

WOULD YOU FOLLOW HIM?

Luke 9:1-45

It's becoming apparent that Jesus' followers are following a Rejected Master.

He isn't winning popularity contests in Jerusalem!

Ch. 9 contains some lessons about what it means to be a follower of the rejected Messiah.

Luke develops two parallel thoughts:

1) **Continues to affirm who Jesus is: Messiah**

2) **Continues to prepare His followers for rejection.**

The series of events presents a cycle of contrasts:

* Evidence of His authority

* Prediction of his rejection and death.

Luke brings these two thoughts together in ch. 9:

What it will mean for us to follow the rejected Messiah

FIVE EVIDENCES THAT JESUS IS THE SON OF MAN

(1) **Delegation of authority 9:1-6**

The mission of the twelve demonstrates that Jesus, as Messiah, has the right and ability to delegate His authority to others (9:1-6). ~~He is able~~ to pass His power on to others.

He is able to pass His authority on to others.

To pass that authority on, He must first HAVE the authority!

The twelve are sent out to proclaim a message

and to authenticate that message by signs => healing diseases.

They are given His authority over demons and disease

To make clear to all around them that the kingdom has come,
in the person of the King => Jesus

This is a special gift, given to authenticate their ministry.

Rom. 15:18-19; 2 Cor. 12:12; Heb. 2:1-4

Miracles are evidence the Lord has sent them and is working through them. Their message still must pass the truth test (Deut. 18)

Today we use the truth test as basis for evaluation (1 Jn. 2:18-29; 4:1-6)

Miracles alone are not adequate proof that a person is sent by God.

Satan can enable false ministers to do amazing things

(Matt. 24:24; 2 Cor. 11:13-15; 2 Thess. 2:9-10)

As the apostles go, God supplies their needs through those to whom they go.

Those who accept Him demonstrate that acceptance by meeting the needs of the "apostles"

"Day of fads"—People imitate the method, thinking that is what "made it work"

"Go out with nothing—just trust the Lord!"

But on other occasions, the Lord tells them the opposite.

In Luke 22:35 they're to take a bag—the purpose has changed.

It isn't the Lord's point that missionaries ought to go out without any supplies or provisions.

If so, that would apply to all His followers.

Some say we all *ought* to live that way.

That isn't His point!

His point is that this provides the test to identify God's people.

Those who are truly God's people, will identify with and support these "sent out" emissaries of Jesus.

Martin: "The fact that the Twelve heal in Jesus' authority and power shows that He's the Messiah who can bring in the Kingdom. It's necessary that people believe the twelve. People evidence their belief in the twelve – and in Messiah – by showing hospitality to these men who are ministering in Jesus' authority. . . People who believe the message and the Messianic healings will be glad to share with the twelve."

If they're refused, they should shake the dust off their feet, a familiar act performed by orthodox Jews when they leave pagan territory (Luke 10:10-11; Acts 13:51)

"When Jews return home from Gentile country, they shake the dust off their feet to signify they're breaking ties with the Gentiles. In this way the twelve signify that certain Jewish townspeople are like pagans who won't listen or believe.

Whatever role God calls us to fulfill,

He provides what we need to accomplish it according to His supply.

(2) **Herod's fear** – Demonstration of authority 9:7-9

2nd evidence that Jesus is the Son of Man.

Jesus' convincing Messianic demonstration of power causes Herod to be concerned about the implications for Him, especially in the light of his role in John's death.

Rumors are coming to him that John is back.

He keeps trying to see Jesus –

Why? – He has a suspicion that this guy is John.

There's a lingering fear in Herod's mind: *John has come back to haunt him!*

Jesus, on the other hand, isn't looking for a chance to associate with the high and the mighty.

Herod's question concerning who this is is answered in the following sections:

Feeding of the 5000 is an evidence 9:10-17

Disciples cite 3 popular answers (9:18-19): Mainly – "John the Baptist"

Peter gives his own answer (9:20): "God's anointed One"

God answers (9:35): "My Son; the chosen One"

(3) **Feeding of 5000** 9:10-17 **Several evidences included:**

* **He could meet all their needs – abundantly – in excess**

* **Healing**

The apostles come back with glowing reports of all that happened.

He took them away for some time alone together.

They needed some time to unwind!

Even so, the people won't leave them alone. They pursue them.

Do you hear the tone in their voice in vss. 12-13?

When the disciples want to get rid of the people and be alone,

Jesus ministers to the people.

Sort of a set up for what follows: when He tells them that to follow Him they have to deny themselves.

What responsibilities has God placed before US that we would rather move away from to enjoy a little peace and quiet?

The feeding of 5000 demonstrates that Jesus, as Messiah, is able to satisfy the needs of His people (9:10-17).

