

Title: RISKY BUSINESS, LUKE 9:51 – 62
(Chatham, NJ; 06/30/13, AM) [Pc – Narrative Exegesis]

Theme: Discipleship is risky because it demands total allegiance to Christ; everyone and everything else comes in second place.

Purpose: To refocus our commitment to serve Christ with courage and complete trust in the face of many roadblocks.

Introduction:

1. Following Jesus is not always easy.
2. Discipleship demands that we choose the narrow, hard path (Mt. 7:13-14).
3. The challenges of following surface as Jesus begins his journey to Jerusalem (9:51) where suffering and the cross await him.
4. Jesus challenges our motivations and inner desires.

I. Samaritans Reject, Disciples Misunderstand, 51-56

A. Going to a Samaritan village?

1. Other than what we have seen in John 4, this seems out of place.
2. Long-standing differences and mistrust get in the way (explain)
3. Jesus answers the dispute, "Salvation is from the Jews," John 4:22
4. Yet he institutes worship that is of the spirit and the truth, John 4:23
5. Is he building good will? Seeking dialogue? Announcing the Kingdom?
6. He maintains exclusivity, "No one comes to the Father except through me," John 14:6
7. He follows a script for unity in himself, Eph. 1:10.
8. The Samaritans reject him, perhaps because of the long-standing divisions, hatred, and prejudices.

B. Unnerved the disciples

1. They have not fully comprehended discipleship in previous discussions: Jesus' death, who is the greatest, who is for or against us
2. Incensed at the rejection?
3. Seek to preserve Christ's honor?
4. Shades of Elijah when he called down fire to slay his enemies, 2 Kings 1
5. Jesus rebukes them, 55
6. His mission is to save, not destroy

II. More Followers Redirected, 57-62 (Remember that Jesus is on his way to crucifixion in Jerusalem, verses 44 & 51)

A. No place to lay his head, 57-58

1. Someone commits to follow Jesus anywhere, 57
2. He does not realize what that entails
3. Jesus is not just homeless, poor, and constantly on the road
4. "No place for his head" – alienated and separated from the ways of the world
5. Following Jesus can produce loneliness and feelings of alienation, 1 Peter 4:4

B. Let the dead bury their dead, 59-60

1. An important duty under the Law
2. Is the father already dead?
3. He could be just putting off following Jesus to a later time.
4. Even familial duties and relationships cannot come between someone and God

C. Don't look back, 61-62

1. This seems at least a cut above the second excuse
 2. At first it appears that Elisha does this, 1 Kings 19:19-21
 3. But Elisha has clearly severed his ties to his past life, and this is the difference Jesus wants to highlight
 4. When we die to an old way of life, we cannot long for it once again.
- D. Jesus negates artful dodges, ones that sound legitimate
1. Though these are perplexing demands, obedience often precedes understanding
 2. Discipleship is risky business
 3. Filled with loneliness, moments of doubt, self-denial, and betrayal
 4. God comes first always and in everything
 5. Said this in other places: excuses at the invitation (14:15-24), reject family and own life (14:26)
- E. Room for family responsibilities
1. Care for family is a first duty, Eph. 5:22 – 6:4
 2. Without God these things will never be the same, hence the reason people today seek to redefine and institution built into the very fabric of creation: marriage
 3. We must de-tangle ourselves from the world
 4. Only Christ gives meaning and worth to these things

Conclusion:

1. Jesus leads us to the cross (where he is headed here in Luke 9).
2. Let nothing stand between you and the cross.
3. Can we see God in all circumstances? This is part of the risk.
4. When we don't understand, can we still obey?
5. His death and resurrection give life and significance to everything else.
6. You die and are resurrected with him in faith, repentance, and baptism.
7. Don't let anything come between you and Christ.