

# Luke

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Preacher: Crowter, Harold (1923-2011)

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End With the Lord's help I will speak this evening from the last verse in the ninth chapter of the gospel according to Luke. Luke's gospel chapter 9 and verse 62.

The End Jesus said unto him, No man having put his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God.

And Jesus said unto him, And Jesus said unto him, No man having put his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God.

[ 3 : 48 ]    A few things in the context. What a wonderful experience it was to Peter and James and John when they were the favored subjects of the Mount of Transfiguration.

When the Lord himself, Moses and Elias were there speaking together.

And have you ever considered the subject matter of the conversation? What was the subject matter of the conversation?

The death of the Lord Jesus Christ. And the language that there is employed by the Holy Ghost is very, very significant.

And behold there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias, who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease, which he should accomplish.

[ 5 : 02 ]    At Jerusalem. His decease which he should accomplish. Now can we talk of death as an accomplishment? We can talk of Christ's death as an accomplishment.

The Holy Spirit talks of Christ's death as an accomplishment. And what was accomplished when Christ died.

My friends, we never will be able to comprehend the accomplishment affected by the death of Jesus Christ.

And so it was a worthy subject. By these, Moses and Elias appearing in glory, and the Son of God.

And it seems sad that weakness overcame Peter and the disciples at that time.

[ 6 : 08 ]    And Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep. And when they were awake, they saw his glory. And the two men that stood with him.

And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here. And let us make three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

And he said, not knowing what he said. My friends, with all the benefit of the experience, there was still ignorance in the heart of Peter.

And he said something and didn't really know what he was saying. But he was brought at length, as we learn in another gospel, to Jesus only.

It's a very wonderful word that was spoken out of the cloud to these fearing disciples. And there came a voice out of the cloud saying, this is my beloved Son.

[ 7 : 16 ] Hear him. And that's who we want to hear tonight, isn't it?

To hear him. And he speaks now from heaven through the preaching of the gospel by the sanctifying grace of his spirit.

I trust there are not a few in the congregation that know the difference between hearing with the natural ear and hearing with the ear of faith as Jesus speaks to his people.

And that's who we are. And that's who we are. Well now, to hasten to the text, we have so many things in the chapter.

The coming down out of the mount, we find Jesus face to face with a man of the company, with a child crying out under the power of the enemy.

[ 8 : 43 ] The power of the enemy. What condescension in Jesus Christ to move, so to speak, from the situation of transfiguration down to the immediate attending to such a desperate trying case.

But my friends, the Lord says to this father who so tried and troubled, bring thy son hither.

And as he was yet coming, the devil threw him down and tear him. And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit and healed the child and delivered him again to his father.

And what a difference there was between that child initially and that child finally. And my friends, we see in that what is so often the case in families.

It's not only the person that is troubled immediately by Satan, but those that are round about, that are troubled in consequence.

[ 10 : 12 ] And this father, he's got no peace at home, have you? The whole atmosphere of his home, the whole environment of his family was troubled by reason of the son that was possessed of the evil spirit.

Now, I do hope that there is no family here tonight disturbed by any person that's here tonight.

I hope that we, under the grace of the Spirit, contribute to the peace of our environment, not the trouble of our environment.

When grace is in our hearts, we're peaceable in our relationships among men. When the enemy is within us, we're a disturber of the peace. And my friends, how sad it is to be in the role of this lad who was a disturber of the peace so that his home was constantly in trouble and confusion by reason of his presence.

Let me say this to the encouragement of any that may be tried by reason of the spirit of a child or a person who may seem to rob of all peace.

[ 11 : 43 ] The Lord can deal with it. As surely as he dealt with his child and sent that father home to a peaceable habitation, so, my friends, he can produce peace and he can transform completely the situation by his word.

Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit and healed the child and delivered him again to his father.

Well, they were all amazed at the mighty power of God. Let us hasten to the immediate subject matter of the text.

Verse 57, And it came to pass that as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou doest.

Now, Matthew records that that was a scribe, that there made that bold profession. My friends, I can only feel that it was actuated by personal advantage.

[ 12 : 55 ] He thought there was something personally to be gained by following the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord didn't call it.

He made the profession absolutely out of his own mind spontaneously. He says, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

Now, there's nothing wrong with the profession that he made in the wording of it. But my friends, what we would judge by the answer that Jesus gave to him, that, and as Jesus reads the hearts of men, that Jesus detected the motive in saying it was not a sound motive.

It's not what we profess. It's what's underneath it, or what's behind it. And the Lord Jesus Christ brought that profession to this touchstone.

And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head.

[ 14 : 13 ] Now, Jesus created all things. Foxes had holes, because the Lord provided holes for foxes. Birds had nests, because the Lord provided nests for birds.

But the Lord made no provision for himself. Has that ever amazed you when you've looked around yourself and seen the wonderful provision God in his providence has made for you?

