

Luke 9:51-62 ESV

To Rejecters – How Should We Respond? **Being Followers – What Does that Mean?**

Sunday, June 26 at 8:00 & 10:45 + Monday, June 27 at 7 PM

6th Sunday after Pentecost / 5th Sunday after Trinity – 2016

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: We live in this world, but, *as followers of Jesus*, we are outsiders! Today we will focus on ➡ how to respond to others when they reject Jesus and ➡ what it means for us to follow Jesus!

We are in Luke chapter 9 and Jesus is nearing the end of His ministry; as He heads toward Jerusalem, He will attempt to stay in a Samaritan village. Then, *as He continues His journey*, He will encounter various people along the way.

1. **To Rejecters – How Should We Respond?** ⁵¹ **When the days drew near for him to be taken up [to return to heaven], he set his face to go to Jerusalem. [“It was not the last journey which the Lord was here undertaking, but one which would settle His fate, so far as the leaders of the Jews were concerned” (Kretzmann, NT1:320).]** ⁵² **And he sent messengers ahead of him, who went and entered a village of the Samaritans, to make preparations for him [to stay overnight].** ⁵³ **But the people did not receive him, because his face was set toward Jerusalem.** ⁵⁴ **And when his disciples James and John [who became known as the “Sons of Thunder” (Mark 3:17)] saw it, they said, “Lord, do you want us to tell fire to come down from heaven and consume them [as Elijah had done (as recorded in 2 Kings Chapter 1)]?”** ⁵⁵ **But he turned and rebuked them.** ⁵⁶ **And they went on to another village.**

- a. Why did the Samaritans reject Jesus? First, *who were the Samaritans?* They were Jews who had intermarried with Gentiles, “**had fallen away from the Jewish Church, accepted only the Pentateuch [the first five books of the OT] as God's revealed Word, and did not worship at Jerusalem**” (Kretzmann, NT1:320). So, in many ways, they were anti-Jew; therefore, because Jesus’ “**face was set toward Jerusalem,**” thus *because He was headed toward Jerusalem,* they did NOT receive Him! So, *in a sense,* they were racist, even though there is only one true race – *the human race!*
- b. How should we respond to others? First, *how did James and John **want to** respond?* Just like Elijah; in 2 Kings chapter 1, Elijah called fire to come from heaven to consume 50 men – *and it did;* then he also did it a second time; *so that is what James and John had in mind!* But Jesus rebuked them, *thus He sharply scolded them for having such a thought;* “**the spirit of Christ and the New Testament is not bent upon destroying the souls of people, but upon saving them**” (Kretzmann, 320). Then “**they went on to another village.**” So what about **our response** to those who reject Jesus? We should ♦feel sorry for them, ♦pray for them, ♦equip ourselves to share God’s precious truth with them, and ♦seize such opportunities when they arise!

2. **Being Followers – What Does that Mean?** It calls for **self-denial** and **change**; denying what we desire for self and saying, “Yes” to the Lord’s will for our lives!

- a. We must consider the cost: ⁵⁷ **As they were going along the road [to Jerusalem], someone said to [Jesus], “I will follow you wherever you go.”** ⁵⁸ **And Jesus said to him, “[The] foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.”** // So what is more important to **you** – ♦creature comforts or ♦knowing Jesus as Savior and Lord? For many, the cost of following Jesus is too high:
- i. Jesus said to the rich ruler, “Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.’ But when he heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich” (Luke 18:22-23 ESV).
 - ii. “...calling the crowd to him..., [Jesus] said to them, ‘If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel’s will save it’” (Mark 8:34-35 ESV).
 - iii. May we always count **knowing Jesus** as so important that we are always willing to give up **whatever to follow Him!**
- b. We must let go of false teachings: ⁵⁹ **To another [Jesus] said, “Follow me.” But he said, “Lord, let me first go and bury my father.”** ⁶⁰ **And Jesus**

said to him, **“Leave the dead to bury their own dead. But as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.”** // “Leave the dead to bury their own dead,” what does that mean? Long ago some believed **“that the decomposition of the flesh between the first and second burials [a practice by some at that time] atoned for the sins of the dead person.”**¹ So Jesus was saying to the man, **“Let go of those false teachings and proclaim the kingdom.”** *Let us also let go of everything false and follow Jesus!*

- c. **We must have undivided minds:** ⁶¹ **Yet another said, “I will follow you, Lord, but let me first say farewell to those at my home.”** ⁶² **Jesus said to him, “No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.”** // As looking back when plowing is not good, *so looking back to our former lives, prior to following Jesus, is not good either!* As Peter sank when he took his eyes off of Jesus ([Mark 14:29-30](#)), *so it is very dangerous for us to look back or be divided in our allegiance to Jesus!*

Conclusion: Let us pray: Dear Father in heaven, forgive our sins and make us faithful followers of Jesus – willing to pay the price, letting go of everything false, and focusing on Him; also, as we meet people who reject Jesus, help us to be compassionate, pray, and share Your truth; in Jesus’ name...

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¹ Ronald Wayne Mosely, Yeshua (Baltimore: Lederer Books, 1996), 27.