

## Luke 9 Chapter Study

### INTRODUCTION

Tonight we wrap up -

### VII. The Galilean Ministry 4:14-9:50

Jesus closes out about 2½ years of ministry in the northern region of Israel, & heads south to Jerusalem.

While He's made several trips to Jerusalem to celebrate the annual feasts, he focused His ministry in Galilee – *teaching the crowds* and *training the disciples*.

In fact, *training* the disciples is precisely what we see him doing in our first verses tonight.

As we saw Sunday, this section really begins at v. 22 of Ch. 8 where Luke gives us 4 vignettes of Jesus' incredible power & authority . . .

#### T. Jesus' Authority 8:22-9:9

1. Over nature 8:22-25
2. Over spirit 8:26-39
3. Over disease & death 8:40-56
4. Through the disciples 9:1-6

**<sup>1</sup> Then He called His twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases. <sup>2</sup> He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.**

In light of what they'd just seen Him do over the previous couple days, they'd have understood that they were to go & do precisely the same thing.

They were to go to the people of Galilee & announce that God's reign & blessing would come if they would repent of their sins & turn in genuine & humble faith to Him.

God would then verify their message by bringing healing to the sick & setting the demon-possessed free.

But Jesus has some guidelines for how they were to conduct themselves as they went.

**<sup>3</sup> And He said to them, "Take nothing for the journey, neither staffs nor bag nor bread nor money; and do not**

## have two tunics apiece.

In other words, “Travel light.” He who travels light, travels far. This was a time that had no mass media. News traveled by word of mouth.

There was no radio, television, or popular press.

Scrolls & books were far too expensive for the average person to have.

So Jesus depended on His followers to spread His message.

The lighter they went, the farther they could go.

But if they carried no bag, money, or bread, how would they eat?

Where would they stay?

**4 “Whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart. 5 And whoever will not receive you, when you go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet as a testimony against them.”**

Jesus knows that as they go they’ll be greeted by 1 of 2 reactions:

Welcome or Rejection.

If their message is *rejected*, they aren’t to linger.

They’re to give testimony to their unworthiness of the things of God by shaking the very dust off their sandals as they leave town.

In other words, they lie under the wrath & judgment of God, so they want no *part* of them.

But if their message is *welcomed*, then they’re to stay in the home that first invites them.

Jesus assures them that as they go in obedience to Him, their needs *will* be taken care of.

They *will* find lodging – & when they enter a home, they’re not to look for something better or cozier.

They’re to accept the hospitality extended to them with humble grace.

What Jesus means by staying in one house is that when they’ve been welcomed & the work of God is flowing in power, there will be those with greater means than their hosts who will offer their homes.

The disciples could easily upgrade their accommodations.

If they did, they would be taking advantage of the success of their ministry, but *not* for some strategic move for the Kingdom of

God – just their own comfort.

There's a subtle but consistent temptation that comes to those who are successful in ministry, & that is to be seduced into thinking *that* success should manifest itself in their personal material means.

Jesus warns His followers against that here.

They are never to corrupt the pure desire to glorify God with the desire to enrich themselves by the use of the anointing to minister.

**6 So they departed and went through the towns, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.**

Luke gives us a simple statement of fact – the disciples went & did what Jesus said.

**5. Contrasted to Herod's 9:7-9**

**7 Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by Him; and he was perplexed, because it was said by some that John had risen from the dead, <sup>8</sup> and by some that Elijah had appeared, and by others that one of the old prophets had risen again. <sup>9</sup> Herod said, "John I have beheaded, but who is this of whom I hear such things?" So he sought to see Him.**

Herod was the *civil authority* whose power was nothing less than the Imperial power of Rome.

But Luke presents him as being in a quandary over who Jesus even was.

Jesus authority & power was so radically *different* from Herod's, the ruler, who was the epitome of clever political maneuvering, had no idea what to make of Jesus.

