

Luke 9:61

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house.

Analysis

And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house (ἀποτάξασθαι τοῖς εἰς τὸν οἶκόν μου, apotaxasthai tois eis ton oikon mou)—the third would-be disciple requests permission to say goodbye to his household. The verb apotassō means to set in order, arrange, take leave of—it implies not a quick farewell but settling affairs, making arrangements, perhaps divesting property. Like the second man (9:59), he wants to follow but requests delay: **let me first** (πρῶτον, prōton).

His request echoes Elisha's to Elijah: 'Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee' (1 Kings 19:20). Elijah permitted it; Jesus forbids it (9:62). Why the difference? Because the kingdom's arrival in Christ creates unprecedented urgency. What was permissible in the old covenant becomes inadequate under the new. The man's request sounds reasonable—honoring family, responsible transition—but Jesus exposes it as halfhearted commitment masquerading as prudence.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern custom expected proper leave-taking when entering a teacher's service, especially settling debts, transferring property, and providing for dependents. The man's request reflects cultural norms, not selfishness. But Jesus's kingdom mission operates outside normal cultural patterns. The gospel's urgency—that the Messiah has come and is heading to Jerusalem to die—permits no

delays, however culturally appropriate or family-honoring. The kingdom demands immediate, absolute priority.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. What 'setting your affairs in order' keeps you from immediate, wholehearted obedience to Christ's call, and how does this man's example reveal that reasonable-sounding delays can mask divided loyalty?
2. How does Jesus's refusal to grant what Elijah allowed Elisha demonstrate that fuller revelation demands fuller response—that living under the New Covenant requires more radical obedience than the Old Covenant saints exhibited?

Interlinear Text

Εἶπεν	δὲ	καὶ	ἔτερος	Ἀκολουθήσω	σοι	κύριε·	πρῶτον
said	And	also	another	I will follow	thee	Lord	first
G2036	G1161	G2532	G2087	G190	G4671	G2962	G4412

δὲ	ἐπίτρεψόν	μοι	ἀποτάξασθαι	τοῖς	εἰς	τὸν
And	let	me	go bid them farewell	G3588	which are at home at	G3588
G1161	G2010	G3427	G657		G1519	

οἶκόν	μου
house	my
G3624	G3450

Additional Cross-References

Luke 14:26 (Parallel theme): If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

1 Kings 19:20 (Parallel theme): And he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee. And he said unto him, Go back again: for what have I done to thee?

Deuteronomy 33:9 (Parallel theme): Who said unto his father and to his mother, I have not seen him; neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor knew his own children: for they have observed thy word, and kept thy covenant.

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