

Amazing Grace Begg a Question

by Brian Long

This sermon emphasizes the call for wholehearted commitment to follow Jesus, highlighting the cost of discipleship and the need to prioritize Christ above all else. It challenges believers to surrender convenience, comfort, and relationships for the sake of following Jesus without reserves, retreat, or regrets. The message underscores the importance of embracing inconvenience and inconvenience for the sake of the gospel, echoing the call for undivided loyalty to Christ.

Scripture: Luke 9:23, Luke 9:62, Matthew 10:37, Philippians 3:8, Luke 14:33

Topics: "Wholehearted Commitment", "Cost of Discipleship"

Description

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Transcript

Praise the Lord. Glory be to God. We turn tonight to 2nd Samuel chapter 9, please.

2nd Samuel chapter 9. And I titled this message, it's something the Lord's just been stirring in me. Amazing grace begs a question. Amazing grace begs a question.

And we'll be confronted with that question later on in the message. But we begin reading at 2nd Samuel chapter 9, verse one. And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake? And there was of the house of Saul a servant whose name was Ziba.

And when they had called him unto David, the king said unto him, Art thou Ziba? And he said, Thy servant is he. And the king said, Is there not yet any of the house of Saul that I may show the kindness of God unto him? And Ziba said unto the king, Jonathan hath yet a son which is lame on his feet. And the king said unto him, Where is he? And Ziba said unto the king, Behold, he is in the house of Makar, the son of Amiel in Lodibar.

Then King David sent and fetched him out of the house of Makar, the son of Amiel from Lodibar. Now, when Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, was come unto David, he fell on his face and did reverence. And David said, Mephibosheth.

And he answered, Behold, thy servant. And David said unto him, Fear not, for I will surely show thee kindness for Jonathan, thy father's sake and will restore thee all the land of Saul, thy father. And thou shalt eat bread at my table continually.

And he bowed himself and said, What is thy servant that thou should look upon a dead dog as I am? Then the king called to Ziba, Saul's servant, and said unto him, I've given unto thy master's son all that pertain to Saul and to all his house. Thou, therefore, and all thy sons and thy servants shall till the land for him. And thou shalt bring in the fruits that thy master's sons may have food to eat.

But Mephibosheth, thy master's son, shall eat bread at my table always. Now Ziba had 15 sons and 20 servants. Then said Ziba unto the king, According to all that my lord, the king hath commanded his servant, so shall thy servant do.

As for Mephibosheth, said the king, he shall eat at my table as one of the king's sons. And Mephibosheth had a young son whose name was Micah. And all that dwelt in the house of Ziba were servants unto Mephibosheth.

So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem, for he did eat continually at the king's table and was laying on both his feet. Let's pray. Father, we thank you for your holy and living word.

We thank you for gathering us again tonight. We thank you that you are a God who speaks to your people. You've been speaking to us throughout this entire camp, Lord, and we thank you for your word that's been going for through your servants.

Lord, we pray tonight that you would give us eyes to behold the wonder of your grace and what that means to us, Lord, the response that it demands. I pray, Lord God, that you would would would so fill me tonight with your spirit that we would hear from you, Lord. We would see you and Lord, we we would all respond to your call tonight with unwavering faith and absolute surrender.

Lord, we pray that you would pass not a single person by. Perhaps there's someone here tonight who has never been a recipient yet of your grace. They've never been born again.

They've never seen you, Lord Jesus, through the eyes of faith. I pray that you would reach them tonight. You would save a lost soul, Lord God.

We pray for those who have lost the wonder of your grace to be awakened tonight. Oh, God, we pray for those. Oh, God, who are straddling the fence.

We pray if there's any area of our heart that is divided, that tonight it would be resolved. Lord, do a mighty work in our midst, we pray in Jesus name. Amen.

Amen. So we just read here in the scriptures of a man called Mephibosheth. Mephibosheth was the son of Jonathan, who who was the son of King Saul.

So he was the grandson of King Saul. And the Bible says here that he was lame in both of his feet. What had happened to this man? Well, years previously, previous to this, he the Philistines attacked Israel.

And when they did, they killed King Saul. And they killed all three of King Saul's sons, including Jonathan. Now, when Jonathan's or when Mephibosheth's nurse heard about this, she picked him up.

