

Luke

See Jesus

The Real Cost of Following Jesus

Luke 14:25-35

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / Oct. 16, 2022

I. Jesus Had No Category for Superficial or Cerebral Followers

Everybody thinks there are two levels of being a Christian—the regular Christian and then the committed, devoted, disciple of Christ—but the Bible doesn't talk that way and Jesus is certainly not talking that way here.

Jesus never keeps the cost of following Him a secret. He wants you to know the true cost of following Him right up front. So, He talks about who it is that cannot be His disciple.

Luke 14:26 "...he cannot be My disciple."

Luke 14:27 "...cannot be My disciple."

Luke 14:33 "...cannot be My disciple."

The people following Him are all over the map in terms of commitment. Some are nominally committed, some are truly committed, and some are barely committed at all. They're just there out of curiosity or caught up in the excitement that surrounds Jesus.

Jesus is sharpening the focus and definition of what it really means to trust in Him and belong to Him.

II. You'll Have to Abandon Your Normal Earthly Priorities

Coming to Christ is not a superficial makeover; it's a total life takeover. You go from running and ruling your own life to submitting and giving it to Him as Lord.

Jesus steps into the middle of what we care about and prioritize most—ourselves, our people, and our stuff (see vv. 26 & 33)—and says, "It's all got to be secondary to Me."

The Greek word for "renounce" in v. 33 literally means to give up or say goodbye to something dear to you. When you say "yes" to Jesus, you go from ownership to stewardship. He owns it all now—you, your people, and your stuff.

A. Your First Love for Him Begins to Fuel Your Secondary Love for Other People Around You

Luke 14:26 "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."

He's not using this word "hate" in its normal or common sense of being actively hostile towards someone. He's using the word to mean to hate someone comparatively in light of something or someone greater.

In this one verse, Jesus takes every kind of love we have in this world and He says, "I want from you and I offer to you a kind of love that will make all of these earthly loves fall away and pale in comparison."

You will love your spouse, your children, your friends, and others best when you love Jesus most.

When you don't love Him enough and don't know His love for you as you should, you can't love other people well because you need too much in return from them.

B. Your New Identity in Him Changes What You Need from Other People Around You

Luke 14:27 "Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple."

He's not talking about life circumstances. He's talking about your identity with His life, death, and resurrection that now shapes and informs you in a way that changes how you see your circumstances.

In other words, He's saying, "Let who I am and what I've done for you now define you" because the essence of discipleship is to identify fully with Him—to see yourself now in light of who He is and what He's done.

Colossians 3:1-4 "If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. ³For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory."

Luke 9:23 "If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me."

You have to keep in mind every day who you are in Christ. "I'm accepted, I've got nothing to prove, I'm loved with a love that will never end, and nothing in this world can separate me from it."

When you get a hold of this, it changes what you need from other people around you. It frees you from being so self-absorbed and emotionally exhausted. Others can't knock you down and you're not looking to others to keep you propped up! You don't go into relationships desperately needing affirmation, acceptance, and security because you've found all that and more in far greater measure in Christ...which means you can live a radically different life of self-forgetfulness that focuses on loving other people well.