eternity!" ☐