Asking disciples to provide food makes clear how impossible the task is.

Only Messiah can handle this one.

[Immediately after this He asks them about Who He is]

"Feeding of the 5000" isn't adequate. It's 5000 males.

He must have fed at least 10,000 people.

All are satisfied and there's more left over!

* **Confession of disciples 9:18-20**

In contrast to crowds, who're uncertain of the significance of Jesus' mission, the disciples who heard and believed, recognize that He's Messiah.

He's **GOD'S ANOINTED ONE!**

Those who know Him best have no doubts!

They're still to keep this information to themselves.

The time for His presentation hasn't arrived yet.

* **Prediction of death 9:21-27**

Jesus reveals a truth they can't understand: He must be rejected and die before coming to reign in His glory over the Kingdom.

What this means for Him: He must suffer, be rejected, and die.

They will have to do the same, IF they want to follow Him!

These warnings are sprinkled through the Gospel accounts, but they're always hard to understand.

It **doesn't fit the popular conception** of what ought to happen to Messiah.

How could elders, scribes and chief priests reject and kill the Son of Man?!!

23-26 talk about PREREQUISITES FOR FOLLOWING HIM,

NOT prerequisites to become children of God or to obtain eternal life.

Except for Judas, they're already believers.

Here He's talking about those who want to follow Him.

What's it going to cost?

Anyone who wants to follow Jesus will have to carry a cross.

It's going to cost him everything.

"Deny yourself" – To say "no" to something.

Swindoll: *"in every moment of life to say 'no' to self and 'yes' to God . . . to dethrone self and enthrone God . . . to make Him the ruling passion and principle of life.*

Constant self-denial is the life of constant assent to God, expressed by giving in and submitting to Him."

"Take up your cross daily"

They had all seen a man take up a cross.

When a man took a cross and went off with a little band of Roman soldiers, he was on a one way journey.

He would not be back!

Swindoll: *"If you want to be my disciple, spiritually you must die to self. You must prefer My will to your will and must give up what you want to do with your life, allowing me to become your preeminent focus."*

"Follow Me"

Some observers think Jesus' disciples are throwing their life away.

They aren't getting any younger, and what's the return on their investment?

Jesus assures His followers that they have chosen the right values **9:24-26**.

[??] *"I saw in a dream that I was in the celestial city— though when and how I got there I could not tell. I was one of a great multitude which no man could number, from all countries and peoples and times and ages. Somehow I found that the saint who stood next to me had been there more than 1900 years."*

"Who are you?" I said, "I was a Roman Christian," he said. "I lived in the days of Paul and died in Nero's persecutions. I was covered with pitch, fastened to a stake, and set on fire to light up Nero's gardens."

"How awful!" I exclaimed.

"No," he said, "I was glad to do something for Jesus, He died on the cross for me."

A man on the other side then spoke: "I have been in heaven only a few hundred years. I came from an island in the south seas. John Williams, a missionary, came and told me about Jesus and I too learned to love Him. My fellow-countrymen killed the missionary, and they caught and bound me. I was beaten until I fainted and they thought I was dead, but I revived. The next day they knocked me on the head, cooked and ate me."

"How terrible!" I said.

"No," he answered, "I was glad to die as a Christian. You see the missionaries had told me that Jesus was scourged and crowned with thorns for me."

They both turned to me and said, "What did you suffer for Him? Or did you sell what you had for the money which sent men like John Williams to tell the heathen about Jesus?"

"I was speechless. While they were looking at me, I awoke and it was a dream! But I lay on my soft bed awake for hours, thinking of the money I had wasted on my own pleasure; my extra clothing and costly car, and many luxuries; and I realized that I did not know what the words of Jesus meant: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me."

9:24

JDP: "Suppose in view of the threats made against Christ by the religious leaders a person decides that it would be dangerous to identify with Christ. If this person decides not to follow Him in order to stay alive, that one would actually die. But the one who jeopardizes physical life by identifying with Jesus Christ would actually stay alive. . . .

Christ no doubt is anticipating the devastating judgment that would come on the nation through Titus in A.D. 70 as a result of the nation's rejection of Christ. At that time people would lose all that they had accumulated."

Ironsides: "I've always been thankful for a little incident that might have seemed trivial at the time. It took place after I had been converted, when I was only a lad, at a Saturday-night meeting on the street-corner, in which I was participating. Along came some of my schoolmates, and they were dumbfounded at seeing me in the meeting, and they listened in amazement when I witnessed for Christ. On Monday when I came to school, they greeted me derisively shouting "Hallelujah." I said, "Praise the Lord." Then they said, "Praise the Lord." I replied, "Amen." Some who were kind to me said, "Harry, what do you mean by turning religious? You are throwing your life away." Why; that is just what I intended to do! It came to me so clearly, and I am thanking God that He in His grace started me that way. I wouldn't exchange these fifty-three years of service for the Lord Jesus Christ for any career the world might offer me."

