

I have decided to follow Jesus

I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2 Baby Dedication 3rd Service: *Giuliana Brielle Shafer*. John & Gina. Ariana(8) Milena (4)
- B. Slide3 Empowered to Connect: Live simulcast. Hosted by ICA. April 8,9 here at CM. Parents of foster & adoptive children.
- C. Slide4 Good Fri to Great Sunday: Communion - Crosswalk - Easter Services.
- D. Slide5 Thrive: Andrew L. *Who Am I?* Study of man. rm.131
- E. Slide6 Fourth World Movie: Hosting a screening. Free @ 3pm. Come hear & meet *David Bolt* executive director of *Bring Me Hope*, Producer & Director of *4th World*.
 1. Filmed in PI. Inspired by true events. Captures the life of *children living at risk*.
- F. Slide7-13 New Web Site: Ken Pollard. our Site Creator/Web master. calvarymurrieta.com
 1. 7 Home. 8 Our Heart. 9 Studies. 10 2 calendar. 11 1 calendar. 12 CR/Fellowship. 13 Shelby
 2. What was the purpose of creating a new site? [technology improve. way people connect changed]
 3. What is the biggest change in the new website? [responsive/adaptive]
 4. What are some new features on website? [Social Media integration. New calendar. Tagging. Shelby]

II. Slide14 Intro: *I have decided to follow Jesus*

- A. Slide15 Last week I pointed out, Matthew 1st introduced to **the Person of the King** in ch. 1-4. Next, to the **Principle of the King** in 5-7. & now in 8,9 as **the Power of the King**.
 1. We said if a king **doesn't have power** what good are His credentials/principles?
 2. In ch.8,9 we have **10 miracles** (covered 4 last Sun).
 3. Last week we looked at the **Grace to the outcasts**. This week, **Peace to the disturbed** (8:23-9:17). Next, **Restoration to the broken** (9:18-38).
 4. **3 types of miracles: Nature Miracles. Sp Authority miracles. Healing Miracles** [Last week, Healing Miracle. This week, Discipleship & a Nature Miracle]
- B. Slide16 What would you say if Jesus spun around this morning, pointed at you, & asked you, in front of everyone, **why are you following Me?** What would you say? [have to tell truth]
 1. Understand the make up of this group: some hanging upon Jesus' every word; others **interested** in Him; others **attracted** by Him; some loved the

association with his popularity; some enjoyed the **miracles**; some the occasional **free lunch**; they all felt they wanted to be with Him in some way.

III. THE HASTY & RELUCTANT FOLLOWER (18-22)

- A. Here we learn why Jesus was not impressed with the great crowds (18a). The people weren't willing to *forsake all* to follow Christ, *or giving their all* for Christ.
- B. Slide17 THE HASTY (18-20)
- C. This Scribe probably had been listening to His teachings (sermon on mnt) & got fired up & on impulse said, *Count me in!*
- D. This Scribe said, *It'll be great to be your disciple...the stories, campfires, healings, crowds...and* Jesus said, *Wait, there's a price.*
1. In addition to having a traveling ministry and no permanent home, Jesus *cannot rest* because of the crowds' needs.
 2. Jesus response, *but do you know even birds & foxes have more than Me.*
 3. *Are you ready to start on the bottom?*
- E. So, *Eager Eddy* is our 1st prospective disciple.
1. He volunteered to *follow Jesus anywhere...till Jesus warned that discipleship might be uncomfortable.* Hardship kept him from following.
 2. Lesson: *Count the cost before you shoot off your mouth.*
- F. This 1st man was *too fast...this next man, too slow.*
- G. Slide18a THE RELUCTANT (21,22)
- H. The 1st guy hardened by *possessions*; this man by *relationships*. *Lord I'll follow you when I...*
- I. The father hadn't died yet. Because they buried them *the same day* & he would have been home with dad in that process.
1. The son wishes to go home, live in comfort w/his father *till his death* (perhaps yrs away), collect his inheritance, *and then at his leisure...become a disciple.*
 - a) Slide18b We spell this *P-r-o-c-r-a-s-t-i-n-a-t-i-o-n*
 2. Slide19a This man's request probably reflects an *indefinite postponement* of joining Jesus' disciples.

