

Introduction:

- *"As he walked along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at his tax collector's booth. "Follow me and be my disciple," Jesus said to him. So Levi got up and followed him."* (Mark 2:14, NLT)
- akaloutheo - verb present active imperative. To go after God. To walk in the ways of.

I. The Call To Follow

- A. Jesus called to Levi, "Follow me."
 1. Verb, present, active imperative. It is a command to be done "now."
 2. It is a call to action.
 3. The text itself leaves us no information other than it tells us to follow Him.
 4. Levi left all to follow Jesus.
- B. People follow Jesus for many reasons.
 1. He fed them, therefore they followed him.
 2. He healed them, therefore they followed him.
 3. They followed because they have needs that they wanted taken care of.
 4. Granted Jesus make following him attractive as He does provide, heal, shepherd and care for.
- C. The response of the disciple is an act of obedience not a confession of faith in Christ. Jesus calls with absolute authority.
 1. Jesus does not call us to get our needs met. He calls us to become like Him.
 2. Jesus calls us to follow Him not as a teacher or good role model. He calls us to follow Him as the Christ...the Son of God. When we are called to follow Jesus we are summoned to attach ourselves to Him and who He is.
 3. Discipleship means adherence to Christ and because we are connected to Him, it must take the form of discipleship.
 4. To be a Christian without being a disciple, it is to be a Christian in name only. You are therefore a Christian without Christ.

II. The Cost of Following

- A. *"But don't begin until you count the cost. ..."* (Luke 14:28, NLT)
 1. There is a cost to following Jesus. What is it? YOUR LIFE! Your life and everything about it!
 2. Cannot be my disciple: vs. 26, 27. Not worthy to be mine. Mt 10:37-39
 - a) In Luke we are exhorted to hate(Gr miseo) father, mother, wife, children, ourselves. *"Hatred in Discipleship. To be a true disciple one must hate all others for Jesus' sake. This is not psychological hatred but a total commitment that gives absolute priority to Jesus."* Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. (1985). TDNT (pp. 598-599). Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans.
 - (1) Jesus is asking us to choose Him over family and our own lives! That is high price!
 - (2) But a far greater price is to say "No."
 - b) In verse 27 we are called to carry our own cross and in the Roman world you only carried the cross if you were going to die upon it. Again, the cost is your life. Ie. My coffee cup, "My Life Is Not My Own".

- B. Count the cost. Luke 9:57-62.
1. Inconvenience - First man says, "I will follow you!" "The first disciple leaps before looking. Jesus dampens his excitement by warning him that he does not know what he is doing.
 - a) Foxes have dens
 - b) Birds have nests
 - c) But I have no place to lay my head.
 2. Legalities - Second man is invited to follow.
 - a) But he wants to return home first and bury his father. According to the law he needed to do this.
 - b) And Jesus is saying that following him takes precedence over the law. There is to be no legal ordinance that acts as a barrier between Jesus and the man that is called.
 - c) The call of Christ is stronger and greater than the legal precedent.
 3. Looking back - Third mans says, "I will follow you." But let me say "good bye" to the family.
 - a) He wants to follow but he wants to do it on his own terms.
 - b) Discipleship to him can only be realized when the conditions are right. His conditions determine the action.
 - c) But we are called to 'lean not on our own understanding' and just follow!
 - d) Discipleship will never tolerate conditions that may come between Jesus and His disciples. He wants obedience.
- C. To follow Jesus implies leaving all to after the Son of God.

III. The Reward of Following Mt 19:27-30

- A. A position of unique authority - throne. 28
- B. 100 times return - manifold recompense!
- C. Eternal life - life through the ages to come.
- D. By choosing to be least in this life will amplify your greatness in the next.
- E. Those who put God's call first will not be losers in the end! They will be great! vs 30