

Matthew 8.18-34

Homeless Man who Commands Creation

MANY People followed Jesus – SOME of them NOT have Much to LOOSE

But Matt LUCRATIVE Job w/ GREAT CONNECTIONS, Job SECURITY

DEMANDED People give him MONEY – Power of Roman Empire to Enforce

JESUS Convinced Matthew that Following Him was BEST INVESTMENT

Now MT – like all 4 Gospel writers, Present Clear, Compelling Witness of Jesus

Convince He is Worthy of INVESTMENT of your Life – be King YOU Follow

Each Gospel writer SLIGHTLY Different View, SAME Basic Facts of Jesus

MT arranges Stories & Sermons by THEME – Pillars of MT's Book 5 Sermons

Chs 8 & 9 – Stories about POWER of Jesus / Intersperses Calls to Discipleship

2 Guys CONSIDERING Following Jesus / 2 STORIES Focus on their Concerns

These stories come in the middle of a section documenting the authority of Jesus over sickness...Matthew wants to show that the same Jesus, who has authority over sickness, nature, and demons, also has authority over the lives of his disciples. Jesus determines what following him will involve, not us. Therefore, if you are going to follow Jesus, it must be on his terms rather than your own.

James Boice

vs. 18 Now when Jesus saw a crowd around him, he gave orders to go over to the other side.

Many of Jesus' Calls to DISCIPLESHIP come when HE is ON THE MOVE!

How DIFFERENT Jesus STRATEGY to Modern CHRISTIAN Ministries Today

ZGC – Crowds INCREASE > PRINT More Bulletins, More People Won't Read

Give OUT More OFFERING Envelopes, Use to ORGANIZE their Paper CLIPS!

Jesus sees CROWD > JUMP in BOAT and Get OUTTA Capernaum!

NOT Big Boat – Room for DOZEN People – Maybe 20 if they're ASIANS!

So THEN – BIG Question – WHO gets IN? Who does NOT make it IN?

Middle Ages Commentators: Little BOAT is like CHURCH – Only Safe Passage

WRONG ALLEGORY > but TRUTH – Jesus sails Away, Curtain Comes Down

1. The Way to Live: Follow Jesus

a. Important Man with a Reasonable Request

v. 19 And a scribe came up and said to him, “Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go.”

SCRIBE!! Big FISH we’d want to PULL into OUR Boat / Teacher of LAW

Most of them HARSH CRITICS - Make him POSTER Boy – Got 1 on Our SIDE

Humble Scribe – Had HIGHER Theological Degree/Training THAN Jesus!

Jesus wanted NOT Just Poor, Outcasts – also Highest in Society A SCRIBE!!

Man with IMPORTANT Connections – Find him GOOD SEAT on the Boat

Offer to Hold his UNION PAY Card so doesn’t Get WET – Ask PIN NUMBER!

REASONABLE for him to BE CONCERNED about his BASIC NEEDS

Will our Hotel be 4 Star or 5 Star? Do I need to PACK a TOOTH BRUSH?

Do they have 4G on that Side of LAKE? Will there be SOY for my LATTE??

NO! He does NOT ask Those QUESTIONS WE might Ask! I would ASK!!

SCRIBE is TRUE Son of Abraham –

Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you” Genesis 12.1

NO GPS – Not even an ADDRESS! Call to FOLLOW into Unknown by Faith

Scribe declare OPEN-ENDED Obedience – *“follow wherever you go”!!*

I packed my SLEEPING BAG, GRANOLA Bars, and Disposable Underwear!

b. Challenge to Count the Cost

Jesus' RESPONSE seems Quite HARSH – Not Congratulations for Coming
Cold Words to CHASE Away this BIG SHOT with DEEP POCKETS

Jesus' MINISTRY Not going to be in Synagogues / Temple

NOT Always gonna get INVITED to CHICKEN DINNER after Sunday Service

v. 20 And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.”

How EMBARRASSING! Everyone Heard Public Scolding – Still Reading it!

