

Counting The Cost Of Discipleship

Text : **Luke 14: 25-35**

INTRODUCTION :

A. These days, it seems that everyone wants something for nothing.

1. Advertisers take advantage of this character flaw.
 - a. Buy one take one sales ... inflate prices then offer deal.
 - b. Buy this for \$20 and I'll give you this \$20 free, not finished yet .. I'll give .. **\$60** for 20
2. Politicians take advantage of it.
 - a. Vote for me and I'll make you rich.
 - b. Vote for me and I'll take money from those who have more and give it to you.
3. **They succeed because this attitude permeates every facet of our society.**

B. This desire for a free ride has even been incorporated into America's religious life.

1. People want to receive from God, but feel no obligation to give to Him.
2. They choose what church they belong to on the basis of what it can **do for them**.
3. When a church begins to demand from them, they look for one which is not demanding.

C. Jesus faced the same problem during his earthly ministry.

1. Many followed after Jesus because He fed them.

John 6: 26-27 Jesus answered them and said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. ²⁷ "Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you, for on Him the Father, God, has set His seal."
2. When Jesus began to explain the hardships to come, many disciples stopped following.

John 6: 66-68 As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore. ⁶⁷ So Jesus said to the twelve, "You do not want to go away also, do you?" ⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life."

D. We can learn valuable lessons from the teachings of Jesus.

1. **As Jesus did, so we should warn people that Christianity is not an easy life.**
2. **It's not for everyone. It requires total commitment. (Cf.- **Matt. 19: 16-26**)**
3. **Christianity requires the willingness to totally surrender one's life to Christ.**
4. **Though Christianity is very demanding, the rewards are very great.**

I. We must advise people that Christianity is not intended to be an easy life on earth.

A. Jesus warned all who would follow Him that mistreatment would follow.

1. **Read & Exegete ... Matt. 10: 16-22**
 2. From the beginning Christians have received opposition.
 - a. **Acts 8: 1ff** The Jerusalem church.
 - b. The church in most places was persecuted, e.g., **Thessalonica**.
II Thes. 1:3-4 We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brethren, as is *only* fitting, because your faith is greatly enlarged, and the love of each one of you toward one another grows ever greater; ⁴ therefore, we ourselves speak proudly of you among the churches of God for your perseverance and faith in the midst of all your persecutions and afflictions which you endure.
 - c. The lives of the Apostles were not soft and luxurious like Americans enjoy.
I Cor. 4: 11-13 To this present hour we are both hungry and thirsty, and are poorly clothed, and are roughly treated, and are homeless; ¹² and we toil, working with our own hands; when we are reviled, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure; ¹³ when we are slandered, we try to conciliate; we have become as the scum of the world, the dregs of all things, even until now.
- * **No one should expect Christianity to give him an easy life. It brings strife.**

B. The media charlatans are not preaching the same message Jesus preached.

1. Jesus said that following Him would cost you everything, **NOT** that you'd prosper.
2. Christianity caused the early Christians to loose their possessions.
Heb. 10: 34 For you showed sympathy to the prisoners and accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and a lasting one.
3. The Apostles taught that Christians should expect be persecuted. (Cf.- **John 3:20**)
II Tim. 3: 12- Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

II. Jesus taught that Christianity is not for everyone, only for those totally committed.

A. One must evaluate his level of commitment before undertaking the Christians life.

1. Do I have sufficient faith ? **Text ... Don't start the tower and not finish it.**
2. It takes more than an academic belief to complete the Christian walk.
3. It takes more than a desire to be saved to finish one's "**course.**" (**II Tim. 4: 7**)

B. One's faith must cause him to be willing to commit to Jesus above all others.

1. Refer to text.
 - a. Friends
 - b. Family
 - c. Spouse
2. Jesus expects the same commitment from us to Him that He made to us.
3. If there is anyone or anything we put above Jesus, we **cannot** be a Christian. (**actions**)

C. The commitment we must make involves DAILY action.

1. Some view being a Christian as coming to the assembly on Sunday.
ILL.- "I'm faithful if I come to church regularly and don't join some other church."
2. Christianity is a DAILY walk with God which involved DAILY service.
Read & Exegete ... Luke 9: 23-26

D. Christians are servants of sin who have been purchased to serve God.

1. Becoming a Christian is not to become a freed slave.
2. Becoming a Christian is to commit one's self to a different Master. (Cf.- **I Cor. 6:20**)
3. Being a bondservant of God has great rewards IF one remains committed to Him.

