

Don't Look Back!

Lk.9:61-62

“Fear causes hesitation, and hesitation will cause your worst fears to come true”

Lk.9:57-62 (61-62)

- First glance: request seems reasonable; refusal appears harsh, unfeeling
- A closer look . . .
 - Man is ready to follow Jesus . . . but “first” . . .
 - Does he want to hear what family thinks of his plans?

I. Excuses Cannot Justify Disobedience, 61

What about 1 Kings 19? Elisha...

- Elijah was not on his final journey . . .
- Elijah did not know hearts of men; Jesus did
 - 1 K.19:10 . . . I alone am left . . . (v.18)
 - Jesus knew hearts: Jn.2:23-25
 - RYR: Lk.18:24-27 . . . 28-30
 - Family can stifle plans to follow Jesus
- Elisha knew difference in reason / excuse

“Say farewell”

- “*Set things in order*” (he may follow later)
- “*Forsake all*” –
 - 14:33 (26): renounce, give up
- Parents issue an ultimatum: “choose between us or Jesus” ?

“Doesn’t Bible teach us to love mother and father?”

- Yes...and not to array one scripture against another. (Lk.4:9-11)
- Lk.9:62 does not contradict love for parents
- Lk.14:25-33 –
 - 25: Jesus never deceived people
 - 26: *HATE* – Gn.29:30...31. (Mt.10:37)
 - 27: *bear cross* = put Jesus first
 - 28-33: count the cost. Let *nothing* come between you and God

I. Excuses Cannot Justify
Disobedience, 61

II. Lord's Response, 62

Put hand to plow

- Proverbs (illustrations) enforce truth
 - Hesiod, about 800 B.C.
- Put hand to plow: undertake something
 - No time to spare...
 - To be a disciple – must act now

Looking back

- Having put hand to plow – a mere fact
- Looking back – present: continuous action

–61: “first”: Mt.6:33

- “Lord, I’ll follow, but I have a duty first...”
- Satan will make sure they stay busy – Lk.12; Ac.24

–62: “looking back”: Lk.17:32; Ac.7:39

Not willing to sacrifice everything = sacrifice nothing

- Rich young ruler...not willing to give Lord his undivided devotion
- Lord's warning: take it seriously or not at all
 - Demas, 2 Tim.4:10
 - Hb.10:38, Now the just shall live by faith;
But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him [shrink back]
 - Finishing is the key!

2 Peter 2

20 For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. **21** For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. **22** But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: “A dog returns to his own vomit,” and, “a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire”

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III. **Lessons**

1. It is wrong to accuse Jesus of harshness or unkindness

Is it cruel to redirect someone who is
headed for destruction?

Jesus is trying to save souls

2. Opposite of looking back is looking ahead: normal way to plow / live

- Ph.3:12-14
- The Christian is like an athlete . . .
 - Total focus: no distractions.
 - Lk.9:61 – great potential for distractions
 - Undivided mind (full attention). 1 K.18:21
 - Zeal; giving our all. Ph.3:14
 - Commitment. Col.1:18. Hb.12

3. Plowing implies sowing...harvest.

- Does farmer abandon crop because it might rain? ...too many rocks?

“The man who does things makes many mistakes, but he never makes the biggest mistake of all...doing nothing” – B. Franklin

4. Those who refuse to plow the straight furrow are unfit for the kingdom of God

- Not usable, suitable

Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work
– 2 Tim.2:21

5. Great danger: 'innocent desires' hinder our discipleship

- If we love anyone or anything above Lord, we are already lost.

He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me – Mt.10:37f.

- Ascending climax

Sad conclusion?

- “I used to be a Christian” / (“ex-Christian”)
- Backslider: a ‘Christian’ (?) who is not as close to Jesus as he used to be.

–Lk.9:57-62

Earthly
desire

Earthly
sorrow

Earthly
affection

–Mt.19:27

“See, we have left all and followed You.
Therefore what shall we have?”

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- Churches lower commitment level to attract numbers
- Lord’s standard has not changed

–Rv.2:10