

Luke 9:58

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

Analysis

Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests—Jesus points to the humblest creatures: scavenging foxes (ἀλώπεκες, alōpekes) and common birds (πετεινά, peteina). Even these possess natural shelter and security. **But the Son of man hath not where to lay his head** (οὐδὲ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἔχει ποῦ τὴν κεφαλὴν κλίνη, ho huios tou anthrōpou ouk echei pou tēn kephalēn klinē)—Christ's earthly ministry involves deliberate homelessness and material insecurity.

The title **Son of man** (οὐδὲ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου) evokes Daniel 7:13's glorious cosmic figure who receives eternal dominion, yet Jesus applies it to His present humiliation. The King of kings has nowhere to lay His head. This paradox defines incarnational ministry: glory veiled in poverty, majesty in meekness. Jesus warns the enthusiastic volunteer that following Him means sharing this rejection. Discipleship offers no guaranteed comfort, security, or earthly home—only Christ Himself. For those who require material stability before following, the cost is too high.

Historical Context

Jesus's itinerant ministry depended on hospitality (Luke 8:1-3), but this was precarious—as the Samaritan rejection just demonstrated (9:53). Unlike settled rabbis with established schools, Jesus traveled constantly, relying on providence and occasional supporters. His homelessness was both circumstantial (rejection by

His own) and chosen (incarnational identification with the poor). The early church would embrace similar itinerancy and material sacrifice (Acts 4:34-37).

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. What does Jesus's description of His own homelessness reveal about the incarnation's extent—that God in flesh embraced not just humanity but human poverty, rejection, and insecurity?
2. How does Christ's warning challenge cultural Christianity that markets faith as a means to material blessing, comfort, and security rather than a call to cross-bearing discipleship?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	εἶπεν	αὐτῷ	ό	Ἰησοῦς	Αἱ	ἀλώπεκες	φωλεοὺς
And	said	unto him	G3588	Jesus	G3588	Foxes	holes
G2532	G2036	G846		G2424		G258	G5454
ἔχει	καὶ	τὰ	πετεινὰ	τοῦ	οὐρανοῦ	κατασκηνώσεις	ό
hath	And	G3588	birds	G3588	of the air	have nests	G3588
G2192	G2532		G4071		G3772	G2682	
δὲ	νιὸς	τοῦ	ἀνθρώπου	οὐκ	ἔχει	ποῦ	τὴν
but	the Son	G3588	of man	not	hath	where	G3588
G1161	G5207		G444	G3756	G2192	G4226	G2776
κλίνῃ							
to lay							
G2827							

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 8:20 (References Jesus): And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

James 2:5 (Parallel theme): Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?

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