



As Jesus and his disciples were proceeding on their journey someone said to him, "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." And to another he said, "Follow me." But he replied, "Lord, let me go first and bury my father." But he answered him, "Let the dead bury their dead. But you, go and proclaim the Kingdom of God." And another said, "I will follow you, Lord, but first let me say farewell to my family at home." To him Jesus said, "No one who sets a hand to the plow and looks to what was left behind is fit for the Kingdom of God."

**Introductory Prayer:** In you, Lord, I find all my joy and happiness. How could I offend you by chasing after fleeting success and lifeless trophies? I believe in you because you are truth itself. I hope in you because you are faithful to your promises. I love you because you have loved me first. I am a sinner; nevertheless, you have given me so many blessings. I humbly thank you Humbly I thank you.

**Petition:** Let me willingly accept the cost of following in your footsteps

**1. Hidden Expenses:** A would-be disciple of Jesus' boasts that he will follow Our Lord anywhere, whatever the sacrifice. Jesus' response makes us wonder whether the fellow understood what he would be getting into. Following Christ is demanding — and not always glamorous. We might dream of doing great things for Christ, but then find the day-to-day struggle distasteful ("the Son of Man has nowhere to rest his head"). Unglamorous challenges take many forms. A new wife might discover to her chagrin that her husband can't handle finances. Or a parent with high hopes learns that a child has a learning disability that will limit her ability to excel. Or a husband takes a higher-paying job to support his family, only to find his new boss is a tyrant. Or a teen suffers ridicule at public school for her modest clothes. All these trials can be the cost of following Christ. What price am I willing to pay?

**2. Family Ties:** Christ tries to dissuade another would-be follower from "burying his father." The man was probably settling his father's estate and getting too involved in family finances. Our Lord wanted him to cut with all that, immediately, and get on with the

work of the Kingdom. Too often money matters distract us from doing what Christ wants. No wonder St. Paul warns, "The love of money is the root of all evils" (1 Timothy 6:10). Is money holding me back in my relationship with Christ? Am I working longer hours than I need to, just for the sake of money?

**3. Long Good-bye:** The moment of decision had arrived. But instead of joining Jesus' camp, the would-be disciple felt the tug of family ties. As followers of Christ, we have to be willing to make a fundamental option for Christ — an option that by necessity excludes other paths. Does this sound hard? It should sound familiar. Think of the young woman who says yes to a proposal of marriage. She does so assuming that her beloved has long broken off other romantic relationships. Or take the student who decides to go out for the soccer team at school. He rules out spending hours of practice on the basketball court. By extension, if we want to follow Christ, why do we fritter away hours in activities that have nothing to do with our faith or the Church? Are there things I need to weed out of my life?

**Conversation with Christ:** Lord, help me focus my energies better on you and what you are asking of me. Let me not be distracted by activities or material possessions or even relationships that aren't helping my spiritual life.

**Resolution:** I will weed out one thing from my life that doesn't fit in with my state as a Christian. It could be a Website, a subscription to a publication, an immodest piece of clothing, a relationship.