

(Luke) 29 - the Judean Ministry

by Ed Miller

The Judean ministry is a new section in the Gospel of Luke that emphasizes the cross and discipleship, with a focus on Jesus' resolute determination to go to Jerusalem and the importance of preparation and itinerary.

Duration: 48:02

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Luke 9:51 - 10:24, Ephesians 4:14-16

Topics: "Ministry"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher expresses his initial hesitation in teaching the mysterious and challenging aspects of the scriptures. He asks for prayers for understanding and references Ephesians 4, which encourages believers to arise from the dead and have Christ dawn on them. The preacher then introduces the first two stories in Luke chapter 9, where Jesus is rejected by a Samaritan village and encounters three individuals who express their desire to follow him. Jesus challenges their commitment to following the law and teaches them about the true nature of discipleship.

Transcript

Let me just share a little bit of where we've been and where we're heading. We're, of course, looking at the Lord through this wonderful Gospel of Luke. And this morning we actually come to a new division in the book, a new section in the Gospel of Luke.

All through the book, God has presented himself as the Son of all mankind. We've been using Luke 19.10 as a key word. Luke 19.10 says, For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

For 28 lessons now, we have been looking at what we call the Galilean ministry of our Lord Jesus. That's pretty much his entire ministry, the Galilean ministry. That ministry is marked by action, by doing.

It's a great miracle section. And he calms storms and heals diseases and ministers to oppressed people and heals the sick and casts out demons and raises the dead and all that kind of thing. But now, beginning at chapter 9, verse 51, this is the new section, we come to what we call the Judean ministry of Christ.

In a broad way, this covers about a year and a half, but Luke's emphasis on this ministry only covers about the last six months. So we're jumping now and we're six months before the cross when we begin this section. The one main difference between the Galilean ministry and the Judean ministry is that the Galilean ministry emphasized what he did, his action.

So we call him the friend of all mankind. Now we're going to move to what he says, what he teaches. And he lays out the great principles of the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven.

And as he was in the first nine chapters, the teacher, the friend of all mankind, will now begin to behold him as the teacher of all mankind. This section will take us all the way from chapter 9, verse 51 through chapter 19 and verse 57. So you see, it's a great section of the entire gospel of Luke.

Rather, 1927. Now before we actually begin this new section, let me give you a couple of observations about the Judean ministry as a whole. First one I've already mentioned.

Great emphasis on teaching. In fact, in this section we'll look at 17 miracles, rather, 17 parables that our Lord taught. And many of those parables you won't find in Matthew or Mark or John.

Only Luke deals with these special parables. So we'll see a lot of teaching. The second observation, look at verse 51, please.

Chapter 9, verse 51. He resolutely set his face to go to Jerusalem. This is now a change.

From this point on, Jesus is fixed toward Jerusalem. He's moving toward Jerusalem. Now when I say that, obviously Jerusalem is a place and we register geography.

When the Bible says he set his face toward Jerusalem, don't think primarily geography. It's true, he's going to Jerusalem, but if you just think geography, you're going to get confused because he doesn't go in a straight line. He's all over the lot.

But though his heart is fixed to go to Jerusalem, and over and over again Luke calls attention to this, the fact is he arrives in Jerusalem three times. And then he leaves and he comes back and he leaves, and he's north, he's south, he's all over the place. But this expression, he set himself to go to Jerusalem, is talking about his resolute determination to go to the cross.

That's the point. He fixed himself, he's now heading to accomplish his work, to accomplish his mission. And this particular Judean ministry is all about now Christ is focused, and his disciples, quite honestly, are scratching their heads.

They don't understand all of this determination. He keeps saying, we've got to go, my hour is coming, I've got a baptism to be baptized with, I'm moved until it's fulfilled. And they don't understand quite his desire.

In fact, he calls it in the Greek, there's three modifiers in a row. He says, I have a desire, desire, desire to go to Jerusalem. And I'm moved, and I'm straightened, I'm caught until it be fulfilled.

So now, from this point on, we'll see so much about the cross. I think that, I love that 951, just in terms of my own life, because it's such a beautiful picture to see Jesus so set, so resolute, so determined to go to Jerusalem. It's not like sometimes we have an unpleasant thing before us, and we passively resign to do it.

I don't really want to do it, but because of you, I'll do it. That wasn't his attitude at all. He wasn't saying, well, I really don't want to go through with this, but I love you, so I will.

