

THE DISCIPLINE OF DISCIPLESHIP: COUNT THE COST!

(Luke 14:25-35)

Series: The Disciplines of a Godly Life (Part 8)

- ...One of the great sins of our day is offering a corrupted Gospel to people who need Christ. I have heard it told that Jesus wants all of His followers to be healthy and wealthy... so come to Him and be saved. Others hold forth the hope to lonely people that Jesus is your best of all friends, so come to Him and He will embrace you.
- ...According to Jesus, who was always offering the Gospel to people, the way to genuine salvation first required a probing consideration. The Gospel is free, paid for in full by Jesus, but after one receives it, it demands everything. Jesus gave His all to save us, and now by God's grace and power, we do likewise and lay it all on the altar.
- ...To make sure we understand this, Jesus made it clear by telling three times that if we refuse to do this, "You cannot be My disciple." (14:26, 27, 33) Jesus, rather than lowering the bar to salvation, raised it high!

THREE LOVES CONSIDERED AND THEN SURRENDERED TO JESUS AS YOU FOLLOW HIM...YOUR FIRST LOVE.

...Many Christians give up precious little for Jesus, especially those of us who enjoy abundant prosperity in the USA.

I. You Must Surrender Your Family. Jesus Must Be Your First Love. (vv.25-26)

- A. Note the setting: Jesus has just given a gracious invitation for all to come to His banquet... saved!! (14:21-23) Now speaking to the great crowd He tells them it is very costly to follow Him.
1. He was not going to give the bare minimum message so as not to offend people.
 2. He invites all, but calls each one to deeply consider the cost in following Him.
- B. Jesus tells of the first obstacle, a true disciple must "Hate his family." (v.26)
1. How could this be? Doesn't this conflict with other Bible teaching? No!
...In that day, it was a literary device making a comparison. (Gen 29:30-31, Leah)
 2. This meant, that if there is a question of what love is first, it is always Jesus.
...Love for Christ is the true disciple's only ultimate loyalty.
...Jesus must mean more to us than our own families, however much we love them.
...Jesus told, don't let the claims our families make upon us interfere with...
 3. Unless Jesus is your greatest love you cannot be His disciple. (v.26)

II. You Must Surrender Your Life. Jesus May Allow You To Suffer For Him. (vv.27-32)

...At the "get-go," you must count the cost and be willing to suffer in following Jesus.

- A. "Cross carrying" does not refer to the common sufferings in life, it points to specific ones.
1. Our rebellious world hates Jesus and anything to do with Him. They killed Him.
 2. Now, inspired by Satan, Jesus' followers are the target of hell's wrath. In both large and small ways Christians take the blows of a Christ-hating world. Don't be surprised!
...Such suffering is really a badge of honor. This suffering may involve words, division, loss, misunderstandings, pain, and even death.
- B. Jesus is alerting us that following Him in salvation may bring suffering, sorrow, and death. The true disciple must be ready to share Jesus' fate of rejection by the world.

- C. To help us, Jesus gave two illustrations calling us to really count the cost before following Him.
 - 1. To build a tower, the builder must calculate the cost to finish it. If left unfinished, it will bring him shame as a "monument to one's foolishness."
 - 2. Warfare. To engage in battle when the costs are so great requires prudent reflection. If not, the loss could be devastating.
- D. This is what it means to follow Christ. Our lives are His to do what He desires to do with them.
 - ...We are "Living sacrifices." "Dead, but alive." "Living is Christ, to die is gain."
 - ...If not, Jesus told, "You cannot be My disciple." (v.27)

III. You Must Surrender The Ownership Of All Your Possessions. (vv.33-35)

- ...This involves giving Jesus full control of your life, releasing everything to Him.
- A. We must give Him everything, and then receive back from Him whatever He wants us to have to be managed for Him and His purposes. Jesus told that a true disciple must relinquish all...
- B. What then is left? Only the life that Jesus wants me to have... the way He wants me to have it.
- C. If we fail in this, our lives will be like salt-less salt, useless for His kingdom. (vv.34-35)
 - ...Jesus said the third time, if you refuse to do this, "You cannot be my disciple." (v.33)

SO WHAT? WHAT DIFFERENCE SHOULD THIS MAKE IN YOUR LIFE?

1. Dear Christian, is Jesus your first love? He must be. If you struggle with rival loves, seek God's forgiveness through confession. Any other love is an idol that you must confess and forsake.
2. According to Jesus there is only one kind of disciple, the men and women who have surrendered all to Him. Family, life, and possessions... good things in themselves, but must be given to Him for His glory. One said once, "If He is not Lord of all, He is not Lord at all."
3. Today Jesus is still calling men and women to receive the gift of eternal life by believing upon Him as Savior and Lord. Salvation is a gift, paid for in full by Jesus at the Cross. It is free, but carefully consider by receiving this free gift of life forever, it will cost you everything you have. Today, Jesus is calling. Will you believe upon Him?