

Reflection Luke 9:57– 62

Linda E Hunter 1st October 2025

Luke 9: 57 – end

As they were going along the road, someone said to him, 'I will follow you wherever you go.' 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.'* ⁵⁹ *To another he said, 'Follow me.'* *But he said, 'Lord, first let me go and bury my father.'* ⁶⁰ *But Jesus*^[m] *said to him, 'Let the dead bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.'* ⁶¹ *Another said, 'I will follow you, Lord; but let me first say farewell to those at my home.'* ⁶² *Jesus said to him, 'No one who puts a hand to the plough and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.'*

Today's Gospel reading invites us to pause and reflect more deeply on what it truly means to follow Christ. At first glance, it seems like a simple commitment, "I will follow you", but as Jesus shows us, discipleship is not rooted in comfort, or convenience. It is a calling marked by wholehearted commitment, immediate response, and unwavering trust.

We encounter three individuals in this passage from Luke, each expressing a desire to follow Jesus. Their intentions seem sincere. But with each response, we sense a hesitation, an understandable pull toward family, closure, or a settled life. These aren't the excuses of the indifferent, but the concerns of the people who, like many of us, feel torn between the call of Christ and the demands of daily life.

Jesus, however, responds with words that are unsettling. He does not offer comfort or flexibility. Instead, he names the cost. He reveals that discipleship is not something we add into life when it suits us, but a vocation that claims the whole of our being. His words are clear and to the point; to follow him is to make him our first priority.

That clarity seems to jar but I think that is what it's meant to do. The way of Christ is not easy. It is the way of the Cross. He asks us to let go, to trust deeply, and to walk forward even when the road is uncertain. Following Jesus is not merely about believing in him, it is about being conformed to him, shaped more and more into his likeness. This shaping happens not in moments of comfort, but in the often quiet, sacrificial choices of daily faithfulness.

This passage strips away all illusions. Discipleship is not something we can postpone until life becomes simpler. It is a lifelong journey, a narrow road, yes, but one that leads to true life.

Jesus does not reject the man who wants to bury his father, nor the one who longs to say farewell. But he does confront the deeper issue: delay. And in doing so, he speaks to us all. How often do we feel the Spirit stirring us to act, to pray, to forgive, to speak, but we say, "Not now."

But the Gospel is not about later, it's about now. The kingdom of God isn't built by those who hesitate, but by those who, even with some trepidation, say "yes" in faith. God does not demand perfection, only willingness. And it is that willingness, even in weakness, that opens the way.

Jesus says, "No one who puts a hand to the plough and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God." It's a strong image, focussed, disciplined, and trusting. Just as a ploughman must keep his eyes ahead to make a straight furrow, so must we keep our eyes on Christ. Looking back, whether with regret, hesitation or fear sends us off course. True discipleship means stepping forward, trusting that God's grace is sufficient for the journey.

This does not mean our responsibilities or relationships are unimportant. Far from it. But it does mean that when we feel Christ's call, we should put him at the centre of what we do. Not because he is demanding in a worldly sense, but only because if we put him first everything else falls into place.

So, this passage is not just a challenge, it is an invitation. An invitation to re-examine our own journey of faith, now. The call to follow Jesus is not limited; it is for all, no matter our age. In fact, for many of us, it is in these later years that the call becomes clearer. And so, we ask ourselves:

- In this season of life, how might I continue to serve, love, and witness to the kingdom of God?
- Am I still open to where God may be leading me, even now?
- Do I allow past regrets or losses hold me back from fully trusting Christ today?
- Is there someone I need to forgive, a word I need to speak, a prayer I need to offer?

These are questions which may help us respond to God's invitation and love, fully, freely, and faithfully.

It is in responding to Christ, even in uncertainty, that we step into the life we were created for. We become part of God's mission, part of his body, witnesses of his kingdom not just in word, but in the way in which we live, love, and trust.

So today, let us not rush past this bible passage. Let it speak to us, perhaps even unsettle us. Let it stir in us a deeper willingness to say, "Here I am, Lord." May we put our hand to the plough, fix our gaze on Jesus, and walk forward in faith, in love, and in hope.