

## Wherever.

If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. (Luke 9:23).

When we read these words of Jesus I think there is a temptation to read it as poetic. But as more and more people in this church step across the line from fan to follower, it's important to understand and think through the personal and more practical implications.

With that said, lets look at Luke 9:57, "They were walking along the road, a man said to him, I will follow you **wherever** you go." That sounds like a follower. No restrictions. No boundaries. Wherever. But take a look at vs. 58 where Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head." I can hear this man back peddling now, did I say wherever?

This guy says, "I will follow you wherever." And Jesus points to a place that will be a threat to his comfort and security and asks, "What about there?"

You don't mess with a man's security!! Example: Tell the story of how I started Mid-South Painting. Psalms 91:1-7.

Life puts us all at a cross roads and we have two ways to respond in that moment. We can respond in fear and disbelief or we can respond by trusting the one who called us and is faithful!!!

- It's easier to speak about Jesus when you are making a general statement without any specific commitments. Following Jesus means that you go where Jesus goes. When you think of it that way, suddenly those poetic words have some huge implications.
- How many of you have heard of the old song, "I Surrender All"? Here are some of the words: 'All to Jesus I surrender All to him I freely give. I will ever love and trust him, in his presence daily live. All to Jesus I surrender, Lord I give myself to thee. Worldly pleasures all forsaken, take me Jesus take me now. I surrender all, I surrender all. All to thee my blessed Savior, I

surrender all.' That song wouldn't have the same ring to it if it went like this: I surrender some!!

- Like the first man, we may be quick to say to Jesus I will follow you **wherever**. Lets move this from the general to the more specific. Where is the one place you find it most difficult to follow Jesus? Where is the one place he would point to and say "How about there?"
- What about in your home? Instead of being patient, you are demanding. Instead of being encouraging you constantly critical. Instead of being the spiritual leader, you are passive and apathetic in your own home. So what about there?
- Wherever? What about work? Don't say to Jesus, you wait here in the car while I go to work. When they clock in to work they clock out of following.
- Wherever? What about the game? What about in the neighborhood? What about when you're with old friends? OR, what about Burma or Thailand? Dana is going to come up and read a story of the first American missionary that was ever sent to the mission field.
- One of the reasons we don't follow Jesus Wherever is, we treat Jesus as a personal consultant rather than Lord of our lives. Larry Osborne said this: "Now, a consultant is someone whose wisdom we highly value and listen to, but at the end of the day we make the final decision. That's why they are called consultants. Here's the problem: God doesn't do consulting. Never has. Never will. He does God. When we treat him like a consultant, he simply stops showing up for meetings."
- Jesus wants his followers to say, "My name is YES, now where do you want me to go!!!" See fear always asks the question, WHAT IF? What if I get married and he doesn't change? What if I take the job and it doesn't workout? What if I'm not successful? And what if he wants me to share my

faith with my neighbor? What if he wants me to reconcile with someone who has hurt me?

- The other side of the coin is, **Saying yes to Jesus means saying no to...**
- Lastly, When a Talmid (student) was finally accepted as a follower of a rabbi, they would leave their homes, their jobs, and whatever else that might hold them back and they would follow this rabbi, literally wherever he went.
- This idea of following closely is captured in a Jewish saying: “May you be covered in his dust.”
- A follower of Jesus goes wherever Jesus goes. Maybe it’s to someone who everyone else has given up on. But ultimately if you follow Jesus “wherever” you won’t just end up covered by his dust, you will end up covered in his blood.