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## First Things First

(Luke 9:51-62)

### Introduction

1. [Series] Resonate: Tune into Jesus' frequency to amplify the gospel in your life & church, and to impact the culture.
2. Background
  - a. [9:18-27] Jesus is recognized as the Christ-King, reveals His destiny at the cross, and prepares those who will follow Him.
  - b. [9:28-50] The glory of Jesus as God is briefly unveiled, but the disciples still don't understand what it means to follow Him.
  - c. We'll see how some people respond to Jesus' call, & learn what it means to really follow Him.

### Jesus comes first before tribe [Luke 9:51-56]

1. [9:51] Turning point: Knowing His death, resurrection & ascension near, Jesus resolutely sets His face toward Jerusalem.
  - a. Jerusalem: The "City of God", "city on a hill"; where God's presence used to dwell; a place of enormous spiritual & political significance.
  - b. Samaritans: An offshoot of Jewish people who've intermarried with pagans & practice heretical faith.
    - i. Because of intense conflicts, Jewish people would walk around Samaria
    - ii. But Jesus walks through it; the good news about King Jesus & His salvation is for everyone.
2. [9:52] Jesus sends messengers ahead.
  - a. To make preparations for lodging, as Jesus is bringing a large entourage to small towns.
  - b. They proclaim that Jesus, the Christ-King, is coming.
3. [9:53] Samaritans' response:
  - a. They don't want Jesus because He is determined to go to Jerusalem.
  - b. They're only willing to have Jesus, provided He validates their tribe (as Samaritans).
  - c. We often want Jesus in our tribe, on our terms.
  - d. Jesus says: I'm King & God. I don't join your team; You join Mine.
4. [9:54-56] Disciples' response:
  - a. James & John want to call down the fire of judgment because Samaritans are not their tribe.
  - b. Jesus rebukes them because His judgment will come, but now is a time of invitation to all for salvation.
5. Application: What is your tribe? What is your group or identity?
  - a. When Jesus calls you to repent of your mission, identity, community, are you willing to follow?

### Jesus comes first before comfort [Luke 9:57-58]

1. [9:57] A man claims he will follow Jesus wherever He goes.
  - a. [9:58] Jesus' response: Are you sure? I'm homeless, broke, worse off than animals, & going to a cross.
  - b. Following Jesus is the best life, not the easiest.
2. Jesus comes first before comfort.
  - a. Following Jesus, whatever the cost, is more valuable than all of your possessions & comforts.
  - b. Jesus is the gift that we treasure above all (cf. John 10:10).

### **Jesus comes first before security [Luke 9:59-60]**

1. [9:59] Jesus' invitation: Follow Me.
  - a. Second man's response: I want to follow You, but first... let me bury my father.
2. Problem: Man turns it into an either/or proposition: Honor parents or follow Jesus?
  - a. Things should be done out of obedience to Jesus, not instead of obedience to Him
3. Problem: Man's dad is not dead yet: Where would he be if his dad was dead or dying?
  - a. What he's really saying: Let me wait until my dad is gone, then I can come follow You.
  - b. Reason 1: He finds security in his father's approval.
  - c. Reason 2: He finds security in a financial inheritance.
  - d. Attitude: Someday, I'll follow, but not today.
4. [9:60] Jesus' response.
  - a. [60a] There's nothing you can do for a dead person:
    - i. Even those spiritually dead can bury the physically dead.
  - b. [60b] But you could be serving the living:
    - i. Preach the good news of the King & Kingdom.
  - c. Mission trumps security.
    - i. If you wait, you won't do anything
    - ii. Or you'll waste time that could have been spent bringing the King & Kingdom to the living.
  - d. Myth: If I put security before Jesus, I can have both.
5. Application: Not someday, today.
  - a. If not a follower of Jesus, is today that day for you? He's not saying hate your parents, but love God first & foremost.
  - b. If a follower of Jesus: How are you choosing security today, & putting off proclaiming the Kingdom & serving the King for tomorrow?

### **Jesus comes first before the past [Luke 9:61-62]**

1. [9:61] Third man's response: I want to follow You, but first... let me say bye to my family.
  - a. Man refers to [1 Kings 19:19-21]: Elisha is called to follow the prophet Elijah as his successor, & makes the same request.
  - b. Elisha burnt his plow, symbolizing cutting ties with his old direction of life to plow God's calling.
2. [9:62] Jesus' response: You're not like Elisha; you're not going home to burn your plow, but turn back from mine.
  - a. You can't go straight forward while looking backward.
  - b. Heart of problem: Those who look back with longing want to go back.
    - i. Myth: It was better back there (like Israel wanting to return to captivity in Egypt; cf. Num 11:4-6).
6. Application: What do you look back at with regret?
  - a. What do you feel would have been "better" in your life if it weren't for Jesus?
  - b. What do you feel like He's withholding from you?
  - c. Jesus says it is all an illusion & lie; we forget that He's Lord, King, God, Savior & gives us His best.
  - d. Through Jesus, you can plow a life of repentance, humility, obedience, joy, harvest & fruitfulness.

### **Conclusion**

1. When we say: "I'll follow You, but first...", it means tribe, comfort, security or the past come first, & Jesus second.
  - a. We don't know what these people chose, as if the question is left for us to answer for ourselves.
2. Will I follow Jesus first, right now, no looking back, or not?
  - a. For some: It means becoming a Christian today.
  - b. For others: You realize your life is a crooked row; it's time to be wholeheartedly following Jesus, by the grace of God & through the power of the Holy Spirit.