He's saying, I want to go through with this. I have a determination, a resolution to go through with it, and I'm going to do it. So everything from this point on is going to be talking about the cross.

And you see, Jesus was the friend of all mankind, but he didn't primarily come to feed the hungry. And he didn't primarily come to heal the sick, and to cast out demons, and to raise the dead. He came to die.

He came to go to the cross. That was his mission. He came to save man.

The Son of Man has come to seek and to save. And so now he's going to get into that ministry. So that's the second observation, this new move toward Jerusalem.

The third observation, for a long time I missed this. I thought, well, this section begins. If you read 51 to 56, it begins with rejection.

And of course it ends with rejection, because it's the cross. And I said, well, this Judean ministry begins with rejection, the rejection of the Samaritans, and it ends with rejection. The rejection by the world, and putting him on a cross.

But I missed 951. Take a look at 951. It says, it came about when the days were approaching for his ascension.

What's that all about? What ascension? What's it talking about? You see, this section does not begin with the note of rejection. It begins with the note of victory. It goes beyond the cross.

It goes beyond the resurrection. And it says, as the days were approaching for his ascension, he set himself to go to the cross. And the point is, I think, this wasn't gloomy for Jesus.

He said, I've got to go to the cross, but that's not gloomy. You have the same idea in Hebrews. It says, for the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross.

He always looked beyond the suffering and beyond the cross. Actually, I don't know if you're familiar with this, but the cross, God uses many pictures. And one of the pictures is childbirth.

And he pictures the cross as a woman in labor. And he said on the cross he was having a baby. And he pictures the sufferings of the cross.

And then it says he saw the travail of his soul, the labor pain. And out of the cross, the church was born. And we're his little baby.

And so, just like a woman looks beyond the pain to the child, he said that he was looking now to the ascension. And he's looking to the glorification and to the crown and to the glory and actually to the baby, to us. And it was worth it all.

Now, in that sense, the Judean ministry doesn't begin with rejection. It begins with victory. So this section, there's a great emphasis on teaching.

There's a great emphasis on the cross. But there's also this positive side. It's victory and it's glory and it's resurrection and so on.

But then there's one more note. Jesus is not only heading to the cross in this section. He's training his disciples to head to the cross.

It's a great section on discipleship. Now, how are they to respond in the light of rejection? See, he's not only going to the cross. He's saying the path of the king is the path of the king's subjects.

The path of the king is the path of the king's servants. And if you follow me, says Jesus, there's a high chance you're also going to be rejected. And so he's preparing them for this.

Some of the strongest statements in all the Bible on discipleship are right here in Luke. As he unfolds these final six months and tries to get into the hearts and the brains of these disciples. They're stumbling along, you know, like we do.

And they just don't seem to understand. You know, we call this section the teacher of all mankind. He didn't only teach through parables.

He taught through examples. And he's his own light. He said, watch me.

I am going to the cross. Watch how I respond to rejection. And so he was teaching them by example as well as by all of the parables.

There's a great confusion, and we'll pick it up right away when I begin looking at the text. There's a great confusion and backwardness in his disciples as far as their understanding. What's all this talk? Rejection.

Suffering. They don't want to hear it. You know, sometimes we say in the Old Testament they look forward to the cross and we look back.

They did not look forward to the cross. They tried to prevent it. That's why Peter took his sword out and was like, you're not going to the cross.

I'll stop the cross. They were not looking forward to it. Now they looked up in simple faith to a Savior who said, offer the animals.

The animal sacrifices look forward to the cross. But the people didn't. The people looked up, not forward.

And so they didn't understand this. And they're sort of following, at first they're walking with Jesus. But as he starts this crazy talk about the cross, they're about one step behind.

And then they're about five steps behind. And they're scratching their heads. And you see the disciples following almost in an uncomprehending terror.

As he keeps spilling out, unless you hate your father and your mother and your family, you can't be my disciple. If you put your hand to the plow and you turn back, you're not worthy of me. If you don't confess me, I'll deny you before the angels.

Whoa, what is this all about? This great friend of all mankind, this healer of the blind and the helper of the oppressed, all of a sudden he starts saying, bless the dead, bury the dead. And they go, I'm not sure. I was sharing this with my 20-year-old son.

We studied together. We were studying yesterday. And he said, dad, to be honest with you, if I lived back then, I wouldn't hang out with him.

