

“God: # 1. Everything Else: #387.”

Luke 14:25-35

August 13, 2023

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- 25 **Now large crowds were going along with Him; and He turned and said to them,**
- 26 "If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple.
- 27 "Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.
- 28 "For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it?
- 29 "Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who observe it begin to ridicule him,
- 30 saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.'
- 31 "Or what king, when he sets out to meet another king in battle, will not first sit down and consider whether he is strong enough with ten thousand men to encounter the one coming against him with twenty thousand?
- 32 "Or else, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace.
- 33 "So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions.
- 34 "Therefore, salt is good; but if even salt has become tasteless, with what will it be seasoned?
- 35 "It is useless either for the soil or for the manure pile; it is thrown out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

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- 25 **Now large crowds were going along with Him; and He turned and said to them,**
- "large crowds" – made up of all kinds of people who were following along with Him – the curious, some attracted to Jesus, some wanted to see miracles, some to get an occasional free meal, those interested in what He had to say.
- To the modern day evangelical church, this sounds good – big numbers, large crowds. They wonder - What is His strategy for church growth? What keeps the people coming back? Jesus must be seeker-sensitive.
- Numbers don't mean much. Example: A rabbit and an elephant. Which is healthier?

• So to Jesus, it was just the opposite. The large crowds mean little if they don't understand what the cost of discipleship means. Jesus will now tell them.

A young preacher once complained to Charles Haddon Spurgeon that he did not have a big enough church congregation. Spurgeon asked, "How many do you have? The young man replied, "About 100." Spurgeon looked the man straight in the eye and said, "Maybe that number is more than you care to give an account for on the day of judgment!"

Being a disciple may cost you:

1. your close relationships.
2. your life .
3. your possessions.

26 "If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple.

1. **YOUR CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS.**
 - To "come" is to believe.

John 5:40

40 and you are unwilling to **come to Me** so that you may have life.

John 6:37

37 "All that the Father gives Me will **come to Me**, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.

John 6:44

44 "No one can **come to Me** unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day

John 6:65

65 And He was saying, "For this reason I have said to you, that no one can **come to Me** unless it has been granted him from the Father."

John 7:37-38

37 . . . Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty, let him **come to Me** and drink.

38 "He who **believes** in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'"

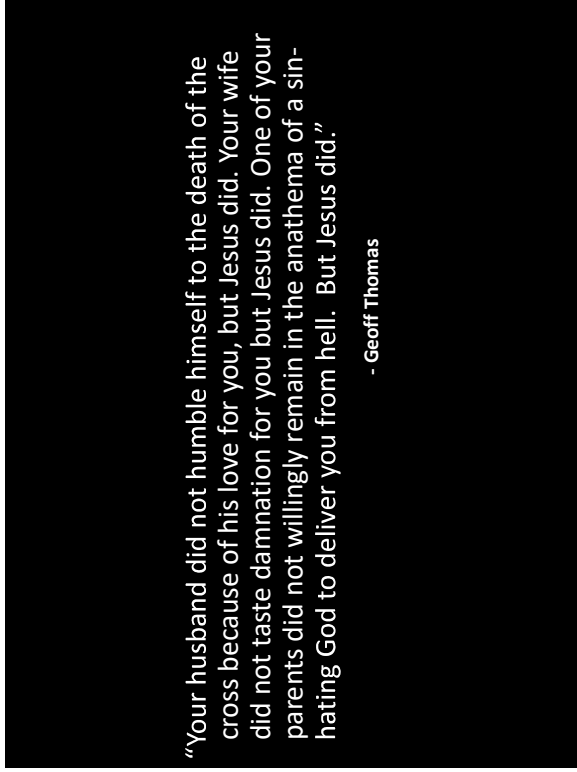
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1. CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS.

- To "come" is to believe.
 - Giving up relationships, your life, your possessions is not to obtain salvation or else nobody would be saved. This is talking about that which comes through sanctification.
 - "hate" – this is hyperbole of comparison. Something is said to an extreme for the purpose of comparison.
 - We know that the Bible not only talks but commands us to love our parents and wife and children and siblings.
- Matt 10:37**
- 37 "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.
- So Jesus is saying, "God is #1 and everything else is #387 by comparison. Not even close. No 2-386.
 - Jesus is making the point that God is to be so superior in your life that it is through you "hate" everything else because it all is at the far extreme, at the very bottom.
 - A disciple has God as the top priority in everything, and the rest is in the distance.

Luke 14:20

20 "Another one said, 'I have married a wife, and for that reason I cannot come.'



- Geoff Thomas

26 "If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple.

- There are those today who come out of Jewish, Hindu, Muslim, atheistic families, that are faced with that choice. If they choose Christ, they will be disowned.
- You are not a follower of Christ if you say, "I love you Jesus, but if you touch anyone in my family or any in my family threatens me with being cut-off from the family, then that's the end of my love for you."
- Jewish families were very close. This hit them right where they were.

2. YOUR LIFE.

"even his own life" – Jesus now mentions that which is even more valuable, and that is your very life. He will expand upon that in the next verse . . .