He was just a little boy at the time. She picked him up and she took off running to protect him. Because in that day, anytime the enemy army would come in and defeat a nation and kill the king, then all the members of that the household of that king were also under a death sentence.

They would kill them all. So the nurse, his nurse picked him up, took off running to protect him, and she accidentally drops him on the ground. And he's injured badly in both feet.

He's crippled for life. Now. David, all of a sudden, remembers we're fast forwarding now 15 to 20 years.

David, all of a sudden, remembers the covenant he made with his best friend Jonathan. And so he asked in verse three, is there not yet any of the house of Saul that I may show the kindness of God to him? This is the king, King David, asking, is there anyone left of the house of Saul that I may show the kindness of God to him? Ziba says to the king, well, Jonathan has yet a son, which is lame on his feet. In other words, yeah, there's there's one left, but that's Mephibosheth, that crippled.

He was blemished. No one blemished was that was blemished, was allowed in the presence of the king. Surely the king wouldn't want him.

And King David says, bring him. That's who I want. Bring him to me.

And they bring him. And when when Mephibosheth comes into the presence of King David, he falls on his face and does reverence. And in verse seven, David says unto him, fear not.

Don't be afraid, for I will surely show you kindness for Jonathan, thy father's sake and will restore thee all the land of Saul, thy father, and thou shall eat bread at my table continually. Mephibosheth bows down and says, what is your servant? Who am I that you would speak to such a dead dog as me? And David reassures him again, you from this moment on are going to eat at my table as one of my sons, one of the king's sons from this day forward. Amazing grace, amazing kindness.

And if you and I would have the eyes to see it, there's so much more here, brothers and sisters, than King David and a crippled man called Mephibosheth. Who is this Mephibosheth? If you look closer. When I look closer, I see the old Brian Long.

When I look closer, I see you before you came to Christ. I see me. Mephibosheth's name.

This is where the story takes on even more meaning. These Hebrew names, Mephibosheth's name means shame, shame. He's living in the land of Lodibar, which means barren wasteland.

He's staying in the house of Makar, whose name means sold. Shame, a man of shame, crippled, unable to get to the king on his own, blemished, living in a barren wasteland, sold. Who does that sound like? It sounds like the old, every single one of us before we met the king, every single one of us were sold as slaves to sin.

We had a death sentence upon us. He had a death sentence upon him. We had a death sentence upon him for the wages of sin is death.

The soul that sins, it shall die. We had a death sentence upon us. We were enemies separated from God.

Enemies because God cannot look upon sin. God must judge sin. We're in a barren wasteland.

Have you forgotten what that was like, brothers and sisters? Maybe some of us have been born again for a while. Maybe it would do us good just for a moment to remember what it's like to be in the barren wasteland of sin. No peace, no fellowship with God consumed.

Who were you back then? I remember who I was in chains of darkness, in chains of sin, in a barren wasteland, being tormented by demonic voices. I was a young man who would at night be tormented by demonic voices, thought I was going crazy, beating the air, consumed with anger, consumed with lust, a sinner sold under sin, a slave to sin. But there is a king who made a covenant with the father who shed his precious blood.

And he said, I've come to seek and to save that which was lost. And just as King David came seeking, searching, is there anyone there? Is there anyone from the house of King Saul I can show the kindness of God to? Oh, there's one, but he's blemished. He's crippled in his feet.

Oh, there's one. Oh, there's one. You, me.

And Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost. And what happened? He found us. And those of us who turned to him in faith and repentance, and we came to him.

He cleans us up. He strips us of all these dirty, filthy clothes of unrighteousness. He cleans us up.

He clothes us in robes of righteousness. He gives us a new name. He takes out the heart of stone and gives us a new heart.

He gives us a whole new identity. And he says, now, from this day forward, you have a place at my table, the king's table, and you will be treated as the king's son, adopted as a son or a daughter of the most high God. Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me.

What did Mephibosheth do to earn the favor of the king? Nothing. What did you and I do to earn the favor of God? Absolutely nothing. What did Mephibosheth do to earn and to deserve such kindness, to deserve such mercy? Absolutely nothing.

What did you and I what could we ever do to deserve the kindness and mercy of almighty God, the creator of the universe, who is holy, holy, holy, so holy that angels have to cover their faces in his presence? What have we done to deserve to come into his holy presence? Absolutely nothing. But he so loved the world that he gave his only son. And those who believe on him pass from death to life, a child of darkness under the slave, a slave to sin, sold under sin, a child of the devil, delivered, brought into the kingdom of life, and into his presence, seated at his table.