Bonhoeffer, executed by Nazis because of his testimony: "When Christ calls a man, He bids him come and die." To follow Jesus no matter what the cost--that's the way of the cross.

"Jesus, I my cross have taken, All to leave and follow Thee;

Destitute, despised, forsaken, Thou from hence my all shall be!

Perish every fond ambition, All I've sought, and hoped, and known;

Yet how rich is my condition, God and heaven are still my own!"

Jesus asks: what is the profit if a man gains the world, but loses or forfeits himself. Nothing material can compensate for loss of self.

- (4) **Revelation of Christ's glory 9:28-36** (cf. Matt. 16-17) – Transfiguration
Though it isn't God's plan for Jesus to reveal His glory yet, some disciples see a revelation of His glory which confirms that He's the promised One.

Transfiguration before the three disciples is the only time during His earthly ministry when our Lord reveals His glory. **2 Pet. 1:16**

Most commentators think Peter stuck his foot in his mouth here!

I think he was right on target!

God's response is for them to listen to Him.

It has nothing to do with the rightness or wrongness of what Peter said.

It has everything to do with Who He is!

Peter is thinking of the Feast of Booths,

a feast of in-gathering, associated with the kingdom (cf. Zech. 14:16-21).

Peter assumes that what's taking place is related to the coming of the kingdom.

Peter's ignorance of what he's saying doesn't imply he's wrong.

It may indicate he doesn't fully understand the significance of his own words.

He hasn't related that scenario to our Lord's words concerning His death.

Rejection by religious leaders, in Luke, is characterized by refusal to hear Him.

They've just found out who this is.

They've seen a divine authentication.

Therefore, God says, they better *hear* Him!

- (5) **Authority over supernatural forces**

Authority over Satanic power **9:37-43**

Jesus reveals His power over Satanic forces when He heals the boy with the unclean Spirit (9:37-43).

JDP: "Christ responds, 'O unbelieving and perverted generation. He addresses this to the father, to the crowd and to the teachers of the law rather than to the disciples who had been unable to heal the man. This son evidently has been brought as a test of the authority that belongs to Christ and as a test of the disciples as His representatives. The nation to whom Christ refused to give a sign is still seeking a sign.... The father confesses his dire need when he pleads, 'Take pity on us and help us' (Mark 9:22). The fact that the father has not put faith in Christ is evident in that he prefaces his plea with the words, 'If you can do anything.' [In Luke he just asks Jesus to 'look at' the boy.]

This lesson is designed to teach the men that **their ministry in future days must be carried on in dependence on God and faith in Him.**

It would be their faith, not their position, which would make it possible for them to fulfill the ministry entrusted to them."

Their power is dependent on Him.

Both the observers and they themselves think they can pull this one off.

The incident makes clear that **the power is not in them.**

FIVE CONSEQUENCES OF FOLLOWING THE REJECTED SON OF MAN

- (1) **Don't try to cover your own bases 9:1-6**

Those who love God will provide for you–

Trust God to provide your needs

Reject those who refuse to accept you as His messengers

- (2) **Allow God to supply all your needs 9:12-17**

- (3) **Affirm Who Jesus is 9:18-20**

- (4) **Deny yourself, take up your cross daily,**

and follow Him—to the cross 9:21-27

He's headed there. Following Him means taking the way to the cross.

Self goes on the cross—the "problem with a living sacrifice"

(5) You can't go it alone 9:37-43

JESUS, I MY CROSS HAVE TAKEN

*Jesus, I my cross have taken, All to leave and follow Thee;
Destitute, despised, forsaken, Thou from hence my all shalt be:
Perish every fond ambition, All I've sought, and hoped and known;
Yet how rich is my condition, God and heaven are still my own!*

*Let the world despise and leave me, They have left my Savior too;
Human hearts and looks deceive me; Thou art not, like man, untrue;
And, while Thou shalt smile upon me, God of wisdom, love, and might,
Foes may hate and friends may shun me; Show Thy face, and all is bright.*

*Man may trouble and distress me, 'Twill but drive me to Thy breast;
Life with trials hard may press me, Heaven will bring me sweeter rest.
O 'tis not in grief to harm me, While Thy love is left to me;
O 'twere not in joy to charm me, Were that joy unmixed with Thee.*

*Hasten on from grace to glory, Armed by faith and winged by prayer;
Heavens eternal days before me, God's own hand shall guide me there.
Soon shall close my earthly mission, Swift shall pass my pilgrim days,
Hope shall change to glad fruition, Faith to sight, and prayer to praise.*