There were a lot of opinions on who Jesus was floating around.

Some thought he was some kind of reincarnated John the Baptist, who'd recently been *executed* by Herod.

Other's thought Jesus was Elijah who'd come back.

They thought this because as you'll remember, Elijah never died –he was caught up to heaven.

Plus, Elijah's life was marked by dramatic miracles and a powerful message, just like Jesus.

Still other postulated that Jesus was one or another of the OT prophets come back from the dead.

The reason why they suggested all these things is because as the *fulfillment* of ALL the OT foretold, Jesus reminded them of various passages of the Scriptures.

#### **U. Jesus Feeds the Multitude 9:10-17**

**<sup>10</sup> And the apostles, when they had returned, told Him all that they had done. Then He took them and went aside privately into a deserted place belonging to the city called Bethsaida.**

One of the most common experiences of those who enjoy a season of fruitful ministry is the terrible let-down that comes after.

You would think that after seeing God move in such a powerful way through you, you'd be flying high for a long time – but such is not the case.

It is the virtually universal experience of God's servants that seasons of great blessing are followed by a melancholy that borders on depression.

What happens is that when God's Spirit moves in power through mere vessels of clay, they realize their own frailty.

It's awesome to witness the glory of God, but when that glory withdraws, one's own mortality becomes more discouragingly clear.

Jesus knew the disciples were coming off a spiritual high, and would now be prone to this post-victory melancholy, so He does the one thing that will help them cope – He calls them to a quiet place alone with Him where they can just rest in the sweetness of His presence.

---

But the crowds of eager people didn't give them much time to themselves.

They soon discovered where Jesus had gone to & again pressed round.

**<sup>11</sup> But when the multitudes knew *it*, they followed Him; and He received them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who had need of healing. <sup>12</sup> When the day began to wear away, the twelve came and said to Him, "Send the multitude away, that they may go into the surrounding towns and country, and lodge and get provisions; for we are in a deserted place here."**

I wonder sometimes what the disciples must have thought about the way Jesus took care of His ministry.

This begins with Jesus calling the disciples away to a quiet place, away from the crowds, to spend time *just* with them.

But when the crowds re-appeared, He turned from the disciples to deal with the multitude again.

As the end of the day approached & it didn't appear Jesus was going to let up in His ministry to the crowd, the disciples thought they needed to counsel Him on the best course of action.

It was getting late & the trek back to the nearest villages for food & lodging not a short one.

They thought Jesus needed to wrap things up & send the people away.

At first glance, it looks like Jesus' ministry was being dictated by the *present need* rather than by *settled priorities*.

When the disciples return from their mission, He withdraws to a quiet place to refresh them. When the crowd reappears, He turns to them again.

Was Jesus' ministry determined by whatever latest need presented itself?

No, of course not – we know better than that.

As Jesus said, He always & only did the Father's will. [John 8:29 14:10]

The *only need* that drove His schedule was the need to obey the Father.

So while it may *appear* that Jesus was only dealing with the latest need to present itself, in fact, what we see in Him is prompt obedience in doing that which the Father set before Him.

---

Here's what we can learn from this:

Do you know what God's will is for your life? Do you know what your priorities are?

What needs you're to meet?

How you're to schedule your time & use the resources God's given you?

We live in a world of virtually infinite need – we cannot meet every one of them.

But we can & should meet those God calls us as individuals to.

The only way we'll know what they are is by staying in tune with Him.

And let's keep in mind that God calls all of us to meet *different* needs.

Our agendas are *not* all the same.

Don't judge others because their calling & path are not the same as yours.

As Paul says in Romans 14, who are we to judge another man's servant?

It is to his master that he stands or falls.

Even so, we must stop judging one another as fellow servants of Christ.

If we would spend the same amount of time in prayer for others as we spend in criticizing them, we'd see much greater advances in the Kingdom of God, & a whole lot more love in the Body of Christ.