We are invited to come in now and have communion with the king of kings. We can call him Father, Abba Father. Amazing grace, amazing grace, amazing grace.

Now, Mephibosheth is eating at that king, at the king's table every day, every evening, treated as a king's son, lavished with love, lavished with kindness. But something's going on now behind the scenes. David's own son, Absalom, turns against his dad.

He has a lust for power. He wants to be king in place of his dad. So he leads a conspiracy, turns all the hearts of the people away from his father, stole the hearts of the people.

And then until he got enough followers that he decided to come against his own dad, even to kill his own dad, to remove him from the throne, that he himself could be king. David hears about it. And we go to Chapter 15 here, Second Samuel, Chapter 15 and verse 13.

There came a messenger to David saying, The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom. They're going after your son now, David. Verse 14, David said unto all his servants that were with him at Jerusalem, Arise and let us flee, for we shall not escape from Absalom.

Make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly and bring evil upon us and smite the city with the edge of the sword. And the king's servants said unto the king, Behold, thy servants are ready to do whatsoever my lord, the king shall appoint. And the king went forth and all his household after him.

So David says, We've got to leave. We're leaving Jerusalem and all those who were loyal to him, all of his household, his servants said to the king, We're going with you. All of them, it says.

But one of them is missing. One of them didn't follow. Everybody follows the king when he says, It's time to go.

Follow me. Let's go. They all leave but one.

And it was not a pleasant place to follow the king. The king would was grieving, mourning over his own son coming at him. We read later in verse 30 that David went up by the ascent of the mount of all of all of it and wept as he went up and he had his head covered and he was barefoot and all the people that was with him covered every man his head and they went up weeping as they went up.

So David went and all of his faithful followers went with him, weeping, mourning, grieving. But there's one of those one of those servants missing. He's not around.

Everybody else is there. He's not there. He doesn't want to go and weep with the king.

Later on, King David has rocks thrown at him. A man named Shimei cursing him, throwing rocks at him. It's it's not easy to follow the king down this path.

Who is missing the whole time? Mephibosheth. Mephibosheth made a choice, even though the king said, it's time to go. Follow me.

Mephibosheth made a choice to stay back behind. And David says, I believe with the broken heart in chapter 16, verse three, King David said, And where is thy master's son? Where is Mephibosheth? And Ziba said unto the king, Behold, he abides at Jerusalem, for he said, Today shall the house of Israel restore me the kingdom of my father. Then said the king to Ziba, Behold, thine are all that pertain unto Mephibosheth.

You know, he's saying, Where's Mephibosheth? And Ziba says, Well, he stayed behind because he figures this is why he stayed behind. He had a divided heart. If Absalom wins, then I'll serve Absalom.

If he doesn't, I'll wait here for King David to come back. He had no loyalty to the king. You see, he had no faithfulness to the king.

He stayed behind. Well, we fast forward and King Absalom is actually killed. David grieves and mourns over this.

He cries, Oh, Absalom, Oh, Absalom, my son, Absalom, were it me instead of you. But Absalom dies. David returns to Jerusalem, back to his throne.

And when he gets back to Jerusalem, here's what I want you to see, brothers and sisters. Amazing grace begs the question. Here is a man, Mephibosheth, who has experienced amazing grace.

But now he's confronted with the ultimate question. Chapter nineteen, verse twenty four. Mephibosheth, the son of Saul, came down to meet the king and had neither dressed his feet nor trimmed his beard nor washed his clothes from the day the king departed until the day he came again in peace.

And it came to pass when he was come to Jerusalem to meet the king, that the king said unto him, Wherefore, when is thou not with me, Mephibosheth? Why didn't you go with me, Mephibosheth? Why didn't you follow me? I showed you kindness. I lavished love upon you. I made you as one of my own sons.

You sat at my table and you ate at my table as one of the king's sons. Why didn't you follow me, Mephibosheth? Amazing grace begs the question, beloved. In light of all that you and I have received, did you follow the king? Did you follow him wholeheartedly? The amazing grace of God demands a response in view of God's mercy.