Seemingly bizarre statements that our Lord was saying. And how radical they were. And how they got down into the soul and the spirit.

And he did not chop weeds off at the surface. He just went down to the spring, the main spring of everything. And he began to expose.

And they did not understand this. And they couldn't understand his unconquerable resolve to go to the cross and withdraw. And then he kept saying, and you will too.

Oh, great. I'm not sure I signed up for this when we volunteered. Is this all that's involved? So this section is going to tell you a lot about his cross, but a lot about yours too.

A lot about his cross, but a lot about theirs. And so as we go through this section, I'm going to call attention to a lot of their bewilderment and how God began. He's got, as far as Luke's record, he's got six months to take them from what we're going to look at to the place where they're going to be willing to be thrown to the lions, to be burned at the stake, and to take a rugged and an uncompromising stand for their savior.

How does he do it? Because I'm suggesting the way he did it here is the way he does it in our lives. So as we go through this Judean ministry, as we focus with victory in our mind, but we focus on the cross and discipleship and some of these great things he laid down. And most of the parables have to do with discipleship.

He's going to teach, he's going to instruct, he's going to train, he's going to inculturate these disciples so that they're not just saying, oh I follow Jesus. Do you really? What is involved? What does it mean? They need to hear this and learn it. And so do we.

In the introduction, there's really four stories, and this morning we don't have time to do four stories. Let me just set up the introduction for you, give you the references, and then we'll look at the first two stories. The first is in chapter 9, verse 51 through 56.

Jesus is rejected by a little village of the Samaritans. And then in verse 57 to 62, three fellows come to Jesus. We don't know their names, strangers.

And they all have the same thing in common. Two were volunteers and one Jesus singled out. And it all has to do with following the law.

One says, I'll follow you. Jesus went up to them and said, you follow me. And the third one said, I'll follow you.

And Jesus said, will you really? Here's what's involved. Will you really? Did you know this? Are you sure you want to follow? And he lays it all out and he explains it. That's the second story.

And then the third story, we have chapter 10, the first 20 verses, where he sends out the 70 disciples, two by two, to prepare the way for him. And then finally, in verses 21 to 24 of chapter 10, we have the only record in the whole gospel, in all the Bible, where it says Jesus rejoiced greatly in the Holy Spirit. And we need to see what he rejoiced about.

It's the only time he's ever rejoiced greatly in the Holy Spirit. What did he rejoice about? And that sets the stage, then, if you get those four stories, that sets the stage for understanding his whole duty in ministry. And I'm suggesting these are sort of introductory things, which lay out the whole picture.

Then he comes back, picks up the details. So I hope we can not get lost looking at that. Follow along, please, as we read this first story, the rejection by the Samaritans.

Verse 51 of 9, It came about when the days were approaching for his ascension, that he resolutely set his face to go to Jerusalem. And he sent messengers on ahead of him, and they went and entered a village of

the Samaritans to make arrangements for him. And they did not receive him, because he was journeying with his face toward Jerusalem.

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? He turned and rebuked them and said, You do not know what kind of spirit you are of. For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And he went on to another village.

Let me make a couple of observations just about this story, and then we'll look at the heart of it. The first is that we're surprised to see this in Luke. I say that because, you know, Luke was a Gentile himself.

He wasn't a Jew. And he really had some nice things to say about the Samaritans. And when you read about the parable of the good Samaritan, you've got to go to Luke.

Luke tells you about the good Samaritans. And when you read about the ten lepers, and one leper was a Samaritan, and he came back and worshipped the Lord, Luke tells you about that. Luke, he said good things about Samaritans.

And so we're surprised at this first thing, that Jesus begins, he goes to Samaritans, and they reject him. That's just an observation. When you come to something that is surprising like that, my suggestion is stick with it, because there's probably some nugget of truth in that.

I love to be surprised. I didn't expect him to say that. Meditate on that, and usually there's some wonderful thing there.

A second observation is that some have tied in this story with Mark 3, 19. In Mark 3, our Lord Jesus was appointing the twelve disciples. And don't forget, now that's an important passage, because it tells you why he called the twelve.

And it was not to do a work for him. It says he appointed the twelve that they might be with him. Fellowship is why he called the twelve, not service, not ministry.

But anyway, when he called the twelve, there were two, James and John, that he gave a special name to. Do you remember this word? Boanerges. And he called them Boanerges, which means sons of thunder.

