

# Fit for the Kingdom

Luke: All Things New



## Series Goal

That Mercy Hill Church would be made new as we follow the One who is making all things new!



## Sermon Text

Luke 9:57-62



## Big Idea

In three encounters with three different men, Jesus shows us here what taking up our cross actually entails. On first read, His words sound harsh and uncaring, but as we look deeper we come to see that He is truly trying to set us free!

### (1) Uncalculated Enthusiasm? . . . Count the Cost! (vv. 57-58)

There is initial enthusiasm here but it is uncalculated. This brother has perhaps seen some wonderful things from Christ—the miracles, the teachings, the power, the crowds—and he is excited about what is in store. He wants to be on the winning team. He is ready to follow Jesus wherever he goes, but this is only because he has a mistaken notion about where Jesus is, in fact, going—to a throne; to a place of prestige and power. He has enthusiasm, but he has no idea what following Jesus will actually cost him. He shoots up with joy when he thinks it's all good, but when it gets hard he will fall away.

So Jesus senses the need to push back on this enthusiasm: “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’” (v. 58). It's a sobering word, intended not necessarily to douse this man's enthusiasm or quench his spirit. But it certainly is intended to get him to slow down and think—to Count the Cost.

### (2) Principled Postponement? . . . Commit Already! (vv. 59-60)

This man is quite opposite from the first. The first was eager, zealous to follow, but Jesus had to slow him down. This man is hesitating it would seem and so Jesus has to speed him up. Here is the person who hears and sees and kind of likes it but is still postponing full commitment, still shuffling his feet. Therefore, Jesus does not wait for this man to come up to Him with some promise or pledge, but, rather, Jesus goes after him instead: “Follow me” (v. 59a).

### (3) Divided Loyalties? . . . Surrender All! (vv. 61-62)

The problem here I would describe as Divided Loyalties. “I want a little bit of this and a little bit of that.” And Jesus will have none of it. The call is issued, in essence: “Surrender All!” The picture Jesus gives is simple enough to understand. We are not going to be able to move straight ahead so long as we are looking back. A man pushing a plow must keep his eyes on the line ahead or the furrows will zig and zag in the soil and the sowing and harvesting and everything else will be a mess.

## Reflection Questions



- Have you truly counted the cost and taken up your cross to follow Jesus? In what ways are you still tempted to try to make a home for yourself here? How does Jesus come to help?
- Consider St. Augustine's prayer again: “Grant me chastity and self-control, but please not yet.” Have you ever prayed a prayer like this? Are there things God is calling you to do even now—you know it, you plan to do it at some point, but you keep postponing obedience? Why?
- Have you experienced the sad effect of divided loyalties? Can you see how all of your sin (lack of love on the earth) is a breakdown somewhere in the interplay between *faith* in Christ and *hope* in heaven? Why are you anxious? Why are you bitter? Why are you filled with lust? How can following behind Jesus on this “road” reorient and rehabilitate us?
- Do you believe that Jesus is really saying these hard words in love for these men and for us? How have you experienced this?