---

By recommending that Jesus send the crowds away, really, the disciples are suggesting that He isn't dealing with them properly. You know, if Jesus had followed their counsel, they would have missed out on one of the most remarkable miracles He performed.

And He used *them* to accomplish it!

**13 But He said to them, "You give them something to eat." And they said, "We have no more than five loaves and two fish, unless we go and buy food for all these people." 14 For there were about five thousand men.**

Right up front, Jesus tells them of the miracle to come – for indeed, it will be *they* who'll give the people dinner.

But they reply that all they have is a meager supply of fish & bread, not even enough for themselves. Where are they going to get enough food for all these?

As we've seen in Matthew & Mark, the men were numbered at about 5,000.

Now this may be inclusive of *all* the people, or if the usual method of counting *only adult men* was used, then the total number of people present may have been as much as 10 to 12,000!

Seeing where Luke places this story, I can't help but think that he wants to link it to the previous mission Jesus had sent the disciples

on.

He'd sent them out to preach & heal, & they'd faithfully gone & returned with great reports about the miracles they'd seen.

Now He wants to stretch them a bit further.

He wants them to realize that the authority & power He'd given them earlier was greater than they realized.

In fact, it was enough to meet the needs of thousands at once.

Even more importantly - numbers, amounts don't matter!

So Jesus said – “If the people are hungry & you're genuinely concerned about them, *meet* the need.”

“You've been watching Me meet the needs I've seen all day long.

As my disciples who've been given My authority & power, if you see a need, get to it!”

The mistake the disciples made was that instead of drawing on that authority & power, they immediately looked at their own meager resources & knew they didn't measure up.

They understood the power of God as good for only one need, one person at a time.

And now they saw thousands, a mass, a crowd – and it appeared as just one massive need that was way beyond them.

What they ought to have seen was not a crowd, not one *massive need*, but thousands of individuals, each with a need for food.

Look at what Jesus does . . .

**14 For there were about five thousand men. Then He said to His disciples, “Make them sit down in groups of fifty.” 15 And they did so, and made them all sit down. 16 Then He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke *them*, and gave *them* to the disciples to set before the multitude. 17 So they all ate and were filled, and twelve baskets of the leftover fragments were taken up by them.**

Jesus had the disciples arrange the people in groups of 50 because He wanted to turn the *mass* into smaller groups that would be easier to get to with the food.

When Jesus broke the few loaves & fish & handed it to the disciples, it multiplied.

The disciples then took the food to the groups of people & handed

it out to them.

As they went back & forth from Jesus to the people, the crowd dissolved into individual faces.

They went from being an *indefinable mass of humanity* to specific people the disciples made personal contact with.

Jesus wanted them to *see* – not a crowd – not just some abstract need to be met – but *people* with needs they were personally taking care of through His power, delivered to them.

This was a crucial lesson for the disciples – that God isn't interested in just meeting needs; He wants to meet the people, and does it through their needs.

Ministry is *always* about people!

## **V. Private Disclosures to the Disciples 9:18-36**

### **1. Peter confesses faith in “Christ” 9:18-20**

**18** And it happened, as He was alone praying, that His disciples joined Him, and He asked them, saying, “Who do the crowds say that I am?”

They are coming now to the end of their time in Galilee & Jesus is preparing for the trip South and the trial it will bring.

He's been wildly popular among the common people of Galilee & asks the disciples what's being said about Him.

**19** So they answered and said, “John the Baptist, but some say Elijah; and others say that one of the old prophets has risen again.”

The disciples lay out the latest talk that's been going round about Who they think Jesus is.

The common theme in all the guesses was that He was a prophet on the order of one of the luminaries of old.

**20** He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered and said, “The Christ of God.”

Jesus makes the question more personal, quizzing *them* on Who *they've* come to believe He is.

Peter speaks right up & makes the bold declaration that Jesus is Messiah, the Redeemer-King sent by God.

