**The Cost of Being a Disciple**

Luke 14:25-35

Key Verse 33

“In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples.”

**Introduction**

In this passage Jesus turned to a large crowd following Him, instructing them on what it meant to be a His disciple. It is more than accepting an invitation. Jesus told them about what kind of cost they had to pay to become His disciples. Becoming Jesus’ disciples is a great blessing, but it involves cost. Jesus wanted them to consider the cost and get ready to pay the cost to become his disciple.

**1. Read verse 25-27. Who was traveling with Jesus and why did He turn to them and speak? (25) What must we do as disciples of Jesus? (26) What else is required as we live as his disciple? (27)**

**1-1, Read verse 25-27.**

Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: 26 “If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own life—such a person cannot be my disciple. 27 And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.

**1-2, Who was traveling with Jesus and why did He turn to them and speak? (25)**

* Large crowds were traveling with Jesus.
* They were following Him with many different purposes. Some might have followed Jesus to get something from him.
* They might still have desire to know Jesus and learn from him. Some of them might have wanted to be his disciple.
* Jesus turned to them and spoke. He wanted to teach them the way to become his true disciple. Just traveling with Jesus didn’t mean that they were automatically his disciples. Traveling with Jesus in a crowd and becoming his disciple are quite different.

**1-3, What must we do as disciples of Jesus? (26)**

26 “If anyone comes to me and does not **hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own life**—such a person cannot be my disciple.

* The word disciple simply means “learner.” A disciple is someone who is a student, a learner of Jesus.
* Previously, Jesus said that coming to God was like accepting an invitation (Luke 14:16-24). Jesus was careful to add that there is more to being His follower than simply accepting an invitation.
* Jesus boldly said that the true disciple comes to Him without reservation, putting Jesus first. Other relationships are definitely of lower priority than one’s faithfulness and obedience to Jesus.

* Jesus used a strong word such as ‘hate’ to show how great the difference must be between our allegiance to Jesus and our allegiance to everyone and everything else.
* Normally, being a follower of Jesus makes someone a better and more beloved family member; being a follower of Jesus doesn’t automatically divide families.
* Yet certainly it does divide among non-Christian or anti-Christian cultures.
* The greatest danger of idolatry comes not from what is bad, but from what is *good* – such as the love within family relationships.
* The greatest threat to the *best* often comes from what is *second best*.
* So what is better is the exact enemy of what is best!
* ‘Hate’ (μισεί) means to love little or to love less.
* We should be able to love Jesus more than our close family members and even our own lives.
* To be disciples of Jesus, we should be able to sacrifice close family relationships and even our own lives to follow him and serve his will.
* The detachment from family members and any other things that we are bound to is necessary to commit ourselves to Jesus fully.
* Jesus requires that his disciples make a full commitment to him.

**1-4, What else is required as we live as his disciple? (27)**

And whoever does not **carry their cross and follow** **me** cannot be my disciple.

* Large crowds must have known what it meant by carrying one’s cross.
* Carrying one’s cross was a requirement for criminals before being crucified.
* If someone took up his cross, he never came back and it was a one way journey of shame and torture.
* So ‘carrying one’s cross’ meant going through the suffering and sacrifice that is demanded of us if we choose to follow Jesus. It meant following Jesus and serving the duties that God has charged us with. Carrying our cross could include even our death.
* Jesus says, “their” cross. It means that each person has his or her own cross.
* Jesus Himself took His cross to show us a good example how to carry the cross.
* Becoming Jesus’ disciple involves much suffering as well as labor.
* Only those who are ready to go through suffering and labor can be his disciples.
* ‘Follow me’ – Following Jesus means to copy him and his way of life.
* It also means to follow his leading through obedience. It means to be literally a ‘little Jesus’ and obey him as our Lord.
* Being Jesus’ disciple is not only to believe His teaching but also to yield our lives.

**2. Read verse 28-33. What should we do first before building a tower? (28) What might happen if we skip this first step? (29, 30) What should a king do first before going to war and what would he do if he thought he could not win? (31, 32) What cost should we consider to be Jesus’ disciples? (33)**

**2-1. Read verse 28-33.**

“Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won’t you first sit down and estimate the cost to see if you have enough money to complete it? 29 For if you lay the foundation and are not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule you, 30 saying, ‘This person began to build and wasn’t able to finish.’ 31 “Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Won’t he first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? 32 If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. 33 In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples.”