III. To be a Christian one must be totally surrendered to His new Master, Jesus.

A. When Jesus talks about saving and loosing one's life, He refers to spiritual life.

1. **Re-Read Vs.- 24**
2. **Jesus offers a trade ... our life on earth for eternal life in Heaven.**
 - a. That is what the Apostle Paul refers to in **Gal. 2:20**. ... **crucified** = Christ live in
 - b. **Jesus will not be an add-on to anyone's life. It's all or nothing.** (Cf- **Lk 16:13**)
 - c. That is the message of **II Cor. 5:14-15** : **For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; ¹⁵ and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.**

B. To be surrendered to Christ is to put Him in total control of your life.

1. Christ becomes our ONLY goal in life.
2. Every decision in life is made with regards to how it facilitates HIS will.
 - a. Who my friends are ... (**I Cor. 15:33**)
 - b. Who I marry ... (**I Cor. 7**)

- c. Where I live, work, etc. ... (**no longer I who lives, Christ lives through me.)**
(**they who live might no longer live for themselves)**

C. Christianity is a total surrender of one's life to the Savior who purchased it.

1. Christianity is not a temple religion.
 - a. Come before the Lord at His house, briefly worship and then go about one's life.
 - b. Each individual Christian IS the temple of God.
 - c. One never leaves the presence of the true God. (**We worship & serve continually.)**
2. Christianity cannot be a part of one's life.
 - a. Some say, "*The church (God) is an important part of my life.*"
 - b. Others say, "*The church (God) is the most important thing in my life.*"
 - c. Jesus says, "**I will BE your life or I will have no relationship with you.**"

*** Take up your cross and follow Me = be crucified with Me = no life other than Me.**
3. There is nothing one does or says that is outside his responsibility to Christ the Lord.
Col. 3: 17- Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus,

D. Few in America today are surrendered to anything beyond themselves.

1. **Read ... II Tim. 4: 3-4**
 - a. Vs. **3** Christians will come not to like to hear the word proclaimed.
 - b. Vs. **3b** They will seek preachers who will teach how and what they want to hear.
*** Just give me a few minutes of something positive and uplifting.**
 - c. Vs. **4** This will lead to a turning away from the truth.
2. **Read ... II Tim. 4: 1-2**
 - a. Vs. **1** Preachers have a specific responsibility in the matter.
 - b. Vs. **2** Regardless of what men want to hear, preach the word of God.
 - c. Vs. **2b** Always be ready to preach the word even when it's not popular.
3. The preacher is commanded to identify problem areas and correct them. (Vs. **2c**)
 - a. "**Reprove**" ... Is to convict of sin. **This is to be done forcefully.**
Titus 2:15- These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority.
Let no one disregard you.

(*** "The sword of the Lord is not for spreading butter."** G.K. Wallace)
 - b. "**Rebuke**" ... To charge with wrong. **Apply directly, not in the abstract.**
(cf.- **II Sam 12** ... Nathan confronted King David directly.)
 - c. "**Exhort**" ... To call to a person, to urge someone to follow a course of action.

*** In order to be a Christian one must surrender his life to Christ.**

CONCLUSION :

A. Christianity is very different from the common religion in America.

1. It is not something one goes to or that one joins.
2. Like a wolf in sheep's clothing, Satan is slowly ravaging it from within.
3. As Israel wanted a king **"like the nations round about"** the church has become like the world.

B. In order to be a Christian, one must commit himself to Christ above all.

1. This commitment demands that one come out and function separated from the world.
2. He must put the Lord and the Lord's goals above everyone and everything. (**even self**)

C. In order to be a Christian, one must surrender his life to Christ.

1. The one who holds on to his life on the earth will lose his eternal life in Heaven.
2. Surrender involves one's DAILY life, not just academic acceptance.
3. The surrendered life seeks the benefit of his Master, not his own benefit. (**gain = loss**)

D. The Christian life is very demanding, but also very rewarding.

1. It seems so unfair that the wicked are allowed to prosper while the righteous suffer.
2. Their good things will not last, but the Christian will prosper eternally. (Cf- **Lk 16**)
3. If we remain committed and surrendered, our reward is assured.

Heb. 10: 34 For you showed sympathy to the prisoners and accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and a lasting one. ³⁵ Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. ³⁶ For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised.

INVITATION :

1. Jesus invites you to take up your cross and follow Him daily.
2. He gave His life to provide eternal salvation for you.
4. You can be His disciple if you will place your trust in Him,
commit your life to Him every day,
surrender your earthly life to Him.
5. The first act of surrender is to be baptized.
6. Give Him your life today ... He'll give you life eternal.