

# Matthew 8:18-34

## “The King’s Followers and Freedom”

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Christ’s disciples experience true freedom as they worship God, and all the benefits of a relationship with God. Being Christ’s disciple involves sacrifice and learning to trust Jesus. In light of the benefits and costs will you choose to follow Jesus?

#### Discussion Qs

1. How can the desire for material comfort be an obstacle to Jesus?
2. What are some of the storms (difficulties) of life that threaten our sense of peace?
3. How can storms cause us to run *from* God as opposed *to* God?
4. What perceived sacrifice and fears have made it hard for you to follow Christ?

#### Jesus Is Our King and the Career Realm

When Jesus is king in your work, you do your work to please the Lord and not merely to men [Eph. 6:4-8].

#### Intro.

**Subject:** The costs and benefits of following Jesus

**Object:** Be Christ’s disciple and experience freedom

**Context:** The healing of the leper, Centurion’s servant, Peter’s mother-in-law, and multitudes affirm Jesus’ identity as Messiah [8:1-17]

#### I. The price of following [18-22] Pay the cost of being a disciple

**A. Multitudes are interested in receiving benefits from Jesus [18]** And when Jesus saw great multitudes about Him, He gave a command to depart to the other side: Masses pursued Jesus desiring to receive from Him [healing, etc].

Jesus instructs disciples to cross to the other (Eastern) side of Galilee [Gentiles]  
Jesus focused on caring for and preparing His disciples.

**1. Following Jesus involves sacrifice [19-20]** Then a certain scribe came and said to Him, “Teacher, I will follow You wherever You go.”<sup>20</sup> 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:** Scribe [19] was responsible for interpretation of Scripture. He calls Jesus **Teacher** [19] like “Rabbi” but not Lord [Messiah]. He expresses a desire to follow Jesus [yield to as a disciple] **wherever** [through thick and thin].

**a. Jesus’ disciples are willing to experience hardship for the gospel**

- i. **Son of Man [20]** 81x in gospels, Messianic reference [Dan. 7:13-14]
- ii. Jesus had no permanent home or earthly treasure to obstruct his mission [20]
- iii. Jesus’ warns of the potential obstacle material wealth poses to following Him.

**How can the desire for material comfort be an obstacle to Jesus?**

**2. Following Jesus requires prioritizing Him over all other relationships [21-22]** Then another of His disciples said to Him, “Lord, let me first go and bury my father. But Jesus said to him, Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead:

**a. Jesus must be before self, parents, spouse, child, friends or career [Rev. 2:4]**

- i. The desire to honor parents by caring for them is good + pleases God.
- ii. Jews bury the dead generally within 24 hours [likely not dead at the time]. The essence is - once my parents pass then I’ll follow you.

**b. Jesus calls us to do the work that only His disciple can do [22]** there is a work that unbelievers can do and work which only believers can do.

- i. The spiritually dead can bury the physically dead
- ii. There is urgency to the call to follow Jesus –don’t delay!

**II. The problem of fear [23-27] Place your trust in Jesus despite difficulties**

**A. Jesus’ disciples follow Him [22]** Now when He got into a boat, His disciples followed Him: Galilee is 13 miles long & 8 wide. The surface is 600’ below sea level. Rising temperatures pull the cool air and can create waves measuring over 20 feet. The boat is 27’ with 2 oars, one mast, a rudder, and holds @12. For ballast place a #120 bag under the stern [back] could be used as a pillow.

**Mk. 4:35 Let us cross over to the other side.**

**1. Jesus’ disciples learn to trust Him in the storms of life [24-25]**

**a. Storms threaten our peace [24]** And suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves. But He was asleep

- i. **Great tempest:** Greek *seismos* (seismology). **Boat was covered with the waves:** full of water [Mk. 4:37]. **He was asleep:** peace [only time in gospels where He sleeps]

**What are some of the storms of life that threaten our sense of peace?**

**b. In the midst of storms go to Jesus [25]** Then His disciples came to *Him* and awoke Him, saying, “Lord, save us! We are perishing!

- i. Jesus slept through the storm, but wakes for the disciples (Mom re cry of her baby)
- ii. **Lord, save us! We are perishing!** There are times in life when we feel so overwhelmed by storms that we are perishing
- iii. Storms can cause us to run from God as opposed to God? Go to Jesus!

**2. If you are following Jesus you need not fear [26-27]** But He said to them, “Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?” Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea,

and there was a great calm. <sup>27</sup> So the men marveled, saying, “Who can this be, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?”

**a. Jesus wants to grow us in our faith, so that we trust Him more and fear less**

**i. The most repeated commandment in the Bible “Do not be afraid”**

**b. Following Jesus means trusting Him**

**i. Jesus said, “Let’s cross over ...” Cf. won’t go under so trust, He is with you**

**ii. He has all authority in the universe, the wind and the waves obey Him, + He’s good**

**III. The Promise of Freedom [28-34] Experience freedom to worship God**

**A. Jesus wants to free us from Satan’s harmful influence and control**

When He had come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two demon-possessed *men*, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way.

**1. Jesus has all authority in the spiritual realm** Two demon possessed men [28]: Mark and Luke focus on 1 called “Legion” [Mk. 5:9]. Roman legion is 6,000 soldiers, and the sense is he was possessed by many. Mark tells us that he would break chains intended to bind – supernatural strength, and that he would harm himself and others.

We do not believe believers can be demon-possessed [no evidence of it in Scripture] but can be oppressed.

**a. Demons recognize Jesus’ is Sovereign, but don’t submit to Him [29-30]**

And suddenly they cried out, saying, “What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?” <sup>30</sup> Now a good way off from them there was a herd of many swine feeding. <sup>31</sup> So the demons begged Him, saying, “If You cast us out, permit us to go away into the herd of swine.”

**i. Torment us before the time [29]:** Demons are aware of God’s judgment, but realize that it is not yet time.

**ii. Permit us to go away into the herd of swine:** Demons are spirit beings that may seek to inhabit a physical body. Per Mark there were 2,000 pigs [Mk. 5:31]

**iii. Satan and the rebelling angels aligned with him have influence in the world, because of Adam & Eve’s sin and the consequences of their rebellion. But God is Sovereign. Receiving Christ can break Satan’s influence!**

**b. Demons bring destruction rather than blessing [32]** And He said to them, “Go.” So when they had come out, they went into the herd of swine. And suddenly the whole herd of swine ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and perished in the water.

**i. The demons inhabit the pigs causing violent death of the herd**

**2. Jesus offers freedom but people must choose [33-34]** Then those who kept *them* fled; and they went away into the city and told everything, including what *had happened* to the demon-possessed *men*. <sup>34</sup> And behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus. And when they saw Him, they begged *Him* to depart from their region. The pig herders report all that happened [they don’t want to be blamed for the loss [33]. The whole city comes to Jesus and begs Him to leave [34]

**a. The obstacles of material wealth and fear kept them from experiencing freedom in Christ** The formerly demon-possessed were set-free and choose to worship Christ [Mk. 4:18-20]. The rest rejected Christ resulting in Satan's continued dominance of their lives.

**Conc. Choose to pay the price to follow Jesus, trust Him, and experience freedom found in worshiping God.**