



## WORD

<sup>16</sup>Passing alongside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. <sup>17</sup>And Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men." <sup>18</sup>And immediately they left their nets and followed him. **MARK 1:16-18**

When Jesus invited Simon and Andrew to follow Him, their response was immediate and wholehearted. Right away, they left what they were doing and followed Him. They probably didn't have all the answers to their questions and they probably didn't know where they were going, but they followed Jesus anyway. In this lesson, we will learn what it means to follow Jesus by looking at the stories of three men who almost became Jesus' disciples in Luke 9.

## 1 No Conditions

<sup>57</sup>As they were going along the road, someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." <sup>58</sup>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." **LUKE 9:57,58**

When a would-be disciple said he'll follow Jesus, His response was a challenge. Jesus reminded the man that following Him is not easy, comfortable, or convenient. Following Jesus, like Simon and Andrew, means doing so without conditions or preset notions. It means following Jesus with willingness and a readiness to face challenges. What challenges have you faced as a follower of Jesus? Why do you follow Him in spite of these challenges?

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## 2 No Delays

<sup>59</sup>To another he said, "Follow me." But he said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." <sup>60</sup>And Jesus said to him, "Leave the dead to bury their own dead. But as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God." **LUKE 9:59,60**

When Jesus told another man to follow Him, the man responded by wanting to fulfill his duty in their culture. Though Jesus commands us to honor our parents, He does also demand immediate and complete obedience. If we are to follow Him, we cannot delay and we cannot give excuses. Just as Simon and Andrew immediately followed Jesus, He calls us to do the same. Though Jesus' response may have seemed offensive to some, why is it appropriate? Why does Jesus' command take precedence over family, culture, and personal preferences?

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## 3 No Distractions

<sup>61</sup>Yet another said, "I will follow you, Lord, but let me first say farewell to those at my home." <sup>62</sup>Jesus said to him, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God." **LUKE 9:61,62**

When a third would-be disciple expressed a desire to follow Jesus but was half-hearted in his decision, Jesus said that following Him is an all-or-nothing deal. Putting a hand to the plow and looking back will mean veering off course and will render us unsuccessful in our task. If we are to truly follow Jesus, we will have to say no to distractions and anything else that tries to take His place in our lives. What did James and John leave to follow Jesus (Mark 1:19,20)?

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