### **2. The coming cross 9:21-26**

#### **a. vs. 21-22 • Jesus'**



**21 And He strictly warned and commanded them to tell this to no one, 22 saying, “The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.”**

Jesus accepted & affirmed this declaration of Peter's, then quickly moved to clarify what it meant.

For their idea on Who & What the Messiah was were very far from reality.

They understood the Messiah as a Political & Military leader who would bring political liberation to Israel.

His Kingdom would come & be enforced through the power of the sword.

Now, they believed that it would come when the proper *religious preparations* had been made – when the people of God had proven themselves *worthy* of such a Kingdom by repenting of their sin and keeping the law better.

They thought that what Jesus had been doing was just phase one of His ministry as Messiah, to bring the people to the place *religiously*, where the Kingdom could come *politically*.

They fully expected Him to at any time, lay aside His humble appearance, take on His divine glory, mount a great horse, take the sword, & start the military deliverance of Israel.

Jesus made it clear that that was not the route He'd be going.

The religious preparation would take much more than the proclamation the Kingdom of God was near.

It would take more than preaching – it would take action.

Before the political oppression of Israel could be lifted, the spiritual oppression of earth must be lifted.

Sin & death must be defeated – and the battleground was the Cross.

So Jesus told them of the trail to come.

But it was so contrary to what they expected of the Messiah, they chalked up His words to just more of His mysterious ways.

**b. vs. 23-26 • Theirs**

**23 Then He said to *them all*, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. 24 For whoever desires to save his life will**

**lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it.**

As Jesus has told them of the coming cross, He goes on to say that His followers must likewise embrace their own cross.

He is not calling for them to commit suicide, but to *die to self*; to reckon as dead all that which smacks of selfish self-interest & independence from God.

The essence of the Fall in the Garden of Eden was the appeal to define the self as *independent* from God.

But we were created FOR God, that is the very reason & purpose FOR our being.

So the essence of redemption is to eradicate selfish independence and live in total dependence on God.

That's what Jesus calls the disciples to here – a life that is not lived out of the self, but out of Christ.

Remember what the goal of discipleship in Galilee was – To be just like the rabbi.

Jesus makes that even more intimate for His followers.

They won't merely emulate His life – He will come to live in them and through them.

As He has just told them; He will die and rise again.

As they die to their own self life, Christ will then take up residence in them & live through them.

Their lives will in fact BE HIM!

**Galatians 2:20 • I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.**

---

**25 For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost?**

The self-oriented life finds its meaning & value in the world's priorities & accomplishments.

But all these are only temporary. "You can't," *as they say*, "take it with you."

So at best, living a selfish, self-centered life is a *foolish* thing because it trades an eternity of infinite bliss for a fleeting moment of sensual pleasure.

**26 For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the**

**Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels.**

In v. 22, Jesus has just nuked their idea of what He, as Messiah, came to do.

Here He looks to the future, when He *WILL* come as the Conquering King.

Entrance into the Kingdom He will bring depends on *how* a person responds to Him.

Jesus is the Great & Only determiner of man's fate.

**3. The Transfiguration 9:27-36**

**27 But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the kingdom of God."**

The way all of the gospel place this statement of Christ – right before the story of the Transfiguration, means we're to interpret it as being fulfilled *in* the Transfiguration.

**28 Now it came to pass, about eight days after these sayings, that He took Peter, John, and James and went up on the mountain to pray.**

These 3 are the "some" Jesus was referring to in v. 27.

**29 As He prayed, the appearance of His face was altered, and His robe became white and glistening.**

"White & glistening" is a word that means to shine forth like lightening.

In other words, Jesus didn't *reflect* light – He was its *source*.

**30 And behold, two men talked with Him, who were Moses and Elijah, <sup>31</sup> who appeared in glory and spoke of His decease [death, departure] which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. <sup>32</sup> But Peter and those with him were heavy with sleep; and when they were fully awake, they saw His glory and the two men who stood with Him.**

Jesus was praying, it went on for some time – in fact long enough that Peter, James, & John got sleepy & took a nap.

