

May 6

Scriptures: Read Luke 9

Key Verse: "... Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head." (Luke 9:58)

Overview

Read the last part of this chapter, and you get the distinct impression that Jesus didn't have the foggiest idea, when it came to public rations. Before you get defensive (as if Jesus needs defenders!), think about it for a moment.

Suppose you had the greatest message the world has ever heard, but it wasn't going all that well with the ratings. People were ignoring you at best, and persecuting you at worst. You've just had a bad day in Samaria when, along comes a bright-eyed idealist who just loves you and wants to follow you "wherever you go" (v.57). So what do you do? You sign him up! You give him your "now that I believe" follow-up manual, get his full name and address, put him on your mailing list, and make sure the nurture-group leader in his area gets him to the next house meeting. You pray with him and tell him he's made a wise decision.

What you don't do is highlight your personal poverty and imply in no uncertain terms that if he follows you he'll be a pauper, too. Nor do you turn to other would-be followers and tell them that it's either you or their bereaved families—"You go to that funeral and you can forget following me. You say goodbye to your family, and I say goodbye to you." Was Jesus insensitive here or what?

It appears He was. But then appearances can be misleading. There is another cliché, "what you see isn't always what you get". It could very well be that at this point in Jesus' ministry He was, in His eyes, becoming too "popular". More and more wanted to follow Him, but they were doing so for the wrong reasons. Jesus had to do some sifting of wheat from chaff. And I suspect Jesus' words to these idealists were meant not just for them but for the scores of would-be disciples who were within earshot.

Jesus wanted it to be known that there was a cost in following Him. He demanded singleness of purpose and maturity. He wanted people with an eye to the heavenly kingdom, feet on the ground, and back bent in doing good.

Grace isn't cheap!

Prayer

Lord Jesus, according to the grace given unto us, we determine to follow You as Your true disciples, whatever the cost may be.