Did you offer your body as a living sacrifice in view of his great grace? When he said, follow me, did you follow him? Mephibosheth, not only did he not follow him when David came back, the king came back. He didn't even present himself well to him. The Bible says that he he didn't dress his feet.

He didn't trim his beard. He didn't wash his clothes from the day that the king left. The scripture says in revelation of the bride, she made herself ready.

He didn't even make himself ready for the return of the king. Why? Because there was no ounce of love in his heart for the king. Yeah, I've received such grace, but it's all about me.

What can Jesus do for me? What can the king do for me? I'll follow Jesus. There's another gospel being preached, as you know, by the way, and another Jesus. Follow Jesus.

He'll make you happy. Follow Jesus. He'll give you this.

Follow Jesus. He'll do you that. Just come try him out.

You don't try him out. You don't try out the king of kings. You follow him and you worship him because he's worthy, not just what he can do for you, but because he is worthy and there will be a bride.

He will have a bride when he returns. The king returns. There will be a bride who has made herself ready.

He didn't make himself ready. He didn't trim his feet. He didn't follow.

And David says with a broken heart, why didn't you follow me, Mephibosheth? And he answered, verse twenty six, my lord, O king, my servant deceived me for thy servant said I will saddle me and ask that I may ride there on and go to the king because thy servant is lame and he has slandered thy servant. It goes on to make all these excuses. It's my servant's fault.

It's his fault. It's because of this. It's because I'm crippled.

And David says in verse twenty nine, the king said to him, why speakest thou any more of thy matters? I have said thou and Ziba divide the land that which was going to be yours divided. He divided the land because I divide the land because you have a divided heart. Beloved, does Jesus Christ have all of your heart tonight or is it divided? Is it divine? Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God and a pure heart is not only a clean heart, it's an undivided heart.

It's a heart that is completely and wholly his. Can you imagine a bride? A bride who she marries, she marries this man, he becomes her husband. But when the husband says, come on, we're moving, she says, I don't want to follow you there.

I married you for what you could do for me. I married a faithful bride. And in the first five years of our marriage, we moved nine times.

Bless her heart. Nine times. And Martha followed me all nine times.

And I'll never forget a godly man pulled me aside, Colin Peckham. Maybe you've heard of him. Colin Peckham's wife, Mary, was converted in the Hebrides revival under the preaching of Duncan Campbell.

They stayed in my home and Colin Peckham pulled me aside one night and he says, brother, that woman will follow you anywhere. I didn't realize what I had at the moment, really. And I thought, you know, she's followed me nine times.

We moved in five years. That's what a faithful bride, you know why? Because it's not just, the faithful bride follows the bridegroom and follows the king because she loves him. Doesn't matter where he's going.

She just wants to be with him. I remember when my children were little and I was on the ranch and there would be times when I would come home early and and they would meet me at the door. Daddy's home.

And I would say, daddy's home, but daddy still has to do some work. Who wants to go with me? I want to go. And none of them said, okay, where are you going? How long are you going to be there? When are we going to get back? Let me think about it.

Every one of little Kaylee, little Luke, little, all of them. Daddy, I want to go. It doesn't matter where we go as long as I'm with you.

That's what they're saying. Now they get older and they say, who wants to go with dad? Where are you going? How long are we going to be there? So, you know, that, that first love maybe is not there, but it's not like that in a little child. As long as I'm with you, daddy, I want to go.

Amazing grace begs the question. Did you follow him? The love that he lavished upon you. Did you follow him? Didn't matter where he was going to lead you.

Did you go with him? You don't have to know where he's going to lead you. Maybe on the mountain, maybe in a valley, maybe through a storm, maybe through fire, maybe through a place of victory. Doesn't matter as long as I'm with the king.

This amazing grace and the love of God that he lavishes on us should compel, compel us to follow him without reserves, without holding anything back. One time I was a horseback in the mountains and I came over this Ridge and there was this large, this huge herd of elk. I don't think you have elk in Australia.

You have elk big. They're like, think of a big deer, majestic. And they run through the mountains.

And I was watching these elk and I, I rode up on them. And then as I was riding sort of toward them, they were running off. And I heard this bleeding.

What's that? And I rode toward it. And this deep hole, like a crevice, like a washout in the bottom of it was a baby calf elk, just a little baby looking up, bleeding for its mama. And I thought that poor little thing is going to get left.