James and John were isolated, and God said, and I choose you, and I choose you, and you're going to be a rock, and you're going to be this. And he looked at those two brothers, and he said, and you sons of thunder. I call you two.

Now, why did he call them sons of thunder? Well, some think it's from this, because they're making preparation, setting up housing and food, and Jesus is coming to this village, and the Samaritans say, we don't want him. And James and John comes to Jesus and says, they don't want you there. Shall we call down lightning from heaven? He says, sons of thunder.

Shall we wipe them out? Is this the reason? And so some say that's why they were called sons of thunder, because they wanted to call down fire from heaven and incinerate this little village of Samaritans. Hold that a moment, we'll get back to sons of thunder. A third observation, and very interesting, I think, is verse 52.

He sent messengers ahead of him to make arrangements for him. It was like an advanced team. And he sent out these disciples to prepare the way.

Now, you remember when we studied John the baptizer, I called attention to his ministry in that every true ministry is based on John the baptizer. In other words, it's a preparation ministry, a forerunner. If Christ doesn't come after, there's no ministry.

We baptize with water, he comes after and baptizes with the Holy Spirit. I'm glad that all of you come to the Bible study. But if you've just come to hear me, I'm afraid you've wasted your time.

If the Lord himself doesn't speak to you after, that's what I believe. I call it preparation, a voice crying in the wilderness. Maybe I can say something to stimulate your heart and thoughts.

But then, it's you and the Lord. That's where it comes about. That's the real work.

And so, he sends this advanced team. Now glance to chapter 10, please, and verse 1. It says, After this, the Lord appointed seventy others, sent them to and to ahead of him to every city and place where he himself was going. When he sent out the twelve, he didn't do that.

When he sent out the twelve, they were on their own for a year. He didn't follow after. He didn't say, Go to Middletown and then I'll come.

Go to Fort Smith and then I'll come. Go to Newport and then I'll come. He just sent them out.

They went wherever they wanted to go in all the cities and villages. And he didn't follow. But now he's changing things.

And he's organized. And he says, It's all laid out. You go here, you go here.

That's my itinerary. And then I'm going to come after you. I heard Billy Graham quote chapter 10, verse 1 one time and said, That's why I send out advanced teams.

Because he's basing it on this. And a year in advance before Billy Graham comes any place, the team is out. And they're talking to churches and pastors and priests and getting things ready.

And then later Billy Graham comes. And it's all based on this. All right, that's pretty much a few observations.

But let's get to the heart of the story. Why does God begin the Judean ministry with this rejection by this Samaritan village? As the Lord Jesus set his heart resolutely to go to the cross. Notice verse 55.

You see the disciples, James and John So we call down fire. Jesus said, You don't know what spirit. That attitude.

That disposition. You see, I don't think God is telling us about this so that we'll look at the Samaritans. And say, Oh, those awful Samaritans.

They're rejecting Jesus. No, he's not calling attention to the Samaritans. He's calling attention to the sons of Thomas.

And he's saying, There needs to be a change in your attitude. Yes, they're rejecting me. But look at your attitude.

You want them judged. And so we're going to, as we go through this, we're going to see God dealing with his own disciples. Changing their spirit.

And changing their disposition. Jesus had called them and he was going to call them to carry on his own ministry. Now again, this is shocking because when you go through the record you say, John, the apostle whom Jesus loved.

You want to learn about love? Study John. John is the apostle of love. He says more about love than anybody in the whole New Testament.

We say John was this sort of, he was the mild one. He's not like Peter. Peter was impulsive.

John had that sweet disposition. John was the natural one. He had a good temperament.

He wrote about brotherly love. John was a son of thunder. He was not the disciple of love until after God changed that son of thunder.

You want to know John? Here's John. Shall we call down lightning and wipe them out? That's John. Rejecting Jesus? You don't want to give him a meal? Why? We'll incinerate you.

That was John until God changed his heart. We're going to follow that change. So it begins with this son of thunder.

After the change is when he could write the epistle. Now, of course, we're going to keep trying to make it intensely practical and bring it home. I can't apply it to your heart.

I have enough trouble, quite honestly, applying it to this dull heart of mine. You would think that the job would be this. That the average Christian is non-missionary because he's involved with life and things and so on.

