

Daily Discipleship

Sunday, June 26-July 2 (C) - Luke 9:51-62

Stories of Discipleship: *An Apostle's Story*

Focus Question: *What does the commitment to follow Jesus include?*

word of life

“But Jesus said to him, “Let the dead bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.” Luke 9:60 (NRSV)

Read Luke 9:51-62

Jesus is single-minded in his purpose in his limited amount time on his earthly pilgrimage. In Luke 9, Jesus sets his face to Jerusalem. Physically, mentally, and spiritually Jesus prepares for Jerusalem and all that will bring. Today, some might say he was “in the zone” as he walked through villages.

1. *Describe the attitude of Jesus.*
2. *What does it mean “to set your face” towards something?*
3. *What does it mean to be “in the zone”?*

Jesus meets rejection in one of the Samaritan villages. As much as James and John are ready to bring down fire and consume the misguided Samaritans, Jesus shows restraint. It is doubtful if these disciples have had much experience with being rejected for the sake of Jesus. Thus, they might not have had a chance to follow the teachings of Jesus by shaking the dust off their feet when people reject them. Consequently, Jesus rebukes his very own disciples and moves on to another village. Jesus focuses on more important things related to his mission.

4. *What does it feel like to be rejected?*
5. *Does being rejected justify the disciples desire to bring down fire?*
6. *How can Jesus simply move on?*

Jesus asks his disciples to be single-minded as they follow him. In many ways, he desires each disciple to get into “the zone” as each disciple sets his or her mind towards the cross. His followers embrace following him, but are not fully aware of the implications.

Someone offers to follow Jesus wherever he goes. That’s quite a commitment. Jesus warns that faithful discipleship is a wandering, unsettled life as he responds, “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.’” (Luke 9: 57 NRSV)

To another disciple, Jesus extends an invitation to follow him. The prospective disciple’s reply is reasonable. He only wants to bury his dead father. Again, Jesus is single-minded. He expects an immediate response from anyone who hopes or dares to follow him. That immediacy includes even at the time of death.

Another tries to explain how quickly he will be available to follow him, but again Jesus rejects everything except total loyalty. The response is to be immediate and decisive. Jesus does not want lukewarm followers.

These followers will be sent out to adverse circumstances in the name of Jesus. They need to be rooted in God’s word and empowered by God’s Spirit. Jesus is truly preparing them for what lies ahead.

7. *If you were with Jesus, would you be persuaded not to follow Jesus?*

word among us

Ginger was old enough to ride her bike to the neighborhood store. She had always ridden with an adult; but she had gone so many times, she was confident of the way. On the first day of summer vacation, she begged her grandmother to let her go all by herself. Her grandmother consented but stood at the end of the driveway until she was out of sight.

It was difficult for the grandmother to realize her granddaughter was old enough to venture out on her own, but it was time. Within a short time, Ginger came bounding into the house with a big grin on her face. All went well.

1. *Give an example of training someone to take over a responsibility.*
2. *How does it feel to let go and let that person take over?*

Jesus works long and hard with his disciples, molding them into disciples. He lives, eats, walks, and interacts with them, teaching them through his life as well as through parables and direct verbal instruction. When he feels they are ready, he sends them off to teach others.

All along, Jesus is preparing the disciples for the difficult task of being apostles, ones sent in his name to continue his mission. Jesus keeps his expectations of his followers clear. Jesus invests all in his proclamation of the kingdom of God. Thus, Jesus has no house or deep connections which distract him from his mission.

Jesus expects his followers to be faith-filled and single-minded in their devotion. This is especially illustrated in his remarks to the man who wants to bury his father (Luke 9:59-60)

3. *Is it reasonable for the grieving to want to bury their dead? How so?*
4. *What does it mean to “let the dead bury the dead”?*
5. *What is the point of Jesus?*

The next disciple wants to say farewell to his loved ones before following Jesus. Yet, Jesus appears to discourage any allegiance that would distract from following him.

6. *Is Jesus being reasonable in his expectations?*
7. *Do these standards apply for us today?*
8. *How are these expectations to be lived out on a daily basis?*

Again, Jesus is preparing would-be followers for the difficult, challenging life of being an apostle, one sent to proclaim God’s kingdom. Certainly, there are rewards to proclaim the good news of Jesus, but that path may include rejection and persecution. Without a doubt, the story of a disciple is one of commitment.

Prayer

O Jesus, you call us to follow you with full commitment. Fill us with courage and strength to follow you wherever you might send us. Amen

Dig Deeper

Psalm 16

last word

Each day this week,
ponder your commitment
to follow Jesus.



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