

Following Jesus Christ

Luke 5:27–32 (NIV)

5:27–32pp—Mt 9:9–13; Mk 2:14–17

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²⁹ Then Levi held a great banquet for Jesus at his house, and a large crowd of tax collectors and others were eating with them. ³⁰ But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who belonged to their sect complained to his disciples, “Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?”

³¹ Jesus answered them, **“It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. ³² I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”**

Synopsis

The NT provides examples of individuals who followed Jesus Christ and of the implications of this decision for their lives.

I. Examples of those who followed Jesus Christ

A. Crowds of people

Matthew 4:25 (NIV) — 25 Large crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and the region across the Jordan followed him.

Matthew 8:1 (NIV) — 1 When Jesus came down from the mountainside, large crowds followed him.

Matthew 12:15 (NIV) — 15 Aware of this, Jesus withdrew from that place. A large crowd followed him, and he healed all who were ill.

Matthew 14:13 (NIV) — 13 When Jesus heard what had happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place. Hearing of this, the crowds followed him on foot from the towns.

Matthew 19:2 (NIV) — 2 Large crowds followed him, and he healed them there.

Mark 2:15 (NIV) — 15 While Jesus was having dinner at Levi’s house, many tax collectors and sinners were eating with him and his disciples, for there were many who followed him.

Mark 5:24 (NIV) — 24 So Jesus went with him. A large crowd followed and pressed around him.

Luke 7:9 (NIV) — 9 When Jesus heard this, he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd following him, he said, “I tell you, I have not found such great faith even in Israel.”

Luke 7:11 (NIV) — 11 Soon afterward, Jesus went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went along with him.

B. Those who were healed

Matthew 20:34 (NIV) — 34 Jesus had compassion on them and touched their eyes. Immediately they received their sight and followed him.

Mark 10:52 (NIV) — 52 “Go,” said Jesus, “your faith has healed you.” Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.

C. Those who were needy

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Matthew 9:27 (NIV) — 27 As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed him, calling out, “Have mercy on us, Son of David!”

D. The disciples

Matthew 8:23 (NIV) — 23 Then he got into the boat and his disciples followed him.

Mark 14:51 (NIV) — 51 A young man, wearing nothing but a linen garment, was following Jesus. When they seized him,

Mark 15:41 (NIV) — 41 In Galilee these women had followed him and cared for his needs. Many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem were also there.

John 18:15 (NIV) — 15 Simon Peter and another disciple were following Jesus. Because this disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the high priest’s courtyard,

II. Examples of those who obeyed Jesus Christ’s call to follow him

A. Peter and Andrew

Matthew 4:18–20 (NIV) — 18 As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. **19** “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” **20** At once they left their nets and followed him.

Luke 5:11 (NIV) — 11 So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.

B. James and John

Mark 1:19–20 (NIV) — 19 When he had gone a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets. **20** Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.

C. Matthew

Matthew 9:9 (NIV) — 9 As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector’s booth. “Follow me,” he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him.

D. Philip

John 1:43–45 (NIV) — 43 The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, “Follow me.” **44** Philip, like

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Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida. **45** Philip found Nathanael and told him, “We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”

III. The cost of following Jesus Christ

A. Carrying one’s cross

Matthew 16:24–26 (NIV) — 24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. **25** For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. **26** What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?”

Matthew 10:37–39 (NIV) — 37 “Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. **38** Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. **39** Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.

Luke 14:25–33 (NIV) — 25 Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: **26** “If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own life—such a person cannot be my disciple. **27** And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. **28** “Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won’t you first sit down and estimate the cost to see if you have enough money to complete it? **29** For if you lay the foundation and are not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule you, **30** saying, ‘This person began to build and wasn’t able to finish.’ **31** “Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Won’t he first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? **32** If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. **33** In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples.

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John 12:23–25 (NIV) — 23 Jesus replied, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. **24** Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. **25** Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

B. Leaving security behind

Matthew 8:19–20 (NIV) — 19 Then a teacher of the law came to him and said, “Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go.” **20** Jesus replied, “Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.”

Luke 9:61–62 (NIV) — 61 Still another said, “I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say goodbye to my family.” **62** Jesus replied, “No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.”

C. Those who failed to persevere in following Jesus Christ

John 6:66 (NIV) — 66 From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.

IV. The blessings of following Jesus Christ

Matthew 19:27–30 (NIV) — 27 Peter answered him, “We have left everything to follow you! What then will there be for us?” **28** Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. **29** And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life. **30** But many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first.

John 8:12 (NIV) — 12 When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

John 12:26 (NIV) — 26 Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.