

## Chat with the Children

- What's it worth
  - take some objects and discuss what they are worth
  - some high value technology things...
  - some trivial bits of McDonalds trash...
  - some things that have a personal significance...
- *Might I have a relational link in here - which person/relationship do we value, and how do we measure that?*
- Jesus is asking us the question:
  - [what am I worth to you?](#)

## Introduction

- *(Image: WDJD)*
- There are times for looking at the sweep of Scripture
  - there are times for looking at the detail
  - hope you've found ["hanging out"](#) with Jesus and the disciples in Luke 9 helpful as we seek to know [What Did Jesus Do?](#) so we can begin to work out ["What Would Jesus Do?"](#)
- As we finish this series we find Jesus having conversations with three different people
  - all round the theme of what it means to follow him
  - and how much that following might cost us...

## There is a cost to the call (v.57-58)

- *(Image: Home)*
- First of the three conversations is with someone who [offers](#) to follow Jesus:
  - good start!!
  - nothing in the passage to suggest he is not sincere in his offer...
  - they are walking, and the man's offer to follow wherever Jesus goes is in keeping with the situation...
- But Jesus' response to his offer raises a question:
  - for the man himself
  - and for us as we consider our own commitment to following Jesus

### Are you prepared to pay the cost of following me?

- Jesus' response centres round home:
  - Jesus says to the man, ["I've given up the normal right to have a home that is mine"](#)
  - and the implication is ["Are you prepared to do the same?"](#)
- Are you prepared to pay the cost of following Jesus:
  - it may be [career](#) - me, computing, Gerard, forestry, at least to an extent
  - it may be [home](#) - Amanda, semi-itinerant lifestyle travelling around Dolpa, without even a permanent base in Kathmandu
  - it may be [friendships](#) - some people might pull away from us because of our prior commitment to follow Christ, perhaps to follow his ways
  - it may be [time](#) - perhaps as you help out with some form of Christian service, eg the time given in preparing for Summer Focus Week, helping at the International Students cafe, or helping with the church grounds or cleaning
- [He is worth more - but are we prepared to pay the cost of being with him?](#)

## There is an urgency to the call (v.59-60)

- *(Image: Graveyard)*
- The second conversation is a little more puzzling!
  - there seem to be two possibilities
  - first, that the man's father is already dead
  - or second, that he has not already died
- In the first place - already dead, but not buried - there would be a huge cultural expectation that he go and bury his father:
  - even more so than in our culture of undertakers and a few days between death and grave
  - *(funeral this week which was arranged on Wednesday and conducted on Friday - felt quick!)*
  - in Jesus' day the funeral would often be the same day, and probably no later than the next day
  - arrangements needed to be made quickly
  - and culturally a son would be at the heart of that process
  - it would be socially unthinkable for him to drop out and go off following some religious teacher at this particular moment...
- In the second place - not dead - the subtext might be that there is an indefinite delay before this man will respond to Jesus' invitation to follow him
- However we understand the context *(and I think the first is the more likely)*:
  - Jesus' call to the man stressed the **urgency** of the need to respond
  - there is no time to delay
  - **now** is the time for a response...
  - we don't know what will happen tomorrow, even later today
  - will we have the chance again to respond?
  - will the opportunities for service that are open to us now still be open to us in the future?
  - I'll "follow" when I've... **finished studying**
  - I'll "follow" when I've... **got my career established**
  - I'll "follow" when... **the kids are a bit older**
  - I'll "follow" when I'm... **not so busy with (name a hobby or club or responsibility)**
  - I'll "follow" when I've... **I'm dying**
- *("Following" encompasses both the initial decision to follow Jesus, to ask him to be Saviour and Lord - and also the on-going decisions we make whether to put him first, to respond to his prompt or call to action, large or small)*
- **Notice in passing** that some come seeking Jesus, and some he seeks out and calls:
  - we should expect to observe the same pattern in people today

## There is a decisiveness to the call (v.61-62)

- *(Image: Choice sign)*
- The final conversation recorded in this section stresses a third aspect of Jesus' call:
  - here again the man makes the first move, seeking Jesus out with the intention of following him
  - but he places a condition on responding to the call - he will come once he has said goodbye to his family
  - sounds reasonable enough, but Jesus' response reveals something that may not be obvious
  - **the man was looking back**
  - he was held back by his relationship with his family
  - they still had a hold, a sway, and a pre-eminent one at that
  - which relationship had priority for the man - the one with Jesus, or the one with

- his family?
  - which came first?
  - when push came to shove, his family was still coming first
- And Jesus says my call is to put me first:
  - decisively, completely, unequivocally first
- If you want to check the details of ploughing technique then Jim's your man:
  - but this much I know, when ploughing, if you look back all the time your furrow won't be straight!
  - you won't do the job right
- And the implication of the analogy is clear:
  - if we do want to follow Jesus call, then we have to fix our eyes on him, and follow him, not wavering and wiggling around, looking back as well as forward

## Conclusion

- *(Image: WDJD)*
- These are parabolic statements:
  - not everyone who follows Jesus will not have their own home
  - not everyone who follows Jesus will not have time to bury their parents
  - not everyone who follows Jesus will have to decisively turn their back on their family
  - but in each case, some will
- The question for us is this:
  - will we put following Jesus first?
  - before home and comfort
  - before other urgent tasks and responsibilities
  - before family and friends
- We will need to work out the details of this practically:
  - and having other Christians to bounce stuff around with is essential!
  - what is my particular call in terms of comforts and cost? How do Jesus' words apply to me?
  - how do I respond now, urgently?
  - what do I need to make clear cut decisions over as I follow Jesus?
- Jesus is our supreme example in this:
  - he gave up his right to comfort and home in heaven
  - he gave up his right to have charge of his diary, his time (eg the crowd earlier in chapter 9, when he was wanting away...)
  - he put first God's call before his earthly family
  - he trod the road to suffering and pain and even death on the Cross, following his Father's call, and for our sake
  - will we do what Jesus did, in our own contexts?