1st Time Title The “**Son of Man**” used in Mt. – 81 X's in 4 Gospels

All but 2 X's words come from LIPS of Jesus – 2 X's people Quoting HIM

MYSTERY Surrounded this Term

Psalm 8 – David uses Son of Man to simply refer to Human Beings

Son of Man – Title God gives to Prophet EZEKIEL

Most Obvious Meaning – esp at END of Gospels – ref to Daniel 7

...behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed. Daniel 7.13,14

Jesus NOT call Himself A Son of Man but THE Son of MAN

Most Ambiguous of Messianic Titles - Avoid Misunderstandings of Mission

It seems that the reason why Jesus found this title convenient is that, having no ready-made title in current usage, it could be applied across the whole range of his...mission of humiliation and vindication, of death and glory, which could not be fitted into any preexisting model. Like his parables, the title “Son of Man” came with an air of enigma, challenging his hearers to think new thoughts rather than to slot Jesus into a ready-made pigeonhole. R.T. France

This SON of MAN - DID have some EARTHLY Resources
 Told He worked as CARPENTER – NOT Told his Cabinets were given Free!
 Likely just been a GUEST in Home of Peter and his Grateful Mother-in-Law
 Standing INVITATION at home of MARY, MARTHA, and LAZARUS

Jesus is WARNING MAN & ALL who Consider Following about Rejection

“As the story develops, Judea rejects him, Galilee casts him out, Gadara begs him to leave its district, Samaria refuses him lodging, earth will not have him, and finally even heaven forsakes him”
 William Hendriksen

Does not OWN a Home because He does NOT NEED To

WIFE & I NOT owned CAR in Last 17 years – Had all Cars we’ve Needed
 Lived 11 yrs with 3 Sons in KZ – Almost Every Driver willing to be Black TAXI

Hold Out Hand and Drivers Pull over WILLING to BARGAIN

Memories of 5 Blairs Standing in Blowing Snow on Busy Roads, “Don’t Worry,
 Family! We OWN every Car in this CITY!! Look! Here they Come!!”

BARGAIN: TAI GUEALA!! OCHEN DOROGAYA!! Drive away Muttering
 SONS Muttering – Dad, you CHEAP SKATE get a CAR for US!!

Often my FIRST Advice for Families w/ Small Kids is Get a CAR!

When we lived in UGANDA – 3 Toddlers - we had 2 for a SEASON

Kingdom of God – Call of Jesus to FOLLOW – Not about CARS & HOUSES

Call to FOLLOW in Faith – HIS PROVISION

HOLD a LOOSE Grip on THINGS: Be willing to GIVE AWAY or GO Without

Only time in Gospels phrase LAID DOWN HIS HEAD used refers to Cross...

... and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

John 19.30

Matthew wrote GOSPEL Years after TRAVELED with Jesus over Land & Sea
 See him at COMPUTER – Writing this GOSPEL – Looking thru Instagram PICS
 3 Yrs of AMAZING Facebook Posts on Journey with JESUS CHRIST on Earth
 Thinks “How will a Scribe or Roman or US here be CONVINCED to Follow this
 HOMELESS Man – Endure the REJECTION – Face the UNCERTAINTIES?”
 This would be GREAT Place to TELL STORY about Day on Sea of Galilee....

c. Worthy of our Worship

v. 23 And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him.

Even tho He was CAPENTER – He was CAPTAIN of Voyage – They Follow

v. 24 And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep.

LANDLUBBER enjoys Some Rapid Eye Movements, Seamen do Heavy Lifting

Modern People are HARD to AMAZE – We have SEEN & DONE it ALL!

Most of us carry LITTLE COMPUTERS in POCKETS, Travel W.W.W. Daily

Sir Richard Branson will SELL US a VIRGIN Flight into OUTER SPACE Soon!

But this STORM SCARRED Experienced 1st C SAILORS – Probably US too!

VITAL Discipleship Question Once START Follow Jesus....Can we SURVIVE?

STORMS Come – Sometimes NOT Our Fault – Can we MAKE IT THRU??

v. 25 And they went and woke him, saying, “Save us, Lord; we are perishing.”

Sea or LAKE of Galilee – NOT Very BIG – 21 kms LONG / 13 kms WIDE

But VIOLENT Storms came QUICKLY and packed a BIG PUNCH

The Lake of Galilee is rather like a funnel. To the north are Mount Hermon and the mountains of Lebanon, which stand about 3000 meters above sea level. The lake itself lies 200 meters below sea level. Violent winds are drawn down from the mountains and forced into the narrow Jordan Valley. When the winds hit the lake they churn up waters into fierce squalls...as indicated by the cry of these grown men: *Lord save us!* Joe Kapolyo

vs. 26-27 And he said to them, “Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?” Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. And the men marveled, saying, “What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?”

