

# Let Nothing Stop You

1 Corinthians 5:58



## Excess Baggage

**Read:** Luke 9:51-62

I love books and I have a lot of them. They exceed the capacity of my bookshelf and have started accumulating in piles all over my home and office. Now and again someone asks if they can borrow one and I politely decline. It is my fear that one of my precious books may not return to me or may get damaged. I like to think that I am willing to give up anything to follow Jesus, but if he came to me and asked me to sacrifice my books I may seriously reconsider my position. It's easy to be a disciple when it doesn't cost us anything. It becomes difficult when Jesus starts to ask things of us.

We all have something we can't give up. The three men in the gospel tell Jesus that they will follow him, but when Jesus challenges them to take the next step, they can't handle the sacrifice. Perhaps we sound like them: I will follow you Jesus, but just don't ask me to sacrifice my \_\_\_\_\_ (insert: book collection, hobbies, sports, sleeping in, number in my bank account, etc.).

In talking to the three men, Jesus makes it clear that Christian discipleship requires unconditional resolve. Even family ties and filial obligations should not distract us from our purpose. That is why he says, "let the dead bury the dead" (Luke 9:60). In other words, those who are spiritually dead worry about the things of this world. They are not willing to make the sacrifices necessary to be a disciple. Unfortunately, sacrifice makes us uncomfortable. That is why we don't like to give up the things that appear important to us. Jesus tells us that the things of the world won't make us happy, but resolutely fulfilling God's purpose and design for our lives will.

Jesus encourages us to follow his example. In the gospel he was "resolutely determined to journey to Jerusalem" (Luke 9:51). In other words, nothing was going to stop him from fulfilling his purpose. Nor should anything stop us from fulfilling ours. That means we will have to make sacrifices and get rid of whatever stops us from fulfilling our purpose. God tells us that our purpose is to be more like Jesus and to proclaim the Kingdom of God. That's what's important; everything else is just excess baggage.

**Grow:** What is one thing I would have a hard time giving up in order to follow Jesus? Could I give it up if necessary?