To realize that though the Lord made this provision for you, he didn't make a provision for himself. The Son of Man hath not where to lay his head.

And in saying this, the Lord Jesus Christ was directing the mind of this man to the point that, in a natural way, there was nothing really to be gained in discipleship.

That even the beasts, the lower beasts, the foxes, and the birds, they have provision made for them.

[ 15 : 27 ] But here is the Lord saying, I have not where to lay my head. And my friends, really, the Lord was showing this man that discipleship was not going to prove, as he considered it, to be advantageous to him.

He saw them crowding around the Lord. And he obviously desired to partake of the applause of men.

But the Lord points him to the other side of discipleship. The true side of discipleship. That sacrifice is an essential part of being a follower of the Lamb.

Jesus said unto another, follow me. Now, here is a direct word given by the Lord Jesus Christ that was not given to the scribe in the first instance, but now the Lord directs his word to this man.

And this man has a dead father at home. And he subjects the obedience to the command of Jesus Christ to what we may naturally consider a reasonable request.

[ 17 : 12 ] Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.

A natural thing to desire. But my friends, the Lord will not have second place.

He will not have second place. We mustn't think that the Lord, in his answer to this man, was unsympathetic with the necessity of burial.

Or that he was completely disregarding the benefits and blessings of natural affection.

But he was directing this man to the essential of the kingdom of God, the things of God, being first and foremost.

[ 18 : 20 ] And that every other thing must be subject to that prime consideration.

Others could attend to the burial of his father. Even those, we would suggest, that were dead in trespasses and sins, that had not the spiritual light and knowledge of this man, were well capable of attending to the burial of his father.

But they were insufficient to do what the Lord commanded him to do. And so he said, virtually to him, Now you attend to the things which you are called to attend to.

And leave the other things, in the hands of those who are sufficient to deal with them.

Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead, but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

[ 19 : 30 ] That was the word of Christ. That was the word of Christ to this man. My friends, we must consider it in its entirety, that we come to no false judgments about the spirit and attitude of Jesus to the bereaved and to the necessities of life.

And oh, the first thing was the thing which concerned the kingdom. The thing which concerned the kingdom. Now is that our priority?

Is that, does that receive our first attention? This is the all important consideration in the teaching of Jesus Christ.

And this is the all important consideration of those who are true disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Then another also said, Lord, I will follow thee. But let me first go and bid them farewell, which are at home, at my house.

[ 20 : 39 ] And then I'll follow thee. I'll follow thee. And my friends, then Jesus replied, And I will follow thee. And I will follow thee. Now here's another manifesting, shall I say, the power of nature. The inclination that is so natural and powerful.

Let me first go home and bid them farewell, which are at home, at my house. And then I'll follow thee.

I'll follow thee. And my friends, then Jesus replied, Then Jesus replies to him. Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

Here the Lord establishes the principle. First things must be first. First things must be first. Now the Son of God is a word.

And there's a very solemn word, and I was looking into it this afternoon. And it could be entitled, the subordination of everything, to Jesus Christ.

[ 21 : 51 ] And that's real discipleship. The subordination of everything to Jesus Christ. If anything is not subordinate to the Lord Jesus Christ, at that point we are wrong.

Now the Lord says this, And there went great multitudes with him, and he turned and said unto them, If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother and wife and children and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

Now, if you put your father, your mother, your brothers, your sisters, before Christ, you can't be a disciple.

There cannot be anyone in front of Jesus Christ. He must, he will be first.

And the Lord makes that absolutely conditional. He said, If any man come to me and hate not his father and mother and wife and children and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

[ 23 : 12 ] So, self-consideration must be subordinate to the will and way of the Lord. If you say, Well, it'll cost me too much.

The rigors of discipleship will occasion such restrictions and reproaches upon me that I cannot, my friends, at that point, you cannot be his disciple.

You see, discipleship is all the heart. And it's all the heart or nothing.

The Lord won't share. He will not share. He will have the preeminent. And when we're put to the test and the Lord proves faith, he proves the principles of faith in the experiences of his people, sometimes the Lord will cause you to come to a point where you must make a choice.

You must make a choice between himself himself or your wife, himself or your husband, himself or your father, himself or your mother, himself or your children, himself or yourself.

[ 25 : 00 ] And my friends, at that point of time, discipleship is established in the principle.

If the Lord, by his grace, enables you to put him first, you might say that's a mark of discipleship. If through weakness he's put behind at that point our discipleship falls.

Jesus said, no man having put his hand to the plough and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God.

Now, putting our hand to the plough is making a profession. in no way will I accept the making of a profession conditionable upon baptism.

My friends, making a profession is involved in putting on Christ publicly. It is true.

[ 26 : 18 ] but that's only one way. That's only one way. You know, there's a sense in which we make a profession by being here tonight.

and surely it would be a sad thing if you and I are living a life that's destitute of profession.

