



UNO OR MONOPOLY?

7th in a Series Called, "What Did He Say?" - Topic: Following Jesus

Passage: Matthew 8:18-22 – Now when Jesus saw a crowd around Him, He gave orders to depart to the other side of *the* sea. ¹⁹ Then a scribe came and said to Him, "Teacher, I will follow You wherever You go." ²⁰ Jesus *said to him, "The foxes have holes and the birds of the **l**air have **b** nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head." ²¹ Another of the disciples said to Him, "Lord, permit me first to go and bury my father." ²² But Jesus *said to him, "Follow Me, and allow the dead to bury their own dead."

On Sunday, Rick resumed our series on the difficult teachings of Jesus Christ. This time we looked at two men who wanted to follow Jesus, and the strange way Jesus replied to each of them.

To the first man, the scribe, who said he wanted to follow Jesus, His strange reply was that birds have nests and foxes have holes but the Son of Man had nowhere to lay his head. Jesus would have known all of the man's motives. He wanted to cut to the heart of the matter – the man's heart – the scribe probably had big career goals...maybe fame (the only celebrities at the time were the religious rulers), wealth, power. So Jesus cut to the chase: Following Him was more the path of a homeless man than of a man who ends up in a mansion. The scribe needed to break out of the world's system to follow Jesus. If fame and fortune was where he was aiming, he needed to get another path or adjust his goal.

The second man said he just needed to first bury his father. Rick explained that in Israel in those days, one did not go out to listen to a preacher when his father died. That day, there would be a short time in which one had to bury someone, mere hours, since bodies were not embalmed. So what did he mean, he had to bury his father? It was no doubt an expression for taking care of his business affairs before he died. And Jesus' reply then would have meant that the man should let his family members (who were *not* spiritually minded, following Jesus), handle the father's business affairs. "Let the dead bury their dead," meaning spiritually dead. His ulterior motives were not bad motives: they just were not the best.

These two stories have implications for us as believers. First, Rick explained, the natural current of this life will lead to compromise. The natural current is to allow time slowly move you away from your commitment to Christ, without you even being aware of it, gradually deadening your soul. What the world values highly is detestable to God. To be friends with the world's system is to be an enemy of Christ. You need to decide to swim against the current.

Secondly, Rick urged us to heed Jesus' call to us: to live a life in relentless commitment to Jesus. Love Jesus so *much*, that in comparison, your love for everyone else seems like hate.

Supporting Verses

The Natural Current of Life Will Lead Us to Compromise - Matthew 28:19 - Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit... **Exodus 20:12** - "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you. **2 Timothy 4:13** - When you come bring the cloak which I left at Troas with Carpus, and the books, especially the parchments. **2 Timothy 4:10** - for Demas, having loved this present [\[a\]](#)world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens has gone to [\[b\]](#)Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. **James 4:4** - You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. **Luke 16:15** - And He said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves [\[a\]](#)in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is detestable in the sight of God.

Jesus Calls Us to a Relentless Commitment to Him - Luke 14:26 - "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. **Genesis 29:31** - Now the LORD saw that Leah was [\[a\]](#)unloved, and He opened her womb, but Rachel was barren. **Malachi 1:2-3** - "I have loved you," says the LORD. But you say, "How have You loved us?" "Was not Esau Jacob's brother?" declares the LORD. "Yet I have loved Jacob; ³but I have hated Esau, and I have made his mountains a desolation and appointed his inheritance for the jackals of the wilderness."