WHEN Jesus WAKES Up BIGGEST Concern NOT Storm > their LITTLE Faith
He does not chide them for disturbing him with their prayers, but for disturbing themselves with their fears. Matthew Henry

Saw Roman CENTURION had LESS Evidence than Disciples – MORE FAITH
Gonna put Church in THEIR HANDS – Now Very SHAKY PILLARS of Faith!!
BEGAN in Faith – FOLLOWED thus Far – NEEDED Firmer Foundation

STORM was Great, but SHIP was UNSINKABLE – Jesus was IN IT!

Was Heading to DIE on CROSS – Not a Shipwreck

He REMINDED them before REBUKED STORM, Trust Him No Matter What
These disciples need to understand that ‘follow’ means Gethsemane, and Golgotha, and the tomb. Ibn Sa’id - **ARAB Xtian Commentator**

Man can FIX a lot of things but ONLY GOD can CHANGE the WEATHER!

What KIND of Man? VIRGIN-BORN Messiah Come to Redeem His People

“You rule over the surging sea; when its waves mount up, you still them”

Psalm 89:9

NOTICE how the Psalmist links CALMING of Seas and of the Peoples

O God of our salvation, the hope of all the ends of the earth and of the farthest seas...who stills the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves, the tumult of the peoples, so that those who dwell at the ends of the earth are in awe at your signs.
Psalm 65.5-8

Gospel Fulfillment – Jesus who CALMS Seas, Casts Out Demons from 2 Men

KING David fled from Rebellious son ABSOLAM, Foreigner wanted to follow

The king said to Ittai the Gittite, “Why do you also go with us? Go back...for you are a foreigner and also an exile from your home. You came only yesterday, and shall I today make you wander about with us, since I go I know not where?...” But Ittai answered the king, “As the LORD lives, and as my lord the king lives, wherever my lord the king shall be, whether for death or for life, there also will your servant be.”
2 Samuel 15.19-21

NOW this GREATER David – David’s Son & Lord – Demands we FOLLOW

2. The Why to Live: Finish with Jesus

a. Focus beyond the Family

v. 21 Another of the disciples said to him, “Lord, let me first go and bury my father.”

Man called a DISCIPLE / FOLLOWER – Not told whether he is FINISHER

Maybe a TEMPORARY LOOKY LOO – NOT told END of Either Man’s Story

Jesus WANTED both Men – Now Wants All People - VERY MUCH –

He was NOT Aloof, Distant, Prickly – Wept over LOST Jerusalem

Stretched out ARMS upon CROSS and DIED for Them!

Jesus TREATS 2 men DIFFERENTLY – Not a COOKIE CUTTER Approach

BURY One’s Father – Middle Eastern IDIOM for CARING for the FAMILY

Seen FAITHFUL Sons in Genesis – Isaac & Ishmael buried Father Abraham

Jacob & Esau buried their Father ISAAC – NOBLE, DUTY of Loyal Sons

If Dad DEAD Not likely be ON ROAD, Custom required burial in 24 Hours!

Perhaps Elderly Father NOT even SICK – Perhaps his Death Years Away!

v. 22 And Jesus said to him, “Follow me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead.”

NO Matter Pop’s PROGNOSIS, Jesus demand seems EXCEEDINGLY Rude!

Family Concern COMMANDED OT & NT – Basis of Leadership Qualification

5th Commandment: Honor your Father & Mother

But 1st Commandment – You shall have NO OTHER gods Before ME

And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, When either a man or a woman makes a special vow, the vow of a Nazirite, to separate himself to the LORD... All the days that he separates himself to the LORD he shall not go near a dead body. Not even for his father or for his mother, for brother or sister, if they die, shall he make himself unclean, because his separation to God is on his head. All the days of his separation he is holy to the LORD.
Numbers 6.1-8

If this HIGH Standard expected of Old Covenant NAZARITE Vow

HOW MUCH MORE – as Hebrews says – Shall we Serve THE NAZARENE

He who ACCOMPLISHED our Redemption – Extends Grace of New Covenant

BLANKET Command? No Christian will attend a FAMILY FUNERAL?

Christians should IGNORE the LIFE Needs of their FAMILIES??