I trust the name of Jesus Christ is spoken through the lives that we're living that men and women around us know by our manner of life that we're Christians by profession.

Now, no man having put his hand to the plough, these are the days when the husbandman followed the plough, the ox or the ass or the horse pulled the plough and the farmer, the farm labourer, he followed along and he looked in front of him, didn't he?

He looked in front of him and as he kept his eyes straight in front of him, so he ploughed a straight furrow.

[ 27 : 55 ] He didn't look at his feet, otherwise his furrow wouldn't be straight. He set a mark in the far end of the field, which we do in our profession, that we set a mark at the far end, so to speak, we've got our eye fixed and we plough our furrow.

And my friends, what a mercy if we're looking onward and looking forward and never looking backward, never looking backward.

For the Lord says, no man having put his hand to the plough and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God. It's a looking forward it's a pressing onward.

My friends, yes, it's on, on, on. Now, we can rightly attribute this word to the ministry of the gospel.

A man who puts his hand to the plough and commences to preach the gospel and looks back is not fit for the kingdom of God.

[ 29 : 23 ] It has to be going on through good report, an evil report. In season and out of season, we have many spiritual exhortations exhortations associating with the work of the ministry that necessitates continuation, pressing on, keeping our eye fixed upon the end hand, pressing or plodding on.

No man having put his hand to the plough and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God. And my friends, I do believe that the work of the ministry necessitates continual application, continual application, selfless application.

Not considering ourselves, not considering wife, family, first. They must all be subordinate to the fulfilment of the calling, the high calling of gospel preaching.

But in that second consideration, the matter of general profession, there mustn't be a looking back. There mustn't be a looking back.

This can be a temptation that assaults and assails us at many points in life's pilgrimage. Young people can see opportunities and in some ways your allegiance to Jesus Christ may stand in the way of progress in natural things.

[ 31 : 26 ] My dear friend, you mustn't look back. You mustn't look back. If you look back, it's proved at that point you're not fit for the kingdom of God. If there's to be a sacrifice, it's the sacrifice for Christ's sake.

You mustn't sacrifice Christ for worldly prosperity, for advancement in business. Oh, no, no, no. You'll suffer if you do. First things must be first.

You may come to a point of the trial of your faith when a wonderful opportunity is suggested to you. If so be, you will deny your faith or turn away from your manner of life.

I remember the late Mr. Arnold Priest, when he was, before I think he preached about the commencement of his ministry at Rowley when he had some administrative position with ICI and they were closing down the department over which he was manager at Oldbury and moving the whole department up to the north of England.

And they said that if he would move to the north of England he would be sure of an advancement in his position.

[ 33 : 00 ] And I remember him confiding in me one Sunday on my visit to Belen Chapel in the ministry of his problem. He knew what to do.

In his heart he knew what to do. One could tell in conversation with him he knew what he had got to do. There are times when that must be, that decision must be made because putting your hand to the plough and looking back you're not fit for the kingdom of God.

And then in regard to the relationships of life sometimes we may have suggested to us wonderful opportunities through marriage man of the world may be persistent in his approaches and it may seem to be very advantageous to respond to such approaches.

but there's one thing that's wrong he's not a believer he's not a believer he gives no mark of the fear of, no evidence of the fear of God and you come to the point don't you no man having put his hand to the plough and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God.

These are some of things to pass through in the trials of faith in the unfoldings of the experiences of the Lord's people and my friends they multiply don't they as we go on through life they multiply we come to crossroads in experience and we say which way we know in our hearts of hearts which way don't we but the flesh is a power don't minimise it the flesh is a power and the flesh inclines to flesh the advantage but may this word the word of the text this evening be a gracious restraint upon us for what shall it profit a man says the Lord if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul let me say any advantage in deviating from Christ is but temporary it's a temporary advantage and really it's no advantage at all as walking contrary to

[ 36 : 08 ] Christ inevitably invariably brings leanness into the soul no man having put his hand to the plough and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God my friend press on press on you'll never be the loser by honouring God you'll never be the loser finally by honouring God but the Lord says them that honour me I will honour but them that despise me shall be my esteemed receive the word in love and the Lord and his blessing Amen the closing field is 970 words

Jesus we our cross have taken all to leave and follow thee naked poor despised forsaken them and A H27A

A H27A The word is quite the need we ask. They have worth the saviors in joy.

You are not mine. Who seem to have askedvers they was not my seventh rule.

And while the sand's are above us, From wisdom, blood, and light, How sweet and great to be found, So low, sure, thy patience, all is right.

[ 39 : 35 ] When he troubled and is precious, Do not ride us to thy place, Thy free child of the Jesus  
appealed, So low, we must be buried.

O make thy strength perfect in our weakness, grant us the prevailing of grace in times of  
special need forgive oh Lord anything that has been wrong in our service may the grace of  
the Lord Jesus the Father's love communion, fellowship and teaching God the Holy Ghost  
be with us Amen Amen