So I got off my horse and I, I got him out of that deep hole. And then I was trying to drive him away. Go, go, go, go.

You're going to, you're going to get left. And that little elk turned around, just looked at me and turned his head. Cute little thing.

I said, go on, get out of here. The elk were leaving. I get on my horse to ride away.

I think if I ride away, he'll go on. I ride away. I start running away on the horse.

Look behind me and that little elk's following. He's not turning back. That's if he was saying, you rescued me.

I will never leave you. You know, that's what a disciple should be. Jesus, you set me free.

He followed me all the way to the truck and trailer, by the way. That little elk, I put it in the truck. I brought it home.

Never ever would run away. The kids bottle fed it, grew it up. And that little calf elk became Thelma.

Thelma would follow you wherever you went. And the kids loved her. And then we ended up moving from the ranch and I gave her to my aunt and uncle who were running a certain part of a ranch in northeastern Mexico.

And to this day, they have Thelma. Thelma's had, she's had calf after calf after calf. She runs with the wild elk, but they can drive out in the mountains.

And she likes women now, though she doesn't like men. She won't come, she hates men. She won't come around men.

But my aunt can get out of the truck. Matter of fact, I'm really getting off here, but I'll say this real quick. There was a hunter out one day.

He was hunting elk. And he was, he was wanting to come up on these elk with his binoculars and his gun. And this cow elk comes out of nowhere.

And she's want, she's, he calls for help. He said, this elk was going to kill me. What is this? My aunt says, oh, that's Thelma.

She hates men. But my aunt can call Thelma. And here she comes running, loyal, faithful.

You wonder if she's never forgotten or lost the wonder of being rescued from the pit. Have you lost the wonder, beloved, of the amazing grace of God? Love lifted you from a pit of sin and death that you would never get out of on your own. And one day would cave in at the bottom and you would end up in an everlasting hell.

Have you lost the wonder of that? Jesus Christ saved my soul. He died for my sins. He forgave me.

He lifted me up out of a horrible pit. Set my feet on a rock, put a new song in my heart, David said, never lose the wonder of amazing grace. And what should it do? It should compel us to follow him wherever he leads.

Now we move to the New Testament, Luke chapter nine, Luke chapter nine. In light and in view of such grace and such mercy, we come to Luke chapter nine. And Jesus says to his disciples and really to all who were gathered around him, and there was a great multitude gathered around him.

He says in verse twenty two, the son of man must suffer many things and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes and be slain and be raised the third day. And he said to them all, if any man come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me, follow me in the context of what the son of man must suffer many things. Will you follow me? The son of man must suffer many things and be rejected of the elders and chief priests.

Will you still follow me and be slain and be raised the third day? Will you follow me? If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me and and love or hearts that have not lost the wonder of the amazing grace of God that saved them from sin and death says, yes, Lord. Yes, Lord, I will follow you wherever you lead. I will follow you.

When I was just a young Christian, I never was a writer, but out of the blue one night I sat down and wrote a poem that because God had so stirred my heart about this very thing, his very own disciple, Christ invited me to be he'd lead me in a way I could not clearly see. The invitation was spoken so very lovingly as he said, my child, follow me. Me.

But, Lord, where are we going and how can how can I know the way? He said, my child, the cross is the way and the day is today for it's in dying that you live and in losing that you gain. Follow me, my child, and you will never be the same to be my disciple. You must follow me.

Now look into my face, my child. Tell me, which way will it be? Only the way of the cross, my Lord. That's the only way for me.

For when I look into your face, it's love I truly see. Only give me grace to keep my eyes ever fixed on me. That's his invitation.

That's his call. And we are all beloved going to stand one day, the scripture says, at the judgment seat of Christ. We must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

And I wonder if we will not hear this question that amazing grace begs. You have been shown such grace. Why didn't you follow me? Why didn't you follow me wholeheartedly? No reserves.

No, nothing holding back. Did you follow me? Well, there was a man here in Luke chapter nine that said to Jesus, I'll follow you. Verse 30, verse 57, it came to pass that as they went in the way, a certain man said

unto him, Lord, I'll follow you wherever you go.

But the Lord is not just impressed with lip service, he doesn't want lip service. He said that, didn't he, in Matthew 15, you hypocrites, well, did Isaiah prophesy of you when he says of this people, you draw near to me with your mouth, you honor me with your lips, but your heart is far from me. It's your heart that God wants.

