

**A FEW GOOD MEN**  
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Luke 9:57-62

1. The Marine Corp uses the above slogan in their recruiting efforts which tells any potential recruits that the Marines are looking for extraordinary, rather than ordinary, men and women to join their ranks.
2. The slogan suggests that the Corp does not want to be the biggest branch of the Armed Services, but they do want the name Marine to stand for something special.
3. No marine recruit can complain that they were tricked into joining up by recruiters that told them becoming and being a Marine would be easy.
4. Unfortunately the same cannot be said about the current evangelistic methods being employed by many churches and parachurch groups today.
5. Our modern methods of evangelism are designed to produce numbers, but even a casual reading of the Scriptures reveals that Christian recruiters are not being honest with their potential recruits.
6. Over fifty years ago A.W. Tozer wrote about the high casualty rate among the professed Christians of his day. (I wonder what he would think today?)
7. He observed:
  - a. "Nowhere in the teachings of Christ do we find anything visionary or overly optimistic. He told His hearers the whole truth and let them make up their minds. He might grieve over the retreating form of an inquirer who could not face up to the truth, but He never ran after him to try to win him with rosy promises."
  - b. "All this is but to say that Christ is honest. We can trust Him. He knows that He will never be popular among the sons of Adam and He knows that His followers need not expect to be."
  - c. "By offering our hearers a sweetness-and-light gospel...we not only cruelly deceive them, we guarantee also a high casualty rate among the converts on such terms. We tell them that if they will accept Christ He will give them peace of mind, solve their problems, protect their families and keep them happy all day long. They believe us and come, and the first cold wind sends them shivering to some counselor to find out what has gone wrong; and that is the last we hear of many of them!"
8. Let me illustrate with a couple of straight forwards statements from the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - a. Matt 5:10-12  
"Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 "Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. 12 "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."
  - b. Luke 6:26  
"Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for their fathers used to treat the false prophets in the same way."

c. John 15:18-21

"If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you. 19 "If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you. 20 "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A slave is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also. 21 "But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know the One who sent Me."

d. Matt 10:34-39

"Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. 35 "For I came to SET A MAN AGAINST HIS FATHER, AND A DAUGHTER AGAINST HER MOTHER, AND A DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AGAINST HER MOTHER-IN-LAW; 36 and A MAN'S ENEMIES WILL BE THE MEMBERS OF HIS HOUSEHOLD. 37 "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. 38 "And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. 39 "He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it."

9. The modern approach to evangelism and worship is designed to portray Christianity in a positive light from a worldly perspective.

10. Notice how Jesus dealt with the three individuals highlighted in Luke 9:57-62.

**I. No empty promises. 57-58**

A. Jesus' earthly ministry produced a lot of enthusiasm as people observed the signs and wonders that accompanied His ministry.

B. Many sought to identify with Him because of their misguided messianic expectations.

C. As they saw the sick being healed, the dead being raised and the hungry being fed they, like the man in this passage, exclaimed with great enthusiasm, "I will follow you wherever You go!"

D. Jesus responded, "Follow Me if you will, but following Me may mean no place to call home."

NOTE: The truth is that truly following Jesus may mean losing your job, your family, your friends, your reputation, and even your life.

**II. No conditions. 59-60**

A. Jesus issued a call to the second man who asked for permission to delay obedience until his elderly father passed away.

NOTE: The man's request to be allowed to go and bury his father does not imply that his father was already dead. Would any of you be here today if your father or mother was lying dead at your house?

B. Jesus' response seems harsh but, in reality, it reveals our tendency to want to follow Christ conditionally.

C. We will:

1. Start tithing just as soon as we get our finances straightened out.

2. Get active in church when we find a church we like or our busy lives slow down a little.
3. Set aside time for regular Bible study and prayer soon.
4. Invite someone to church or talk to them about the Lord when they seem more receptive.

**NOTE: The truth is that conditional followers of Jesus Christ will always find a reason to delay. Once this man's father died he would have found another responsibility that he needed to deal with.**

### **III. No rivals. 61-62**

- A. The third man indicated a willingness to follow but only after saying his goodbyes to those at home.
- B. Jesus replied that you can't plow a field and look behind you at the same time.
- C. Jesus often used hyperboles (exaggeration for effect) to make an important point.
- D. No one will fully follow Christ who does not love Him supremely.
  1. Matt 10:37  
37 "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me."
  2. Luke 14:26  
26 "If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple."
- E. Our mouths may say that Jesus has first place in our lives, but what do our personal relationships, spending priorities, and activities say?

### **APPLICATION**

1. Tomorrow is Memorial Day; a day when our nation recognizes the sacrifices of those who have died in the defense of our nation, its people and its values.
2. Are we willing to die to sin, self and this world in order to advance the Kingdom of God.
3. Our goal should be is to see others really come to know Jesus Christ and to have their lives demonstrate that they have done so because:
  - a. Jesus called and they responded not for their sake but for His sake.
  - b. Jesus commissioned them and they embraced His will unconditionally.
  - c. Jesus has no rivals in their hearts.
4. Jesus Himself is the true reward of the Christian life.