3. Lk. 9:59 tells us **Jesus called this man**. *When Jesus calls we must respond*.
- a) His Excuse...more time was needed.
 - b) *The most sacred home ties* are **snare**s when they interfere w/our devotion to our Lord
 - (1) It's amazing how many **grown ups** are still **bound** to their **parents** wishes. Still living under their shadow, **or** their heavy hand, **or** are heavily indebted \$ to them, **or** still hope to one day please them.
 - c) **Slide19b** Let *no relationship* stand in the way...if your serious about following Jesus.
 - (1) Are you Engaged? Dating? Is your boyfriend/girlfriend going to help you to run...to follow Jesus? **Or** are you just *hoping* one day they'll step into a church? Which relationship is affecting you? **or**, *infecting* you?

J. So, *Reluctant Ralph* here is our 2nd prospective disciple.

1. **Slide19c** Kinship keeps him from following. *Let me 1st go & bury my father*.
2. Jesus' response in Lk.9:60 was *Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God*. Meaning, *Let the spiritually dead, bury the physically dead*. [cuz, only the *spiritually alive* can save the *spiritually dead*]
- a) D.L.Moody said, *the church* of his day reminded him of *firemen straightening pictures on the wall of a burning house*. Have we loss focus of the eternal for the temporal?
3. **Lesson:** *The proclaiming the kingdom is so important that it can't wait. So He asks us, can you give up the warmth of family ties?*
 - a) This 1st man was **too fast**...**this man**, **too slow**. Luke adds a 3rd prospective disciples was uncommitted. 9:57-62

K. **Slide20a** *Johnny Manana* is our 3rd prospective disciple.

1. *Lord, I will follow You, but let me first go & bid them farewell who are at my house*
 - a) He just wanted only a little time to say goodbye to some of the home folks, then someday soon, he would follow.
 - b) Long involved goodbyes...he might be liable to forget his call & not return. Feelings change when one looks back.
2. **I will...but. I will but**...I'm too afraid of losing friends. **I will but**...it may cause my family displeasure about me going on the mission field. **What is your but?**
3. **Slide20b Lesson:** *He was uncommitted*.

a) This 1st man was too fast...2nd man, too slow. 3rd man, uncommitted.

L. Jesus ended by saying, *No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God. Or, can you set your eyes in the right direction?*

1. Slide20c Jesus wants **now** disciples.

2. He is looking for disciples who will *put his/her hand to the plow, w/o looking back, moving straight out* to do God's will.

a) That blade must stay level & steady. Only by looking ahead, with eyes fixed on your guiding marks, can you get your job done.

3. So Jesus says, *fix your eyes ahead on Me, & don't look back.*

IV. Slide21 PEACE IN THE STORM (23-27) *Jesus now shows His power over nature*

A. The Sea of Galilee is about 13 m. long & 8 m. wide.

1. Slide22 From the Arbel pass, winds/storms can come quickly & violently from off the Mediterranean Sea upon the N end of the lake.

2. Jesus undoubtedly knew the storm was coming, & certainly could have prevented it...but He permitted it, Why?

a) Slide23 Maybe for the same reasons that parents give *Vaccines* to their children.

It's about presenting *a foreign antigen* to their immune system to evoke an immune response. So Christ builds our *spiritual immune system* w/storms, adversities, trials.

B. If you sense Jesus is asleep in the storm you're going through...relax.

1. Slide24 If He's not doing anything, it means...*He's not pacing. He's not anxious. He's not worried. He's resting.*

2. Jesus was able to sleep during a serious storm. This is the peace we can have when we know we are in the center of God's will.

3. Also remember, at any moment Jesus can stand up and speak a word, & immediately...the storm will stop.

a) How many times have you made Him stop the testing early?

b) How many times have you rode out the storm w/Christ on your vessel?