Being in NEW Covenant – Not under Absolute LAWS – Pronounced by Pastor

You – Under Lordship of Jesus – led by Holy Spirit – guided by Scripture

NEED to Work this OUT – Grace in Jesus – GRACE is NOT CHEAP

The kingdom of heaven involves a degree of fanaticism which is willing to disrupt the normal rhythms of social life. Jesus can hardly have been surprised that true discipleship remained a minority movement, and that popular enthusiasm for his teaching and healing generally stopped short of full discipleship. Many are invited but few are chosen. R.T. France

Massive PRESSURES in Country with BILLION People

Gotta SEE Family NEXT WEEK – Take plenty of RED ENVELOPES for ALL
Gotta DRINK, gotta SMOKE, gotta BRAG about Exploits, Dare Not talk JESUS

Wrong to VISIT Parents – NO! – Be thrilled if My Kids VISIT Me!!

Be GOOD GUESTS here – Make CLEAR we belong to Another KINGDOM
UNSEEN Kingdom Jesus Christ – Small, Struggling – Encompass Earth

v. 22 And Jesus said to him, “Follow me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead.”

2nd Man – TENTATIVE, CAUTIOUS, Wants to MAKE SURE of Things

Jesus’ understanding of discipleship was different from our own...As Jesus evaluated them, the first person was too quick to promise and the second was too slow to perform. James Boice

Let the SPIRITUALLY Dead bury their OWN DEAD ... or POSSIBLY

Let the PHYSICALLY DEAD bury their OWN DEAD

Either Way – This is NO BUSINESS of a SERIOUS DISCIPLE

Too Much LOYALTY to Family, Country, Tribe, Studies, Job, Career

Jesus knew POWER of MASS Psychology – CROWDS Move for Decision

Jesus challenges ZEALOUS Person who is Caught up in IMMEDIATE JOY

ARE you READY for this LIFE CALLING – What matters is FINISHING!

Jesus talks about FRUIT – End of LONG PROCESS – see JUDGMENT Day

LOOK at Yourself – 2 men could NOT Make it – But you Think you CAN!!

REALLY – Not TOLD their Response – WRITTEN for You to THINK!

It is not open sin, or open unbelief, which robs Christ of his professing servants, so much as the love of the world, the fear of the world, the cares of the world, the business of the world, the money of the world, the pleasures of the world, and the desire to keep in touch with the world. This is the great rock on which thousands of young people are continually making shipwreck. They do not object to any article of the Christian faith. They do not deliberately choose evil and openly rebel against God. They hope somehow to get to heaven at last, and they think it proper to have some religion. But they cannot give up their idol: they must have the world. And so after running well and bidding fair for heaven while boys and girls, they turn aside when they become men and women and go down the broad way which leads to destruction. They begin with Abraham and Moses and end with Demas and Lot's wife.

Bishop John Ryle

b. People trump Pigs

Disciples in BOAT asked Question that remains UNANSWERED by Them

v. 27 “What sort of man is this...?”

FINAL Story Question gets answered by SURPRISING SOURCE – Demons

v. 29 And behold, they cried out, “What have you to do with us, O Son of God?”

VIVID Story of FLYING PIGS – Matthew GIVES Short Version

Matthew tells story in just 135 Greek words // Mark more Colorful 330 words

Matthew FACTS and FIGURES Man – Gets Quickly to BOTTOM LINE

Let me GET to BOTTOM Line of this SERMON

We are in Spiritual BATTLE for Souls – OURS, FAMILIES, FRIENDS, World

EVIL One has BETTER Christology than WE DO Some Times

KNOWS and FEARS POWER and FINAL JUDGMENT of Jesus

v. 29 “Have you come here to torment us before the time?”

Jesus is ALREADY Bringing ESCHATOLOGICAL Clean-up of Evil Forces

1st of 5 Exorcisms recorded in Gospel of Matthew

Work of EVIL One seen in BINDING and BLINDING

See BINDING in HORRIBLE Lives of 2 Men – Satan is NOT their Friend

v. 28 And when he came to the other side, to the country of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men met him, coming out of the tombs, so fierce that no one could pass that way.

Some Commentators SPECULATE Why MT sees 2 Demoniacs & Mark just 1

Most RELIABLE Answer I read in Week of Study “We do NOT Know Why!”