And that the job God has is to turn him from non-missionary to missionary. And that God's going to start making him less selfish and don't be occupied with these things that pass away. Start being concerned about us.

And he moves us from non-missionary to missionary. The reality is this. Naturally, my heart is a son of thunder.

And naturally, your heart is a son of thunder. I am impatient with rejection. Naturally.

And you are impatient with rejection. We don't like to be rejected. And we wouldn't probably say it in those words.

Lightning comes down and wipes you out. We wouldn't say it that way. My heart is not non-missionary.

My heart is anti-missionary. I not only don't want to see them saved, I want to see them judged. It's exactly what happened to Jonah in the Old Testament.

There's a great missionary book. Study the book of Jonah. Yeah, a great missionary book.

He did not want Ninevites to repent. He got mad because God wouldn't judge him. And so God not only has to deal in my heart to move it from non-missionary to missionary, He's got to deal with someone who

naturally is anti-missionary.

And He's going to change it to a missionary heart. There's a wonderful story in Acts 8. We won't take time to read it. Let me just quote a verse.

Acts chapter 8, verse 14. It says, And when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that the Samaritans had opened their hearts to the Lord. Isn't that a great verse? When they heard, they had to send somebody.

And verse 25 says, or rather verse 14 says, And so they sent John. This is the same John that said, As soon as we call down fire from heaven and burn the Samaritans, when Jerusalem heard that the Samaritans were open, they sent John. What a change.

So the point is simply this, that what we're seeing at the beginning here is James and John needing a tremendous change. Some think, you remember the story we did last week, just before this, the transfiguration? And you remember the two prophets? One of them was who? Elijah. Elijah and Moses.

And some say, where did John and James, sons of thunder, get this idea of calling down fire from heaven? Well some think, minutes before this, they had just seen Elijah. And you remember in the Old Testament how Elijah called down fire from heaven? That might have been on their mind. They just saw Elijah.

And maybe their mind went back and how Elijah, especially in 2 Kings 1, calls down fire three times and burns up the people. I've had this happen to me. I love reading.

God's given me a love to read. And I love Christian biography. But I always have a problem when I read Christian biography.

And that is, I become Hudson Taylor. Or I become D.L. Moody. Or I become Whitefield or Wesley.

And as soon as I read it, I'm in this thing. And I start copying them. And I can see them seeing Elijah and then copying them.

Oh, so we sent down fire from heaven or something like that? We need to be careful about copying one another. Bringing down fire from heaven was God's will for Elijah. But it was not God's will for the sons of thunder.

But the thing that makes this even more insidious, at least in my own mind, at first I thought it was just their timing that's off. Because Luke in chapter 13 and in chapter 17 says that God someday will send down fire. So they weren't wrong.

So we sent down fire. They were wrong in their timing. But were they wrong? So I thought, well that's their problem.

It's the timing. But God said that wasn't their problem. Their problem was the spirit.

Verse 55, you don't know what spirit you're of. And here's what makes it so insidious. If I were to take these sons of thunder, send them down and say, now why did you want to call down fire from heaven? Here would be their answer.

For Jesus. For loyalty to Him. Zeal for His cause.

Because they're rejecting my Jesus. It sounds so good. And the thing that's so insidious about this spirit is to have loyalty for Christ and not have the spirit of Christ.

To be in His cause without His spirit. And you can see right at the beginning. Jesus said, I've set myself to go to the cross.

These boys have a lot to learn. These guys, they're so far from being resolute to that. And so the story begins with Him having to train them.

And having to teach them what His spirit really was all about. What a change takes place after the Lord finally does that. Don't forget what their impatience was all about.

They were just making arrangements. This wasn't like a big rejection. They weren't throwing stones at Him.

Can He stay here? They say, no, we'd rather not have Him. Can He eat here? No. Fine.

What are they going to do when they get thrown to the water? If they can't take that rejection, somebody is going against my arrangements and they lose it. How are they going to handle it? And so all I'm calling attention to is the profound work that needs to be done in them and in us. Let's look, as we wrap this up, at this second story and you'll see how the section moves on in discipleship.

Verse 57. As they were going along the road, someone said, I'll follow you wherever you go. Jesus said, Foxes have holes.

Birds of the air have nests. The Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head. And He said to another, Follow me.

He said, Permit me first to go bury my Father. He said to him, Allow the dead to bury their own dead. As for you, you go proclaim everywhere the kingdom of God.

