

## Luke 9 V 51- End Excuses

So as we look at the reading what do we have. Jesus is setting out for Jerusalem and he sends the disciples ahead to prepare . so they come to a Samaritan village and not surprisingly they don't want to know , just because he's on his way to Jerusalem – a place they wouldn't want to be associated with .

What do the disciples do they report back and ask if they should ask God to blitz the place but he said no and they moved on.

Further on the journey a man comes to Jesus and says “ I'll follow you wherever you are going – what was he after ? or did he simply have such faith as not to care .

Jesus doesn't give him a direct reply but more of a general warning – The animals the foxes Have their lairs or dens , the birds have their roosts or nests but come with me and you'll have nowhere to lay your head.

He asked someone to follow him and what response does he get ?

Well I've got Dad's funeral to fix first . to someone else he asks he gets the reply – well I must say goodbye to the folks at home first .

Jesus is unimpressed ; he says ' let the dead bury their dead' and no one sets his hand to the plough and looks back , for one thing the furrow will be crooked and if you think that way your not fit to come with me .

Now all of that seems miles away from the caring Jesus we all know .

How good are you at making excuses ? I had a lad who worked for me who was an expert . He would come in and say things like ' there was a fire in new street so the bus couldn't get – really I came the same way by bus this morning and had no trouble .

They moved the bus stop – yes but there is another bus just up the road , the one I come on .

The list was endless.

Seriously when Jesus asks us to follow him he trucks no excuses . How often have we said I'm afraid I can't do that it's auntie Flo's party that day , But once we belong to Jesus' gang we should let him be in charge of what we do and say .

Now I don't say I don't make excuses , I do like all humans . it's not easy to do as the band I have on this morning says F.R.O.G fully rely on God .

We all try as hard as we can I'm sure but don't we need to think carefully before turning Jesus' invitation away.

Now it's not all excuses of course sometimes it's reasons and they are very different. The most serious one nowadays is ' I've got Covid but there are others.

I expect we've all had situations where we are simply not in a position to do , maybe we are ill, maybe it's been a very difficult week and still is .

I think the point Jesus makes is this ; following him is not a part time occupation it's as they say in modern parlance 24/7 365 or in the language I prefer the language that the man who wrote ' Prayers of Life ' many years ago . Michel Quoist .

Following Jesus is a whole life thing , every waking moment and sometimes sleeping ones as well!

If we really want to follow Jesus then we must try not to let life get in the way , after all who wants a crooked furrow.

As Sue pointed out last week the power of Jesus is life changing and yes it can sometimes be frightening the sheer strength of it but as the demon possessed man found – if you put aside the fears the rewards can be great .

I think it's a good thing to remember that God understands all our trivialities and will always help us to complete the task in hand if we put him first .

So from now on – No excuses only valid reasons as we strive to follow Jesus together . In order to follow Jesus together or apart we need to commit to the task in other words it's hands to the plough no looking back at what was before but letting Jesus guide us like the Oxen Guide the farmer when he's ploughing . like the farmer we rely on the strength of someone else . The farmer on the oxen - we rely on Jesus' power within us through the holy Spirit .

Remember to F.R.O,G – fully rely on God