They awoke to find Jesus shining, as Matthew says, like the sun. Standing & conversing with Him were two men who the disciples recognized as representing the Law & the Prophets, Moses & Elijah.

It wasn't that they could tell by their appearance so much as by the

content of their conversation.

**33 Then it happened, as they were parting from Him, *that* Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah”—not knowing what he said.**

Or, not knowing what else to say. Good lesson – when you don’t know what to say – don’t say it!

**34 While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were fearful as they entered the cloud.**

Good reason to be fearful – this was very likely the extension of the glory that radiated from Jesus.

The manifest glory of God is such an awesome thing it simply overwhelms the frailty of fallen humanity.

When the glory of God entered at the dedication of Solomon’s temple, it was so overwhelming it dropped the priest to their faces.

As we’ve seen before, the root of the word “glory” means “weight,” that which presses down because there’s substance.

Really, glory refers to the reality of a thing – and the greater it’s reality, the greater it’s glory.

Most people tend to think of the spiritual realm as something light & airy, ethereal, abstract; the realm of ideas rather than substance and real things.

They think of the realm of nature as far more tangible, more substantial and real.

It’s the exact other way around.

It’s the realm of the Spirit that’s the higher & more substantial reality.

The Spiritual was first, the physical came after, and long after the physical has dissolved, the spiritual realm goes on.

For just a moment, the veil between the spiritual and the natural was pulled aside and Peter, James, and John were allowed to see the reality of the Spiritual and where Jesus figured in it – as THE Glorious One.

**35 And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!” 36 When the voice had ceased,**

**Jesus was found alone. But they kept quiet, and told no one in those days any of the things they had seen.**

Because what they'd encountered found no place in their field of experience to describe.

It was only later, after the Resurrection, that they had some kind of context in which to set the transfiguration.

**W. A "Hard Case" 9:37-42**

**37 Now it happened on the next day, when they had come down from the mountain, that a great multitude met Him. 38 Suddenly a man from the multitude cried out, saying, "Teacher, I implore You, look on my son, for he is my only child. 39 And behold, a spirit seizes him, and he suddenly cries out; it convulses him so that he foams at the mouth; and it departs from him with great difficulty, bruising him.**

This case of demon-possession was dangerous because the demon seemed bent on destroying this boy's life.

The phrase, "It departs from him with great difficulty" in v. 39 doesn't mean that it came & went, although it appeared to the father this was happening.

This was a case of possession where the boy seemed normal most of the time, but all of a sudden, the demon would manifest itself in a terrifying and dangerous way.

Then there would be a final, wrenching display of torment, and the boy would be normal again.

His condition probably looked much like what we'd call severe epilepsy & grand mal seizures.

But in this case, it wasn't merely a brain disorder – it was demonic.

**40 So I implored Your disciples to cast it out, but they could not." 41 Then Jesus answered and said, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you and bear with you? Bring your son here." 42 And as he was still coming, the demon threw him down and convulsed him. Then Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, healed the child, and gave him back to his father.**

Why couldn't the disciples cast it out – after all, they'd had success at this kind of thing before?

They couldn't cast this one out because it held a rank higher than

the previous demons they'd encountered.

As Eph. 6 and Col 2 make clear, there are differing levels of spiritual authority & power with differing rankings of demonic beings.

This one was more stubborn because it held higher rank & the disciples had not yet fully grasped the authority & power that was theirs in Christ.

That's why in Matthew, where this same story is recounted, Jesus said that this kind of demon is only defeated by those who've cultivated their spiritual lives through prayer & fasting. [17:21] These disciplines are the only way for believers to enter in to the full awareness of who they really are in Christ.

And it's only armed with such awareness that they can be truly effective as the followers of Christ.

