

THE RESOLVE OF A DISCIPLE

Luke 9:61-62

INTRODUCTION

- There is a profound lack of commitment amongst professing Christians in our day
- People want a Christ who fits in with their self-absorbed lifestyles, and who makes no demands of them.
- They want to hear a message that tickles their ears, that is full of “smooth things” (2 Timothy 4:3; Isaiah 30:10)
- “Self-will” is the natural enemy of God which indwells each one of us (Romans 8:7)
- Self-will must be crucified, and Christ be received as Lord, in order for a sinner to be saved.
- Over the past few weeks we have been studying these verses in Luke 9:57-62, to see how the Lord Jesus dealt with those who were Christians in name only.
- He exposed them for the frauds that they were, and in so doing, teaches us what it means to be a true disciple of Christ.
- In the first, we learn of the sacrifice of a disciple.
- In the second, we learn of the priority of a disciple.
- Here in the third, which is only recorded by Luke, we learn of the resolve of a disciple.

I. THE SHALLOW PROMISE OF AN ALLEGED DISCIPLE

A. A divided heart

1. This was more than a wish to say good-bye to his family
2. Elijah permitted Elisha to kiss his parents before leaving them and his former life behind (1 Kings 19:19-21)

3. A true disciple would seek to bring his loved ones with him to follow Christ also, rather than leave them behind (cf. John 4:28-30)
4. Instead seeing the Lord's work as a joyful privilege, he views it as a melancholy sacrifice, for which he must bid his loved ones a sorrowful farewell (cf. Philippians 3:7-8; Matthew 13:45-46)
5. His wishes to go to his family not merely to salute them, but to consult them about this decision
6. Returning home would expose him to great temptation to break his resolution
 - a. The devil does not take lightly the loss of souls from his kingdom, and will employ every stratagem at his disposal to prevent it, even by using one's family (Matthew 12:29)
 - b. The wisest man that ever lived had his heart turned from God by those in his family (1 Kings 11:4)

B. Beware of double-mindedness

1. Man says, "Now is not a good time; it does not suit me to follow Christ yet."
2. God says, "*Now is the accepted time*" (2 Corinthians 6:2; Ecclesiastes 12:1; Psalm 119:59-60)
3. "*He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.*" (James 1:6)
4. "*A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.*" (James 1:8)

II. THE SINGLE-MINDED PURPOSE OF AN AUTHENTIC DISCIPLE

A. Christ likens the Christian life to working a plough

1. The New Testament uses different analogies to represent the Christian life

2. It is likened to soldiers in warfare, to athletes running a race or wrestling, and to labourers in the harvest
3. All of these indicate effort, exertion, attention and busyness

B. The sin of looking back

1. In these two words, “looking back”, Jesus exposed the insincerity of this man’s pledge to follow Him
2. Lot’s wife looked back, not out of curiosity at the destruction of Sodom, but out of love for desire for that wicked place (Genesis 19:26; Luke 17:32)
3. The children of Israel were physically removed from Egypt but their hearts remained there (Numbers 11:5)
4. First we *look* back, then we *go* back
5. God says, “*if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.*” (Hebrews 10:38)

C. Such a person is not fit for Christ’s kingdom

1. This is another way of saying “he cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:26,27,33)
2. “Fit” means “well-placed, suited for”
3. Only those who have repented and are justified by faith in Christ are fit for His kingdom (Matthew 22:8)
4. Such a person has evidence of Christ’s reign in his life – by self-denial, faithful service, and patient endurance of suffering – that he is “worthy of the kingdom of God” (2 Thessalonians 1:4-6; Revelation 3:4)

CONCLUSION

1. There is a solemn warning here that we do not trifle with the calls of the gospel
2. This man represents multitudes who respond to Christ’s call by looking back to the world and lingering after them

3. These are unfit for the kingdom both in this world and the next
4. *"No man can serve two masters"* (Matthew 6:24)
5. When it comes to our response to Christ, neutrality is not an option
6. Those who do not receive Him as their only Lord have rejected Him
7. Elijah: *"How long halt ye between two opinions?"* (1 Kings 18:21)
8. Joshua: *"Choose you this day whom ye will serve"* (Joshua 24:15)
9. Many think they can, like the Samaritans, both *"fear the LORD, and serve their graven images"* (2 Kings 17:41)
10. Jacob is an example of putting love of one's family in too high a place – *"his life is bound up with the lad's life"* (Genesis 44:30)
11. It was not until he let go of his son that he could serve God properly
12. The cause of double-mindedness is an impure heart (James 4:8)
13. Such a heart must be cleansed and purged of its idols, that Christ may have complete rule
14. Where is my heart looking – on things above or things on the earth? (Colossians 3:1-3)
15. Devotion to Christ must reign supreme, before family, worldly interest, or self
16. Whatever is hindering you from complete submission to Christ, no matter how precious it may appear, it must be cut off (Mark 9:43-48; Acts 19:19)
17. By God's grace, may we say with Paul, *"forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."* (Philippians 3:13-14)