

§142. Hindrances to a Disciple(Matt 8:19–22)

Introduction

1. In the midst of rejection, Lord teaches the nature of discipleship which is not a means for instant power and position but rejection by the world.
2. Key to the passage is the triple use of the word *follow* implying focused life long commitment to be a disciple.
3. Needs a better understanding and presentation of the gospel since Jesus actually made it difficult to for these to follow.

Exposition

Case 1: Craving for comfort

57 **Now it happened as they journeyed on the road, that someone said to Him, “Lord, I will follow You wherever You go.”**

1. Matthew says this person was a scribe.
2. Surprising that in the midst of rejection, this scribe offered to follow Jesus.

58 **And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.”**

1. Jesus did not coerce people into his discipleship: instead made it difficult to follow him.
2. Discipleship is not for a comfortable life; it is a life of self-denial.
3. Discipleship is not for a secure life; it is a life of self-sacrifice.
4. Discipleship requires trusting God in the midst of rejection.
5. Count the cost: understand the demands of discipleship.

Case 2: Misplaced priority

59 **Then He said to another, “Follow Me.” But he said, “Lord, let me first go and bury my father.”**

1. The request seems reasonable ... but the assumption is family is more important than Jesus.
2. Most likely he was asking for an indefinite time to serve.
3. Delayed obedience is disobedience.

60 **Jesus said to him, “Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God.”**

1. Harsh response: let the spiritually dead bury the physically dead
2. Following the Lord is far more important than the greatest human responsibility on the earth.
3. His problem is misplaced priority and loyalty.
4. What *excuse* can be given for not proclaiming the kingdom of God?
5. Proclaiming kingdom of God is proclaiming the King, admission into the kingdom, and benefits as its citizen.
6. Lord demands complete dedication to him.

Case 3: Attachment to this world

61 **And another also said, “Lord, I will follow You, but let me first go and bid them farewell who are at my house.”**

1. Seems to be genuine request.

62 **But Jesus said to him, “No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”**

1. Attachment to the old life - the worldly life.

Application

1. **Understanding of the gospel:** Discipleship is the result of God's calling and voluntary submission to pay the price. Salvation is free but discipleship is costly for it involves self-denial.
2. **Presentation of the gospel:** True conversion is not an emotional one time prayer made, but a life-long dedication. Lord wants (and He deserves) quality disciples.
3. **Crave for self-denial:** Look for voluntarily undergo hardship and sacrifice in my life. Then make it a habit of life. Problem of flesh.
4. **Rephrased priority:** Devote time for ministry when there is pending physical responsibilities. There is no genuine excuse before the Lord. Problem of pride.
5. **Detachment to this world:** Problem of the worldly value system. Remember Lot's wife.

Song

Down in the valley with my Savior I will go,
Where the flow'rs are blooming and the sweet waters flow;
Everywhere He leads me I will follow, follow on,
Walking in His footsteps till the crown be won.

Follow! follow! I will follow Jesus!
Anywhere, everywhere, I will follow on!
Follow! follow! I will follow Jesus!
Everywhere He leads me I will follow on!

Down in the valley with my Savior I will go,
Where the storms are sweeping and the dark waters flow;
With His hand to lead me I will never, never fear,
Danger cannot fright me if my Lord is near.

Down in the valley, or upon the mountain steep,
Close beside my Savior will my soul ever keep;
He will lead me safely in the path that He has trod,
Up to where they gather on the hills of God.