Verse 61. Another said, I'll follow you Lord, but first permit me to say goodbye to those at home. Jesus said, No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom.

As the Lord Jesus corrected their spirit in this first story, He's now going to teach them about what it means to be a disciple. In this passage, it seems like the Holy Spirit illustrates what this true discipleship is all about. Matthew records the same thing.

Matthew tells us this first guy was a scribe and that he called Jesus teacher. Tells us the second one was already a disciple. It isn't that he wasn't a disciple, but that he had to learn discipleship.

I don't know how you are when you study the Bible, but when I come across sentences like this, and I'm not even suggesting to you that I'm going to give you life. The best I can do is maybe a little twilight on this. Some of the things he said seem so bizarre and so radical, and I'm not suggesting that I understand it all.

I'll follow you. Foxes have holes. I'll follow you.

Let me just bury my dad first. Let the dead bury the dead. It's amazing.

Some of his answers. One time somebody asked Jesus, Are you going to Jerusalem? He said, Are there not twelve hours in a day? Of course. Why didn't I think of that? What's it all about? He gives these

strange answers.

How are we going to know where to have Passover? He says, Go to a certain city, and you'll find someone carrying water. Follow them. They'll go into a house.

Find the owner of the house. What city? Carrying water. Everybody's doing that.

And it says, And they obeyed and followed as he said. And so he's always giving these bizarre things. Let me make a suggestion.

When you study any part of the Bible, it's always helpful, I think, to at least try to take it literally. I mean, God has written it for us. If it's possible.

He says what he means, Take it literally. And if it's a figure of speech, you'll know it. If it can't be taken literally.

I tried that when I came here, and I said, Alright, I'll take it literally. If you take 9.58 literally, what it means is, Jesus was homeless. The Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.

Is that true? Literally. And the answer is no. That's not true.

He was not homeless. He had plenty of places to lay his head. He had a house in Capernaum.

Evidently Mary had some place to stay. He had friends at Bethany. He could have stayed on Peter's boat.

Anybody he healed would have taken him in. There's no question about, Jesus had more pillows than anybody you've ever met. What does he mean? It's not literal.

If you take 9.60 literally, you come into a roadblock. Let the dead bury the dead. You can't take that literally.

The dead can't bury people. It's not possible to take it literally. And so right away, we are sort of advised that this is not literal.

That there is a figure of speech. So then you come as a little child before the Lord. And you say, Alright Lord, I tried to take it literally.

It can't be literal. It must be something else. Instruct my heart.

Give me wisdom. I don't know what it means. And then the Lord begins to dawn on you.

So let me suggest for you, what I think at least some of the principles are. I think anybody who studies this as a whole, can see the big teaching. The cost of discipleship.

If you're going to follow the Lord, you've got to be willing to leave everything. And there's no other priority, and no turning back. I mean clearly it teaches that.

But what else does it teach? Let me try to give you a couple of thoughts. Look at verse 57-58. What did Jesus mean when He said, Foxes have holes, birds have nests, son of man has nowhere to lay his head.

When I first read this, I felt pity for Jesus. I said, Oh, He's homeless. And I thought that's what He was talking about.

That Jesus doesn't have a place to go. And that if God's calling me to discipleship, I'm going to have to be homeless. No, He's not saying that.

I don't feel pity anymore. I think what He was saying is this. Do you really want to follow me? Creatures not made in the image of God, foxes, birds, creatures not made in the image of God, have found their pillow here, in this world.

You're made in the image of God. You're going to follow me? There's no pillow here. No place to lay your head.

The principle being, there's nothing that satisfies you. There's nothing, there's no pillow, there's no resting place, there's no contentment in this world. And if you're serious about following me, you need to understand.

This world, I'm almost going to sing it here, this world is not my home. I'm just a passing through. My treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue.

And I think that's what He was saying. You really want to follow me? Are you ready for this? Then you can't be satisfied with anything on the earth. Because there is no pillow here.

And I think He was saying, there's no attachment here. We set roots and we lay roots and we get so attached. I told you when I started out, I felt sorry for Jesus, pity.

Now I pity myself. And for all those who think there's a pillow here. Who have roots here.

There's no root here. Look at the second one. In the second story, verse 59-60.

It seems so reasonable, let me go bury my father. Obviously his father wasn't already dead. Because they had a rule, if he died he was to be buried before sunset.