It's your heart that Jesus Christ, the king, wants all of your heart. He says, I'll follow you wherever you go. And what would be our answer? That's wonderful.

Someone up here said today, I'll follow Jesus wherever he goes. We'd say, praise the Lord. Amen.

That's wonderful, brother. But you need you and I need to hear what the Lord says before we speak so quickly. I will follow you wherever you go.

And Jesus said unto him, foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests. But the son of man hath not where to lay his head. Now, will you follow me? Now, will you follow me? Foxes have holes and the birds have nests, but the son of man hath no place to lay his head.

When Jesus grew up, he had a home to stay in. But when he entered into his public ministry, many, many, many nights, he never had a pillow to lay his head upon. And he chose that path.

And for those of us who say, Lord, I will follow you, he says, foxes have holes, birds have nests, even when the fox had a den to cuddle up in and the bird is nestling down in its nest. The son of man had no place to lay his head. In other words, you are called you are called not to be comfortable and you will be called not always for convenience, but you're called to a cross.

Listen, it's Christ or convenience, which is your choice. You say, can it be both? And no, it has to be either or Christ or convenience, Christ or convenience. Why? Why do I say it can't be both? It has to be either or because there is no convenience in a cross.

There's nothing about a cross that's convenient, brothers and sisters. But you and I have to remember the wonder of the amazing grace and the king who says sit down at my table, commune with me. And even if we don't have a pillow to lay our head down tonight, I will be with you.

Now, will you follow me? I was having a pity party one time not very long ago about some rejection that I had felt. And the Lord absolutely broke my heart. He reminded me of John chapter seven.

I don't know if you've seen this before. Perhaps you have, but the Lord just really broke my heart with these two verses. John chapter seven, verse fifty three.

It says, and every man went unto his own house. Next verse, Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives. You hear that, brothers and sisters, it's in the evening, it's at night.

Every man goes to his own house. They have a pillow for their head. They have a bed to lay down in.

Every man went to his own house. But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. He was despised and rejected, a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief, and we hid, as it were, our faces from him.

If you are going to follow Jesus, it can at times be a very lonely path. You will experience rejection. You will not be accepted everywhere.

In fact, there will be places you used to be accepted that now you are rejected. You will be betrayed. You will be placed in very uncomfortable, inconvenient places and circumstances.

You will, if you follow Jesus. And the question is, is he worth it all? Is he worthy? Is he worthy? I saw that he came to his own, the scripture says, and his own received him not. He was rejected even by his own.

And even in here, in Luke chapter nine, even here, the Samaritans reject him. I mean, everybody is rejecting Jesus, and this is the king of kings. This is the son of God, the king of glory.

And even here, the Samaritans even rejected because he was set in his face like Flint to go to Jerusalem and even they would not would not receive him. Foxes have holes, the birds have nests, but the son of man has not where to lay his head. And then we have another man in verse fifty nine where Jesus says to another, follow me.

So the first man comes voluntarily. Lord, I'll follow you wherever you go. This one said Jesus looks at him and says, follow me, but he says, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.

Jesus said unto him, let the dead bury their dead, but go down and preach the kingdom of God. That sounds pretty hard, doesn't it? What is he saying? Let the spiritually dead bury the physically dead, but you go and preach the gospel. But he says, suffer me to go bury my father.

Most likely, this man's father hadn't even died yet. What he's saying, Lord, I will follow you, but but let me go home and wait for a more convenient time after my father dies and we have the funeral, then I'll follow you. And the Lord says, let the dead bury their dead.

You go and preach the gospel. Is it wrong to have a nice funeral for your father? Not at all. But there are some things that are more important than others.

And that's what he's saying. It's Jesus first. It's Jesus only before all.

It's Jesus first and everything else has to be last. Let the dead bury their dead. But you go and preach the gospel.

Then we come to the next verse. Another says also, Lord, I will follow you, but let me first go and bid him farewell. Which are at home at my house, in other words, I'll follow you, Lord, but first let me go and say goodbye to everybody.

Having a proper funeral for your loved one is not wrong. Going back to say goodbye to those at home don't seem to be all that wrong, but they become very, very, very wrong when they come first before the Lord. And that's what he's saying.