Both the INERRANT God-Inspired Word of God

Don Carson example – “I saw John Smith in town today” in fact w/ his WIFE

BINDING Effect of EVIL – ADDICTIONS, Drugs, Porn, All Kinds of Bondage

BLINDING Effect of EVIL – DO Not even know We are TIED UP by SIN

2 Would be Disciples: 1 called Scribe, 1 called Disciple, Only God knows Them

Jesus gave them BOTH a BIG Shock – Both Expected to Get a PASS

Need to have some Creature Comforts / Need to Take care of FAMILY

OF Course they can GO! It’s Chinese New Year – It’s Expected, It’s Easy!!

Jesus is RADICAL Raises BAR to Seemingly IMPOSSIBLE Height

Go Ahead!! Take care of Your Kingdom --- but you’re Walking OUT of Mine!

These 2 are BLIND to the URGENCY of Jesus Uncompromising Call to Follow

2 Demon Possessed Men are BLIND too – Not Happy, but Getting Along

NEVER Imagined SO MANY DEMONS were so Powerfully INSIDE Them

vs. 30-32 Now a herd of many pigs was feeding at some distance from them. And the demons begged him, saying, “If you cast us out, send us away into the herd of pigs.” And he said to them, “Go.” So they came out and went into the pigs, and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the waters.

FLYING, DROWNING Pigs vivid IMAGE of EVIL GRIP on Men’s Lives
POWER of GOD in Setting these CAPTIVES FREE

NOT Told DEMON’S DIED, SWIM! – Will DIE Another DAY! FINAL Day!

Today Animal RIGHTS Activists call Jesus a PIGIST – CRUEL to Creatures!

God’s Economy 2 SAVED Souls worth MORE than 2 Million PIGS

Paraphrase Psalm 50 – God OWNS the Pigs on a THOUSAND HILLS

For a Jewish story-teller, and a Jewish audience, the destruction of a herd of swine would be no calamity, but rather a cause of merriment. F.W. Beare

Anybody that THINKS Pigs more IMPORTANT than PEOPLE

Whether that TOWN that had Sudden Economic CRASH – or SINKING

OR Modern People today who Call God UNFAIR to POOR PIGS

They’re BLINDED by god of this World – Drinking the KOOL-AID of Satan

vs. 33,34 The herdsmen fled, and going into the city they told everything, especially what had happened to the demon-possessed men. And behold, all the city came out to meet Jesus, and when they saw him, they begged him to leave their region.

Matthew’s FOCUS NOT on Impression of LOCAL Population of Pig Owners

Focus: DISCIPLESHIP Will YOU Chase Him Away? Love Pigs more People?

The Way to Live: Follow Jesus

The Why to Live: Finish with Jesus

“Costly grace is the treasure hidden in the field; for the sake of it a man will gladly go and sell all that he has. It is the pearl of great price, to buy which the merchant will sell all his goods. It is the kingly rule of Christ, for whose sake a man will pluck out the eye which causes him to stumble; it is the call of Jesus Christ at which the disciple leaves his nets and follows him.... Such grace is *costly* because it calls us to follow, and it is *grace* because it calls us to follow *Jesus Christ*.”

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Matthew 8¹⁸ Now when Jesus saw a crowd around him, he gave orders to go over to the other side. ¹⁹And a scribe came up and said to him, “Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go.” ²⁰And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.” ²¹Another of the disciples said to him, “Lord, let me first go and bury my father.” ²²And Jesus said to him, “Follow me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead.” ²³And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. ²⁴And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep. ²⁵And they went and woke him, saying, “Save us, Lord; we are perishing.” ²⁶And he said to them, “Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?” Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. ²⁷And the men marveled, saying, “What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?” ²⁸And when he came to the other side, to the country of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men met him, coming out of the tombs, so fierce that no one could pass that way. ²⁹And behold, they cried out, “What have you to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?” ³⁰Now a herd of many pigs was feeding at some distance from them. ³¹And the demons begged him, saying, “If you cast us out, send us away into the herd of pigs.” ³²And he said to them, “Go.” So they came out and went into the pigs, and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the waters. ³³The herdsmen fled, and going into the city they told everything, especially what had happened to the demon-possessed men. ³⁴And behold, all the city came out to meet Jesus, and when they saw him, they begged him to leave their region.