"he cannot be my disciple" – very black and white. Does not necessarily mean that he or she is not a believer. How can you be a learner and follower of Christ, and not have Him as #1?

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27 "Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.

28 "For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it?

29 "Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who observe it begin to ridicule him,

30 saying, "This man began to build and was not able to finish."

31 "Or what king, when he sets out to meet another king in battle, will not first sit down and consider whether he is strong enough with ten thousand men to encounter the one coming against him with twenty thousand?

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33 "So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions.

34 "Therefore, salt is good; but if even salt has become tasteless, with what will it be seasoned?

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- A cross was a symbol of death.

"The cross was a well-known instrument of punishment that was invented by the Persians, picked up by the Greeks, and perfected by the Romans."

"In the Roman world, before a man died on a cross, he had to carry his cross (or at least the horizontal beam of the cross) to the place of execution. When the Romans crucified a criminal, they didn't just hang them on a cross. They first hung a cross on him.

- Notice it is "his own cross" and not Jesus' cross. Only Jesus can bear that cross.

- This is not the suffering I go through in life.

- This is a willingness to give up my life to be His disciple.

1 Cor 15:31

31 I affirm, brethren, by the boasting in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, **I die daily.**

- Today we might say, "Whoever does not carry his own electric chair . . ."

- You must be willing to die for Christ if that is what you are called to do.

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"tower" – common on farms and estates. Kind of a watch tower to watch the fields.
• So to build one you must get out your calculator and count up what it is going to cost.
• His intention is not to only complete a portion of it.
• If he fails to count the cost he ends up with only a foundation or half built tower and people laugh at him.
• So bringing that over into the subject of discipleship, we have a lot of "half-built" disciples.
• When a pastor looks at his congregation he sees "towers" at various stages of completion. Some are still working on it. Others have quit. Why? They failed to count the cost—your relationships, your life, your possessions, etc.

Mark 4:16-19

- 16 "In a similar way these are the ones on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy,
17 and they have no firm root in themselves, but are only temporary; then, when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately they fall away.
18 "And others are the ones on whom seed was sown among the thorns; these are the ones who have heard the word,
19 but the worries of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

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"The Christian landscape is strewn with the wreckage of derelict, half-built towers, the ruins of those who began to build and were unable to finish. Thousands of people still ignore Christ's warning and undertake to follow Him without first pausing to reflect on the cost of doing so. This is the great scandal of Christendom, so-called nominal Christianity. In countries to which the Christian civilization has spread, large numbers of people have covered themselves with a but thin veneer of Christianity. They've allowed themselves to become somewhat involved, enough to be respectable, but not enough to be uncomfortable. Their religion, is a great, soft cushion. It protects them from the hard unpleasantness of life while changing its place and shape to suit their convenience. No wonder the cynics speak of hypocrites in the church and dismiss religion as escapism."

- John Stott

Basic Christianity

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- Here is another illustration of counting the cost.
- King has 10,000 men. Enemy has 20,000. If he goes into battle, what will the cost be?
- So he takes action and negotiates.
- He saves the lives of 10,000 men plus he perhaps saves his kingdom.
- The point is - the cost must be considered and then you take action.
- Believers need to understand that discipleship has requirements, that include a cost, that call for a decision, that results in an action.

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3. YOUR POSSESSIONS.

- So if your relationships and your life find their demotion to #387, what about your possessions?
- "give up" – *ἀποτασσομαι* – "to say goodbye to"
- It simply means your taking them off the #1 slot, saying "good-bye" to them occupying #1, and putting them at #387.
- They are no longer the priority. They are way down there.
- You may lose everything but you still have Jesus and when you have Jesus, you have everything.

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- If Christ is your top priority in your life, then your life will "taste" like it.
- Salt adds taste to foods. "Bet you can't eat just one."
- In Jesus' day salt was impure and was sometimes mixed with dirt and it would lose its taste.
- If your life is mixed too much with the world you will lose the appeal of your "salty" life to those around you.
- You will never be salty to the world unless Jesus is #1 in your life.
- The church at Laodicea was lukewarm – not cold, not hot, and therefore not good for anything.
- If it ceases to be salt, it is useless to enrich the soil or to delay the fermentation process in manure which would get spread on the fields.
- Use your ears to hear this, your mind to understand, and your heart to make application. That's what a disciple will do.

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of Glory died
My richest gain I count but loss
And pour contempt on all my pride
Forbid it Lord that I should boast
Save in the death of Christ my Lord
All the vain things that charm me most
I sacrifice them to His blood
See from His head His hands His feet
Sorrow and love flow mingled down
Did ever such love and sorrow meet
Or thorns compose so rich a crown
Were the whole realm of nature mine
That were an offering far too small
Love so amazing so divine

Demands my soul my life my all.

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Application

1. What would you say if Jesus, pointed at you, and asked you, in front of everyone, "Why are you following Me?" - What would you say? Answer: Because you are by far the most important thing in my life.
2. You cannot be a disciple of the Lord Jesus if you are going to have other affections that hold a greater priority in your life.
3. When you become a believer, your priorities get turned upside down. That is what it means to be a "new creature."
4. Discipleship is not just tagging along with Jesus. Discipleship requires serious consideration.