---

But why does Jesus rebuke them in v. 41? Why such a harsh remark in the face of this sincere & earnest request on the part of this father?

What Luke doesn't tell that Mark does, is that there was a group of scribes standing there who'd just been debating with the disciples. [Mark 9:14-19]

They were using this poor boy's condition as a way to condemn Jesus.

Remember where the scribes & Pharisees said Jesus was getting his power from – from Beelzebub, a prince of the demons.

The reason, they said, the disciples could not cast this demon out was because it was higher than Beelzebub!

And they delighted in the disciples' failure! They actually took comfort from this poor boy's misery because it seemed to provide them with ammo against Jesus.

That is what Jesus is responding to in v. 41 – the hard-hearted unbelief of the scribes & Pharisees.

### ***X. Jesus Predicts His Betrayal 9:43-45***

***43 And they were all amazed at the majesty of God. But while everyone marveled at all the things which Jesus did, He said to His disciples, <sup>44</sup> "Let these words sink down into your ears, for the Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men." <sup>45</sup> But they did not understand this***

**saying, and it was hidden from them so that they did not perceive it; and they were afraid to ask Him about this saying.**

Jesus wanted the disciples to remember that His earlier words about being betrayed & killed were true.

Just because they'd see His glory on the Mount and His power at its base, they mustn't think the cross had been set aside – it was still coming.

And even though He urged them to make sure they heard with understanding, they didn't.

When Luke says, this word “was hidden from them so that they did not perceive it” – don't take that to mean God hid it from them.

He wasn't the agent of their lack of perception.

On the contrary – God, Jesus, had urged them TO understand! The reason they didn't was because refused to accept it at face value.

They believed Jesus was the Messiah, but death did not factor into their ideas about the Messiah – so they conveniently rejected it.

---

There's an important lesson here for us as it relates to how we interpret the scriptures.

Jesus meant the disciples to take His words *literally* & not put an esoteric, spiritualized spin on them.

This is the Word of God – & we ought to take it *literally*, as literally as the text itself allows.

There are some passages which are obviously *meant* to be understood as symbols & visions.

Some of the prophetic passages in which people see signs of things to come are clearly meant to be understood as symbolic, but symbolic of something *real*.

In other words, the *symbol* points to something *literal*.

But those passages are obvious.

The vast majority of Scripture is straight-forward and meant to be understood literally.

If we start spiritualizing the text, then we'll end up making the same mistake the disciples did – we'll mis-understand the plain meaning of the text.

## **Y. Kingdom-Greatness 9:46-48**

In light of what Jesus has been saying to them about His coming death, what comes next had to be quite disheartening for the Lord.

**46 Then a dispute arose among them as to which of them would be greatest.**

The disciples were vying for position, jostling with each other for prominence & favor with Jesus.

You see, they were convinced that Jesus would soon make His move to take His role as the Messiah-King and whoever was closest in His favor would get the plumpest appointment.

So they all argued their case on why they were the one Jesus favored most.

“I’m a better disciple than you are.” “No you’re not.” “Yes, I am!”

“You two knock it off – that’s silly. Besides, everyone knows I’m the disciple Jesus is going to pick as His chief lieutenant.”

“Whose sandal you been sniffen? You don’t have a chance next to me.”

And on & on it went.

**47 And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a little child and set him by Him, <sup>48</sup> and said to them, “Whoever receives this little child in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me. For he who is least among you all will be great.”**

When Jesus became aware of the dispute brewing between them, He brought forward a little child, and made it clear – His Kingdom was not about position & political power, it was about *piety*.

Greatness is found in *service*, not status.

While they were busy arguing about who was greater, they were missing opportunities to *be great* through humble, selfless service.

## **Z. “Us vs. Them” 9:49-50**

**49 Now John answered and said, “Master, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow with us.” <sup>50</sup> But Jesus said to him, “Do not forbid *him*, for he who is not against us is on our side.”**



The disciples told this guy to stop because he wasn't following Jesus the same way they were.