**2-2. What should we do first before building a tower? (28)**

“Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won’t you **first sit down and estimate the cost** to see if you have enough money to complete it?

* It is necessary to estimate the cost first before we start to build a building. If we realize we don’t have enough money to complete what we started, we’d better not to start.
* Before we decide to become Jesus’ disciples, we need to figure out the cost. Then we can decide whether we are ready to pay the cost of following Jesus.

**2-3. What might happen if we skip this first step? (29, 30)**

For if you lay the foundation and are not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule you, 30 saying, ‘This **person began to build and wasn’t able to finish**.’

* If a person doesn’t have enough money to build a building, he would not finish it.
* If we aren’t ready to pay the cost of becoming a disciple of Jesus, we will likely not follow Jesus to the end. We might be the person who gives up in the middle.

**2-4. What should a king do first before going to war and what would he do if he thought he could not win? (31, 32)**

“Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Won’t he first sit down and **consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand?** 32 If he is not able, he will **send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace**.

* The king would consider first if he could defeat the enemy king before going to war because he doesn’t want to be destroyed by fighting someone who is more powerful than him.
* If the enemy king is more powerful than him, he should send a delegation to ask for terms of peace.
* Jesus emphasized the importance of considering the cost to become His disciple because he wanted people to know that becoming his disciple involves cost.
* He also wanted people to prepare themselves to get ready to pay the cost of becoming his disciple.
* Many people fail to become a disciple of Jesus because they didn’t consider the cost and are not ready to pay it.

**2-5. What cost should we consider to be Jesus’ disciples? (33)**

In the same way, those of you who do not **give up everything** you have cannot be my disciples.

* This ancient Greek phrase had the meaning of, “To say goodbye to.” Jesus told us to say goodbye to everything we have, entrusting it to Jesus.
* ‘Give up everything’ - There are things that we should give up to follow Jesus.
* ‘everything’ is the thing that hinders us from committing ourselves to follow Jesus.
* ‘everything’ is everything. It doesn’t exclude anything.
* When we are ready to give up everything, we can become Jesus’ disciple.
* Becoming a disciple of Jesus is like a merchant who sold everything he had to buy a pearl that has great value.

Matthew 13:45- 46 reads,

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. 46 When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.”

* Becoming a disciple of Jesus has such value that it is worthy of our giving up everything we have.

**3. Read verse 34-35. What would happen if salt were to lose its saltiness? (34, 35a) How is this related to becoming a disciple of Jesus? Why might Jesus have concluded with the expression, “Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear”? (35b).**

**3-1. Read verse 34-35.**

“Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? 35 It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure pile; it is thrown out. “Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear.”

**3-2. What would happen if salt were to lose its saltiness? (34, 35a)**

“Salt is good, but if **it loses its saltiness**, how can it be made salty again? 35 It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure pile**; it is thrown out**.

* If salt loses its saltiness it becomes useless even more than a manure pile that is useful for fertilizing the land.
* People cannot use it for anything. It would be thrown out.

**3-3. How is this related to becoming a disciple of Jesus?**

* Jesus called his disciples to be salt to the world.

Matthew 5:13 reads,

“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.”

* Only true disciples of Jesus who follow him by giving up everything can be salt that has saltiness.
* ‘Saltiness’ refers to one’s spiritual influence and power.
* If we don’t grow as true disciples of Jesus, we lose our saltiness and become useless.
* When we don’t retain our saltiness, we will be thrown out by God and then even by men.
* Becoming a true disciple is not an option but an absolute must. If we fail to become Jesus’ disciples, God’s judgment will follow.

**3-4. Why might Jesus have concluded with the expression, “Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear”? (35b).**

* Jesus wanted people to take his word seriously and understand what he said.
* Jesus’ word was given to everybody not just to certain people. If anyone who listens to his word and obeys it, he or she can become Jesus’ disciple.
* Jesus didn’t force anyone to listen to his word. It is up to each of us whether we accept his word or not.

**Conclusion**

Certainly Jesus is the greatest King of all. “In the same way, those of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.” Our life goal while we believe in Christ should not be a goal to gain the world but a goal that allows us to give up everything to become a faithful disciple of Jesus. To become a disciple of Jesus, we should be able to hate even our family members and our lives and carry our cross. Only by becoming true disciples of Jesus, can we be salt and light to the world. May God give us faith to follow Jesus and grow as his true disciples.

**One word: those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples**