

**“Jesus Wants Us ALL IN”**

You are about to hear three conversations that Jesus had while traveling with a group of people that he had built a relationship with. Jesus has built a relationship with each of us as well, so pretend like you are in this group listening to Jesus having these conversations. These conversations took place toward the end of his earthly ministry. Jesus knew that soon he would have to drink the full cup of God’s hellish wrath against the world’s sin - on the cross, all alone, a death sentence. Permit me to use poker terminology – “Jesus was ALL IN.” He was fully committed to fulfilling His mission on this earth – saving YOU, and me, and everybody even though he knew it was costing and would cost him everything. Bear that in mind as Jesus has three conversations in which he discusses the important topic of his followers’ commitment to **“proclaiming the kingdom of God”** (vs. 60). Or in other words, how committed does Jesus want his followers to be in proclaiming Law and Gospel – that each of us has sinned and deserves Hell forever because we fall short of God’s perfect standard (Law), but Jesus has declared each of us not guilty of any sin because he paid the punishment of Hell each of us deserves when he died on the cross and instead he gives us Heaven (Gospel). Luke 9:57-62.

**<sup>57</sup>As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go."  
<sup>58</sup>Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."**

**<sup>59</sup>He said to another man, "Follow me." But the man replied, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." <sup>60</sup>Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God."**

**<sup>61</sup> Still another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say good-bye to my family." <sup>62</sup>Jesus replied, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."**

Let’s talk about each of these conversations and as we do let each of us ask the honest question, does this describe me as a follower of Christ? **As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head"** (vs. 57-58). We might describe this first person as “on fire for Jesus.” This person has heard the Gospel and is so excited about their eternal salvation through Christ that they make unrealistic promises and have these unrealistic expectations that being a follower of Christ is easy and comfortable all the time! Being a follower of Christ is awesome and it is wonderful to be “on fire for Jesus,” but unless a Christian understands that earthly sacrifice is involved in being a follower of Jesus – then that person is in danger of growing weary and losing heart when the reality of being a follower of Jesus doesn’t meet their expectations. Specifically, Jesus point is that the Christian’s view of

earthly possessions and money needs to be different than the rest of the world. Jesus isn't saying each Christian needs to live in poverty. Jesus isn't saying it is wrong to own a home or other possessions or take a trip. Jesus IS saying that each Christian's number one priority should be proclaiming the kingdom of God and that should be reflected in your thought process and decisions for how you attain money, spend money, and how you view and accumulate earthly possessions."

**He said to another man, "Follow me." But the man replied, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God"** (vs. 59-60). Notice that with this person Jesus was the one who had to initiate the conversation. Perhaps this person was too familiar with the Gospel. I've heard it all before and so other things in life seem more important than proclaiming the kingdom of God. Or perhaps this person knows they should make God more of a priority in their lives and they have been encouraged by others to do it, but nothing ever seems to change because there are other more pressing matters in life to attend to. Jesus point is that there are certainly things in this world, like funerals, that are important, but in the grand scheme of things – even the most important things in life (work, raising kids, recreation, etc...) are not more important than personally carrying out and supporting Gospel ministry.

**Still another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say good-bye to my family." Jesus replied, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God"** (vs. 61-62). Notice that this person, like the first, approaches Jesus. This Christian is the good intentions Christian. They desire to seriously follow Jesus, but are reluctant because how will this affect my lifestyle? How will this affect my relationships? What will people think of me? Will they still treat me the same? Will I be okay with spending less time with my family and friends if I fully commit to proclaiming the kingdom of God? Jesus point is this - while family and friends are wonderful, and God certainly isn't against us loving, taking care of and spending time with them – EVERY other relationship or desire in life should take a back seat to my relationship with Christ and my desire to live for him and tell others about him.

So which of the three do you relate to best? There are various other Christians that I have in mind for each of these conversations. In Christian love God wants each of us to lovingly talk to that Christian when we see earthly things interfering with their ability to be all in for Jesus. But let's remember that every time you and I point the finger of blame at others, even if done in Christian love, three more fingers are pointing back at me and you. Jesus wants us to realize and admit that each of us struggles with being like each of the people who spoke with Jesus. And Jesus wants us to know that our unrealistic expectations of Christianity and our broken promises to God have hurt individual, local, and worldwide efforts to tell others about Jesus. And Jesus wants us to know that our love of money, love of earthly possessions, and love of earthly pleasure has hurt individual, local, and worldwide efforts to tell others about Jesus. And Jesus wants us to know that our earthly priorities, desire for comfort, and lack of courage to have spiritual conversations that we have been called to have has hurt individual, local, and worldwide efforts to tell others about Jesus. Jesus wants each of us to see how we are like all three of the people mentioned in these conversations, how each of us has struggled to be all in for Jesus. They say

admitting that you have a problem is the first step to recovery. Let each of us daily approach God with Godly sorrow that grieves over our lack of total commitment to loving him, living for him and telling others about him above ALL other things. And in faith let each of us daily cling to the good news that Jesus was ALL IN for us in life, in death, in resurrection so that we can live our lives free to have a clear conscience, free to have an enjoyable relationship with God, and free to look forward to our eternal home in Heaven. And as the Apostle Paul reminded us earlier, free in this way also. **“Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit”** (Galatians 5:24).

Jesus wants you and me to understand what it means to be one of his followers. It's more than just attending worship once a week. It means in all aspects of your life asking the question – is this mindset or decision or activity or relationship helping me or hurting me to be ALL IN when it comes to telling people about Jesus personally, as a congregation locally, and as a synod throughout the world. May God the Holy Spirit lead each of us to do our part in being ALL IN for Jesus. Amen.