C. (25) They accused Him of not caring in Marks account (4:38), *Teacher do you not care we are perishing?*

1. His trust in His Father was so firm that *He rocked in the cradle of the deep*.
- D. What woke Him? **not** the wind. **not** the waves, **not** the boat filling w/water. **not** the rocking back & forth. **not** the noise. **None of these woke Him, they Did!**
1. His disciples caused Him *more disquiet than* the storm. *They awoke Him*.
- E. What a great cry though...*Lord, save us! We are Perishing*.
1. It's the cry we celebrate today on **Palm/Passion Sunday**...*Hosanna! Save now!*
 - a) **Slide25,26** That story of Messiah riding into Jerusalem, 5 days before his death. *And rides in on a donkey showing Himself as King* (their mode of transportation, b4 pope mobiles). *Entering this time in Peace, on a donkey; next time for War, on a battle horse.*
- F. **Slide27** (26) So He spoke to the **men** 1st, for they were the most difficult to deal with. The wind & sea could be rebuked afterward.
1. It is **easier** to quiet **a storm** **than** to quiet **a troubled heart**.
 2. **If you hold a glass of water** in your hand, you can be sure **it will be quite while you hold your hand still**. **But**, if you catch a wild bird & hold it in your hand, simply *holding it still* doesn't help. **You must teach it to trust you**.
- G. **Little faith** - Mark tells us he said, *Let us go over to the other side...not...Let us sink to the bottom of the lake*.
- H. **The winds and the sea** - The Sea calmed also. If just the wind stopped, it would still be like a washing machine for awhile. **But** the waves stopped also.
- I. **Slide28** **Great calm** - they went from *a great tempest* (24) **to a great calm** (26) **because of a great Savior**.¹ *Christ calms the storms of life*.
- J. (27) **Who can this be?** Don't only **wonder** w/the intellect, **but worship** w/the heart.
- K. **Slide29** Ask yourself this question: Which word would better describe u a **believer** or a **follower**?
1. **Believing**/trusting in Jesus Christ is fundamental, **but** doing so is the **1st step** of a person's faith, **not** the *culmination* of it.
 2. Our primary purpose is **to take a lifelong journey following in the Lord's footsteps, honoring Him with our actions and speech**.
 3. A follower's life is summed up in the phrase **complete obedience**.

¹ Warren wiersbe, WEONT, Matthew 8.

- a) When it comes to obeying God, there are really only two responses: “I will” or “I won’t.” It’s tempting to say, *I will, but...* as some of Jesus’ would-be disciples did, *but* that’s a roundabout way of saying **no**.
4. **See**, we are not just waiting to *spend eternity with God in heaven*; we understand that **eternity begins now**, as we accompany Him on the righteous path He has set before us.
5. **Slide30-32** Jesus made it crystal clear, **If anyone desires to come after Me [i.e. follow Me, be My disciple], let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me** (Luke 9:23).
- a) To the disciple, the cross represented *torture, physical abuse, and death*. They had seen and smelled death firsthand.
- b) If we could have listened in, the conversation would probably have sounded something like this: *First you asked me to leave my **business** and my **family** to follow and learn from you, and now you’re telling me that **you’re going to die** and that **I have to deny myself and follow in your steps!** Don’t you think that’s asking a bit much?*²
- L. **Slide33a** A famous Christian hymn originating from India, lyrics are based on the last words of a man in **Assam**, in north-east India. **Who along with his family was converted to Christianity in the middle of the 19th century through the efforts of a Welsh missionary.** Called to renounce his faith by the village chief, the convert declared, *"I have decided to follow Jesus."* In response to threats to his family, he continued, *"Though no one joins me, still I will follow."*
1. His wife was killed, and he was executed while singing, *"The cross before me, the world behind me."* This display of faith is reported to have led to the **conversion of the chief and others** in the village.
2. **Slide33b** The formation of these words into a hymn is attributed to the Indian missionary **Sadhu Sundar Singh**. *I have decided to follow Jesus. No turning back, no turning back.*

² Charles Stanley, Faithlife Study Bible, Devotional, Being Called to Christ.