



Sermon Notes

Term – Autumn Term

Series – Gospel of Luke

Gathering & Date – 8th December 2019

Title – Follow me!

Preacher –Neil Shepherd

Reading – Luke 5:27-39

Main message of this talk in one sentence: The invitation and direction of Jesus – come follow me!

Main points –

Luke 5:33-39

Jesus is confronted by a specific question about fasting and why his disciples are not fasting when John's disciples did fast. As well as responding to the specific question, Jesus goes to the heart of the question which is why are things different for Jesus. In this section of Luke, Jesus points us to the new dynamic of the Kingdom and that this new thing can not be added onto the old way of doing things. Jesus has come to transform everything. This is a constant battle which will be addressed in a number of letters of the New Testament where people try to hold up the old rules and regulations against the new ways of God's kingdom.

Luke 5:27-32

If God is doing a new thing, then what is the invitation of Jesus into this new Kingdom and how do we respond? In the story of Levi we find a man who is an outsider to all. He is going to become a disciple of Jesus who becomes one of the first Apostles and the author of a Gospel (We also know him as Matthew). At this stage he is seen as a traitor, someone that shouldn't be hanging out with Jesus. In Luke 17:9-14 we find a Pharisee praying and thanking God that he is not 'a robber, evildoer, adulterer or even a tax collector.' At this stage Levi is the worst of all people! Jesus enters the scene and everything changes- Jesus calls Levi to follow him.

The word translated follow is *Akoloutheo (Greek)* and means to follow, to accompany, to travel on the road, to imitate and to assist. Jesus is calling Levi to come on a journey with him so that he can learn from and assist Jesus in the Kingdom ministry. This is the invitation that Jesus speaks to each of us – will you follow me.

We looked at a number of passages throughout Luke that we see people following Jesus, the reasons why and the reason to wait:

Luke 5:11 Simon left everything and followed

Luke 7:9 the crowd followed – they were interested to find out more

Luke 9:23 take up your cross and follow me

Luke 9:59-61 reason for waiting to follow

Luke 18:22-28 Jesus challenged the rich young man to give up everything and follow – worldly stuff will get in the way!

Finally, at the end of the story of Levi, we are reminded by Jesus of the direction of his invitation. Jesus has come, not for the righteous (or those who think they have it all sorted) but for the 'sick' (those who are in need of help) As we follow Jesus, we can expect him to lead us to those that are in need in all forms and that they will most probably be people who are already in our lives if we are open to looking with Jesus.

For further thought and prayer –

1. What was significant for you from the teaching on Sunday – give time for everyone to share their take home message?
2. Jesus invites us to follow him – what might this look like in practical terms?
3. The initiation means more than just stand and watch – to follow means to accompany and assist. What are the barriers to hearing this invitation from Jesus?
4. We looked at a number of different ‘I will follow but...’ As you hear the invitation of Jesus to follow him, are there specific challenges which cause you to say ‘yes...but...’ Is there any that Jesus is asking you to lay down at this time?
5. What does it look like for you, in this season for life, to follow Jesus to the ‘sick’ and not the righteous? (Luke 5:31&32) Are there particular people in your life at the moment that you can be praying for and responding to Jesus invitation for them?