But Jesus told them they were wrong. They ought not prohibit him from serving God the way he was.

Maybe the guy didn't have everything absolutely correct – but what he did have correct ought to use, and that was an understanding of the authority and power of Jesus.

We will meet many people during our lifetime who come from different denominations and groups, but who love Jesus.

We may not agree with them in ever point of doctrine, but they are still our brothers & sisters in Christ.

We may even meet some where MOST of their doctrine is goofy – but when it comes to the central issue of Christ, sin & salvation they're right on.

We must not draw a line around ourselves & say they're on the outside so they aren't saved.

As long as they believe in the Jesus of the Bible – then they're saved.

## **VIII. The Judean Ministry 9:51-24:53**

### ***A. A Trip Through Samaria 9:51-62***

#### **1. A village rejects Him vs. 51-56**

**<sup>51</sup> Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem, <sup>52</sup> and sent messengers before His face. And as they went, they entered a village of the Samaritans, to prepare for Him. <sup>53</sup> But they did not receive Him, because His face was set for the journey to Jerusalem.**

Jesus now begins His journey South, & as He does, He passes through Samaria, a region of Half-Jews who are locked in an on-going battle with the Jews in Jerusalem over where God ought to be worshiped.

Jesus sent some messengers on ahead of the main group of disciples to get some lodgings ready.

But when the Samaritans heard that Jesus would not be staying for more than a night in His trip south, they refused hospitality.

Now – this just wasn't done! Hospitality was something you

showed even a sworn enemy if he came to you and asked for it. This refusal to provide lodgings for Jesus & the disciples was an egregious breach of etiquette and marked this village as ripe for God's judgment.

Remember that one of the reasons why God wiped out Sodom was because of the failure to show hospitality to some angels.

How much more grievous to refuse it to the Lord Himself?

This explains the actions of James & John . . .

**54 And when His disciples James and John saw *this*, they said, "Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did?"**

- On Mt. Carmel.

**55 But He turned and rebuked them, and said, "You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. 56 For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save *them*." And they went to another village.**

Jesus had not come for judgment, but for salvation.

Interesting that while the first village refused Jesus hospitality, another welcomed Him.

And so it ever is. Right now, God's eyes are looking to & fro across the earth to show Himself mighty on behalf of those who will look to Him. [2 Chr 16:9]

---

## **2. Count the Cost vs. 57-62**

Now we get 3 quick responses that Jesus gave to people who came with insincere appeals to following Him.

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

Jesus knew this potential new disciple was only interested in how Jesus could add to his fortunes.

He made it clear that He wasn't in the business of merely making His followers more successful.

He offered a whole ***NEW & different*** life where success meant something very different from the world's ideas.

This is the great error I think the whole seeker-sensitive movement

makes.

By watering down the gospel to make it inoffensive they've presented Christianity as just a means of achieving success.

Add God to your life, and things will go better.

That is NOT the message of Christ! His message is – exchange your life for mine!

WE don't ADD God to our lives, we give ours TO Him.

**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."**

Jesus invited this guy to follow Him, but he begged off by asking for a discipleship deferment.

When he said, "Let me bury my father" he wasn't saying his dad had just died and needed to be interred.

He meant, "Let me *wait* till my old man dies & I've got my inheritance – then I'll come."

Jesus made it clear – when the call to follow Him comes, NOTHING can be allowed to interfere – NOTHING.

**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."**

Ah, what an important caution this is – the danger of the influence of friends.

How many people stall in embracing Christ for fear of what their friends will say?

Jesus tells this man if he's earnest about the things of God, then he can't look back with regret at the world.

The farmer who plowed a field made straight rows by keeping his eye fixed on a landmark in the distance.

If he ever looked back, the furrow would go crooked.

Jesus makes it clear that once we've decided to follow Him, looking back with regret will only bring ruin – just as it did for Lot's wife.