First, Lord, let me do this. That indicates where his heart is. You will never follow Jesus as long as there is a but first.

The Lord says, follow me and you say, I will. But first, as soon as we say, but he's no longer Lord of our lives, just like the two words no Lord can ever come together. If you say no, Lord, if you say no, then he can't be Lord.

If you say, Lord, then you can't say no. It's yes, Lord. Yes, Lord, wherever you lead, I'll follow, though none go with me.

I will follow. I have decided to follow Jesus. That's the call.

I love what A.W. Tozer says, Jesus Christ is first and everything else is last. The Lord Jesus Christ is first and for him, I surrender everything to him. I give all to Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior.

He can command me. He's the head of my wife. He's the head of my children.

He's the head of my ambitions. He is first and everything else is last. Everything else, anything else is not New Testament Christianity, brother and sister.

Anything else is a compromise and leaves people half saved, confused, frustrated, bewildered and in the dark. Jesus Christ is first. When we put loyalty to relatives, family, friends, boyfriend, girlfriend, job, ministry, doesn't matter what it is.

If we put anything before the Lord, we are not following him as a disciple. In fact, Jesus used even stronger words, unless you hate father, mother, wife, children, what is he saying? He compares scripture with scripture. And, you know, we're called to love our wife, love our family.

He's saying, if that, if your love for me doesn't so supersede all other loves, to where in comparison, it looks like, hey, you cannot be my disciple. That's his word. This is the real Jesus, brothers and sisters.

That's the real gospel. Will you follow him? Will you follow him with all of your heart where he is first and everything else is last? And then he says, Jesus said unto him, no man, having put his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God. Once you set your face and your heart to follow the king.

Not only must we never go back, we must never even look back. They say of Augustine, who was at one before he came to Christ, was an absolute womanizer. They said after he came to Christ and he was following the Lord, he was walking down the street one day and one of the mistresses was in the back saying, Augustine, Augustine.

He kept walking. Augustine, it's me. And he says, yes, never turn looking back.

He says, yes, but it's no longer me. We are not who we used to be. We are new creations in Christ Jesus.

There will be much to want to pull you back. When you set your heart to follow Jesus, there will be old loves to call you back. Come, just look back.

Don't even have to come back yet. Just look back. Relationships that had to be severed, try to call you back.

Old besetting sins saying you can't let me go. You can't let me go. Look, look back.

No man having said put his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God. I have decided to follow Jesus. Jesus Christ calls for commitment.

He calls for absolute, wholehearted surrender. There was a young man named William Borden. He was he was an heir of the wealthy Borden family.

He was a millionaire. For his senior trip after he graduated from high school, his parents bought him a trip so he could go around the world. What they didn't know, because this young man was born again on this trip around the world.

God so broke his heart for lost humanity. And he he wanted to be a missionary and he surrendered to the Lord to be a missionary. And everybody told him he was crazy.

Look at what you're throwing away. And those around him, though, who knew him said that were believers said he gave not only all his money, he gave his life and he did it with joy as if there were no such thing as sacrifice. What is sacrifice, beloved? When you look at the cross, what is too much to let go of for Jesus to follow the one who gave his life for you? Is there anything worth losing fellowship with him? Nothing, it's all rubbish, as you would say, it's all trash, everything compared to knowing him, Paul says, compared to knowing Jesus, he said, I suffered the loss of all things for the sake of knowing him.

That's the bride that says, I forsake all others to follow you. You have all my heart, all my soul, every fiber of my being. I follow you.

William Borden did become a missionary and but he only at 25 years of age after he poured out his his life for the gospel, out of love for Jesus and gratitude for what Christ had done for him. Twenty five years old, he gets spinal meningitis and he dies and he goes home to be with the Lord. They found his Bible, they opened his Bible, they found a couple of things in it.

One of it was one statement he had written in the back was say yes to Jesus and no to self every single time. Under that were three words. No reserves.

No retreat. No regrets. No reserves, no retreat, no regrets.

The commitment that the Lord is calling for tonight, don't do it quickly. Do it in light and in view of God's mercy and grace. But once you have beheld the wonder of his grace and you know the cost, the cost of forsaking all to follow him wherever he leads, wherever he leads, he's calling for that commitment tonight, that surrender, no reserves, no plan B. And there's not going to be any retreat when they go and get stuff, no retreat.

