



Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ according to Saint Matthew 8: 18-22.

When Jesus saw a crowd around him, he gave orders to cross to the other shore. A scribe approached and said to him, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." Jesus answered him, "Foxes have dens and birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to rest his head." Another of his disciples said to him, "Lord, let me go first and bury my father." But Jesus answered him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their dead."

Matthew 8:18-22.

Introductory Prayer:

Lord, I come to you in this meditation ready to do whatever you ask. Left to myself I often take the easy and convenient path, yet I know the way of a Christian is through the narrow gate. In you I find the reason to abandon the easy path for a more perfect mission of love. I'm ready to learn the meaning of your command: "Follow me."

Petition:

Lord Jesus, help me to seek true holiness by following after you.

1. Follow His Footsteps:

The transition to becoming a disciple is not an easy one. While a disciple generously hands over his own will to the Lord unconditionally, the scribe in today's passage still seeks his own will, as noble as it may be. A disciple is born from an invitation: "Follow me." This scribe does not yet have the total freedom of heart that life with Christ demands. Where do I stand? One becomes identified with Christ not through a mere accumulation of doctrine, principles and techniques, but by living a common life with Christ born from union with the Master's will. May I hear Christ's voice setting the pace of holiness in my life and inviting me to leave behind my own will for the new life he presents.

2. Choosing the Better Way:

Christ does not coldly ignore the scribe, but seeks to attract him to a different way of life, a life of simple poverty. Our Lord's own self-emptying poverty goes beyond the lot of the

poorest of men. What Christ's poverty shows, however, is not misery. Rather, it compels and attracts, for it is an infallible sign of the richness of God from whom Christ lives and moves. Christ's living example empowers men to leave their world for something better, nobler and more worthy of the life they have been given. May my example also compel others to find a better way, a holier way.

3. Shunning Shoddy Sophisms:

There is an almost ruthless quality to Christ's response to the sophisms and excuses offered to avoid following him. Detachment from all personal wants and desires is the way to simplicity of heart. Simplicity of heart requires us to be brutally honest with ourselves. What comes first in our life? What is really moving our heart to make the choices we make? Is it God's will? God's will for us is never complicated; perhaps it may be difficult, but it is never complicated. Sometimes, under the pretext of doing good, we rationalize not.