

Luke 9:51–62

This is the hinge point in Luke. Rural to crowded. Layers of history in Jerusalem. No looking back. How do people respond to him?

Jesus before tribal loyalty

Through Samaria, people of strange beliefs.

'We're willing to have Jesus, providing he joins our tribe.'

What's your? Who's your group? Is it family, race, culture, language, your religion, job, political orientation? It is your spiritual experience?

If Jesus would call you to repent of your mission or your identity or our community, then he's not welcome. He extended a hand of friendship, and they rejected it because he wouldn't join their tribe, and was on his way to their enemy. They put conditions on following Jesus.

Jesus is God. not a pet.

A time for salvation not condemnation. Infinite patience.

I'm going to Jerusalem, to suffering, to death, to suffer. I've a job to do. You can come back to Samaria, after that. There'll be time enough.

Jesus before comfort

Foxes have holes etc is not a self-pitying moan, it's a joyful liberation from being tethered.

Following Jesus is not easy. God is the gift. God is the treasure. God is the joy, his name is Jesus. To follow Jesus could mean a very hard path.

So it's Jesus above comfort.

Jesus before security

Myth, "If I put security before Jesus, I can have both." No. If you worship security as an idol, as God, it will fail you, disappoint you, and destroy you because the world is unpredictable. But if Jesus is in first position, the rest of life will work itself out. It doesn't mean you'll be rich or successful, but it does mean you'll be with Jesus, and he'll get you through it. Follow Jesus first, and that's where everything changed." And that's what he's inviting this man to have is that day. He's not saying hate your parents, but he's saying love God first and most.

Jesus before the past

J. C. Ryle "Those who look back want to go back."

No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.

Orpheus went to the Underworld to seek his dead wife, Eurydice. He was allowed to take her back to the living on condition that he would not gaze upon her until they reached the 'upper air'. But he looked back and in a flash she vanished.

In Genesis, the Lord warns Lot, Abraham's son, to flee with his wife and children from Sodom and not to turn their faces back toward the destruction that will follow. Lot's wife looked back, and was turned into a pillar of salt.

Looking back leads to the evaporation of what we most desire, or our hearts being turned into something as

hard as stone. Neither leads to eternal life. Looking back is sometimes our solution to the fear we experience by looking ahead. However much we may wish otherwise, we must confront reality now and work with that. We must steel ourselves—set our faces—for what’s coming rather than bury ourselves in the past. As Jesus says: leave the dead to bury their dead.

Lord’s prayer ‘thy kingdom come’, the kingdom is not in the past, behind us. It’s ahead of us. And we have no chance whatsoever of being fit for it unless we put the past behind us and start planning for the future starting from where we actually are.