And in the end, at the judgment seat of Christ, there will be no regrets. Hallelujah. I leave you with this.

Having made that commitment, don't ever think you can do it in and of your own strength. But there is that I tell you this, there is an ocean of grace. And God is more willing to empower you with his spirit than you are even willing to receive.

There is an ocean of grace. There is the power of almighty God available to all who are willing to absolutely surrender to him and say, Lord, wherever you lead, I will follow. Though none go with me, I will follow.

And I'll tell you this, some of you are going to go down a lonely path. Will you always remember this? Though none go with you, Jesus will. Though none go with you, Jesus will never forsake you.

There may be no one else around and you may think this is a lonely path. You remember, Jesus will. He'll never leave you.

He'll never forsake you. I've been in some times in my life very lonely. I remember saying one time, even in a large crowd, Lord, I feel so lonely.

And the Lord so comfortably saying, but I'm with you. I'm with you. I'll never leave you.

I'll never forsake you. Though none go with me, he will cross before me, the world behind me. Make that resolve tonight, beloved.

If you've not made that God calls for commitment, Christ calls for commitment. He calls for a cross. He calls you to say goodbye to convenience.

Goodbye to comfort. You'll have some, some physical comfort. You know, we have a bed to lay in tonight.

Praise God. We have some hot water to take a shower in. Praise the Lord.

But there will be other times in other areas where it's very inconvenient, where the Lord awakens you in the middle of the night, like our sister said, and your body says, I want to sleep. And the Holy Spirit says, it's time to pray. It's time.

Will you be inconvenienced? Will you embrace inconvenience when he says it's time to go and talk to that that person? I don't know if I shared this with you last time or not. I was one time in a on a Saturday preparing for Sunday and oftentimes I would go out in the country. This is when I was pastoring and it was a hot day and I was walking out in the middle of nowhere and I couldn't find any good shade.

So I walked toward the highway and there was this large culvert. So I crawled in that culvert where it was cool and I was preparing for Sunday and I was so into this message that I was preparing. And the Lord said to me in a still, small voice, he compelled me, go, go see Kyle.

I knew exactly who Kyle was. I hadn't seen Kyle in probably two years, but I knew right where he lived. He lived in a small town.

He lived right next to the bar. Go see Kyle. It was two o'clock in the afternoon and I thought, OK, I will.

Tomorrow after church, I'll go. And the Lord stirs in my spirit, go see Kyle. Inconvenient, I'm preparing a sermon for the Lord, right? I'm going to preach tomorrow.

Go. Not only the inconvenience of stopping, but the inconvenience of going and maybe being embarrassed, maybe being made a fool of because this man was an absolute blasphemer. He wanted nothing to do with the Lord.

I had witnessed to this man before some two years ago and I shut my Bible and I went and I'm not when I got to his house, I knocked on the door. Nobody came to the door. I thought, how did I miss that? I thought for sure I heard the Lord knocked again.

Nobody comes to the door. I go to the car, get in my car and the Lord says, keep knocking. I get out of the car, go back to the door and knock again.

Kyle opens the door. He looks like absolute despair. I said, hi, Kyle, I haven't seen you in a long time.

We begin to talk. I said, I'll just tell you straight up. I was praying.

The Lord said, go now. He said, come in. He sat down.

There was a revolver sitting next to his chair, next to his chair on a little stool. He was at the point of committing suicide and absolute despair. And Kyle, after hearing the gospel of Jesus Christ, made a decision right there to turn to him.

And the Lord, the Lord saved him. The Lord rescued him. The Lord pulled him up out of that pit.

Are you willing to be inconvenienced if it if it breaks your schedule, if it disrupts your schedule? And the Lord says, follow me, follow me. Will you go? He calls for commitment. Father in heaven, we ask you, Lord, in the mighty, mighty name of Jesus.

To let us hear your word clearly tonight. Lord, let us not play games here. This is very serious.

When you say follow me, I pray that we would count the cost. I pray that we would do it in light of your mercy and your awesome wonder of your grace. And I pray tonight, Lord, that wholehearted disciples would come to you.

Just you, Jesus, just having an encounter with you, no one else. And they will make this resolve. Lord, I will follow you by your grace.

I will follow you with all of my heart. This is our prayer tonight in Jesus name. Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/hPW4E11xxM4.mp4>

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