And this guy wouldn't have been out talking to Jesus if his father was dead. Evidently his father was old. Or old and sick.

Or dying. Or just, he was saying, let me fulfill my filial obligations and after my dad passes away I'll give myself to ministry and all that kind of thing. That's probably what he was saying.

I don't think Jesus was saying, if you're going to follow me, you can't go to your father's funeral. That's not Jesus. He's not going to say that.

And he's also not going to say, let the dead bury the dead. Let unsaved people, spiritually dead people, take care of those things. He's not going to say that either.

What is he saying? Again, I don't want to say guessing because I think I have a little light on it. I don't know the full extent of it. But I think what he's saying is this.

Again, he's getting down to the heart of discipleship. And he's using an extreme illustration. This man is saying, I'll follow you, but there's something in my old life that I love very much, but it's dead.

And Jesus seems to be saying, if you're going to follow me, you've got to understand that you're going to be associated with life now. Dead people do dead things. Living people do living things.

And you're going to line up with life. He's not saying don't love your father or don't go to his funeral. He's just saying, whatever you love that's dead, that's gone now.

And if you follow me, you might have to lay down dead friends and dead jobs and dead churches and dead hobbies and even a dead family. You might have to lay down that because living people do living things. Now put it together.

You want to follow me? There's no pillow here. You want to follow me? You've got to associate with life and not that. And then in this last one, you've got this same idea.

Man said, let me go say goodbye like Elisha did to his family. And Jesus said, if you put your hand to the plow and you look back, you're not worthy of me. You're not worthy of the kingdom.

He didn't say, if you put your hand to the plow and then you take your hand off the plow. That's apostasy. When you choose Jesus and then you reject him.

He didn't say that. He said, when you put your hand to the plow and turn your head. You know what that's going to mean? That's going to mean a furrow like this.

If you put your hand to the plow and turn your head, you're not going to do a straight furrow. And there's a lot of Christians who are divided in that. I've got the Lord, but I'm still like lost wife, you know, looking back.

And Jesus said, if you're going to be my servant, you can't have a furrow like this. You've got to have a straight furrow. And you've got to have your hand and your eyes in the same direction.

And I think what he's saying is, there's no delay. There's no other priority. There's no resting place here.

If you're going to follow me, you've got to be associated with life. And if you're going to follow me, no turning back. No turning back.

I have decided. That's all the way. Let me just sort of bring it all together.

It's so different. And I hope you see that it's different than the Galilean ministry, where he's reaching out and take up your bed and walk and stretch forth your withered hand and rise up from the dead. Now he's getting down, you know, under the skin.

And he's getting into the heart. And he's saying, I'm about to die. And I've set myself.

And I'm going to die. And you're going to follow me. And you don't understand that yet.

You have a vindictive spirit. You're full of animosity. You're full of judgment and your own interests.

We've got to change that. And God begins to work and begins to deal and lay out the principle. Are you really my follower? No pillow here.

You really my follower? No more dead things in your life. You really my follower? Stay focused. No turning back.

Especially looking back with regret. There are two other stories that tie into that. But I think, I hope, you're seeing the new direction.

It's severe. It's different than, quite honestly, I wasn't looking forward to teaching this. Because I love to tell the stories and the blind man and he take up his bed and the leper and he's cleansed.

That's fun. But now he begins to lay down these foundations. We need to hear it.

But it's hard to teach. Because some of the things he says, they're just so mysterious. And we're going to need all along the way.

Pray for me, please. And just pray that God will. Ephesians 4 says it's so beautiful.

In Ephesians 4 it says, Arise from the dead and Christ will dawn on you. Isn't that a great verse? Christ will dawn on you. We need Christ to dawn on us.

To understand some of these things. Well, I guess, almost with apology, I touch these precious scriptures. Any comments or easy questions? Well, thank you.

I hope you see the Lord. Let's bow, please, before him. Our Father, we thank you that your heart is everlastingly the same.

You've laid out these wonderful principles of discipleship. Even to a limited degree, we've seen there's really no pillow here in this world for us. We want to follow you.

We've been so cumbered by dead things so often. We want to associate with life. We want to put our hand to the plow and we don't want to turn back.

Will you grace us to do this, that we might follow our rejected Savior King? Thank you that you work these things in our heart because we claim it in Jesus.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/15/SID15129.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/ed-miller/luke-29-the-judean-ministry/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net