

Luke 9:62

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

Analysis

Jesus responds to a would-be disciple: 'No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.' The plowing metaphor illustrates single-minded devotion—a plowman looking back makes crooked furrows. 'Looking back' (Greek 'blepōn eis ta opisō,' βλέπων εἰς τὰ ὄπισω) means focusing on what's behind rather than forward. Kingdom work requires undistracted commitment, not divided loyalty. The statement 'is fit' (Greek 'euthe tos,' εὐθετός) means suitable, useful—divided hearts are useless for kingdom purposes. Discipleship demands wholehearted, forward-focused commitment.

Historical Context

This was the third in a series of discipleship encounters (vv. 57-62). A man wanted to follow Jesus but first bury his father (v. 59-60), another wanted to say goodbye to family (v. 61). Jesus' responses seem harsh by cultural standards—honoring parents and proper burial were sacred duties. Yet Jesus demands priority over even legitimate obligations. Plowing was common agricultural work in first-century Palestine, requiring focused attention to create straight furrows for planting. A plowman constantly looking back produced unusable, crooked rows. The metaphor of 'looking back' may allude to Lot's wife (Genesis 19:26), who looked back on what she was leaving and became a pillar of salt.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does the plowing metaphor illustrate the necessity of wholehearted, undivided commitment in discipleship?
2. What does Jesus' demand for priority over legitimate family obligations teach about the radical nature of kingdom commitment?

Interlinear Text

εἶπεν δὲ πρὸς αὐτοῦ ὁ Ἰησοῦς Οὐδεὶς ἐπιβαλὼν τὴν
said And unto him G3588 Jesus No man having put G3588
G2036 G1161 G4314 G846 G2424 G3762 G1911

χεῖρα αὐτοῦ ἐπ' ἄροτρον καὶ βλέπων εἰς τὰ ὄπίσω
hand him to the plough and looking back G3588 G3694
G5495 G846 G1909 G723 G2532 G991 G1519

εὑθετός ἐστιν εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ
fit is back G3588 the kingdom G3588 of God G2316
G2111 G2076 G1519 G932

Additional Cross-References

Philippians 3:13 (Parallel theme): Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

Hebrews 10:38 (Parallel theme): Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

2 Timothy 4:10 (Parallel theme): For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.

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