

Commit to Discipleship

Luke 14:25-33

PW Emerson – 10/28/2018 – Ten:27 Ministries

We're in a series on SERVING GOD

- Week 1 – using our gifts & talents & abilities in serving God
- Week 2 – Taking initiative
- Week 3 – Working in the Field
- Week 4 – Loving God Means Loving Others
- Week 5 – Serving in our Worst Moments

Today

Luke 14:25-33

²⁵ 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.

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?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.

It is an understatement to say that discipleship is NOT easy.

- We can go to conference and get very excited, on fire for God, and feel like nothing can defeat us
- We can hear the most inspiring sermon, leave worship determined to change the world for God
- We can read a book by a wonderful Christian author and get excited to make those adjustments in our lives, then we will be great disciples too

These events will not change the fact that being a disciple of Christ is hard

It takes work

In some industries, prices are clearly marked and displayed

- Fast Food – they are proud of their dollar menu
 - They're not highlighting health benefits
 - You're not going to get 100% of your daily vitamins in a hamburger like in a bowl of Total
 - It's about you can get a hamburger for a dollar!

Other industries purposefully avoid directly pointing at the price or anything that may make you think of the costs associated with partaking in their services

- Banks – they don't want people to think about the myriad of fees for their services
- Clinic – I have NEVER seen prices listed at ANY clinic or hospital!

But

Jesus wants to be clear that being a disciple for Christ has a price and Jesus wants us to go in with our eyes open.

It appears that many people following Jesus and calling themselves disciples didn't really know what it meant or the cost. So Jesus stops to clarify things right then and there.

Jesus bring the crowd to an immediate stop and turns to face everyone. And he's going to help people understand the demands of discipleship.

Luke 14:25

²⁵ Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said:

Sometimes when we are planning something, we want to know

- Best case scenario
- Most likely scenario
- Worst case scenario

In the case of following Jesus and being a disciple of Jesus, it was easy for people to see and know the best case scenario:

- They had seen Jesus do incredible miracles
- Seen Jesus raise someone from the dead

Disciples themselves had done miracles of healing

Here in the piece of Luke 14 we're looking at, Jesus gives the worst case scenario

Luke 14:27

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

Jesus is saying that the WORST that could happen was to be crucified.

In hindsight we know that this happened to some of his disciples.

When someone was crucified, they carried the cross to the site of the crucifixion. This was intentional by the Romans because the person carrying their cross would be seen by many people. It was meant to further demonstrate Roman dominance.

So when Jesus says

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

He means it literally.

For some disciples back then, they heard that and decided that the price was too high. They heard enough. So they left Jesus and went home.

John 6:60-66

I FIND THIS PIECE CHILLING

⁶⁰ On hearing it, many of his disciples said, “This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?”

⁶¹ Aware that his disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, “Does this offend you? ⁶² Then what if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before! ⁶³ The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you—they are full of the Spirit and life. ⁶⁴ Yet there are some of you who do not believe.” For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him. ⁶⁵ He went on to say, “This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled them.”

⁶⁶ From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.

We don't know who those disciples were or how many there were. Perhaps they are the 72 disciples spoken of in Luke 10.

Isn't chilling that the worst piece, stating that many of his disciples turned back was chapter 6, verse 66 — 666???

BUT

Even if death isn't the conclusion of discipleship, it's important to know the level of commitment that is needed.

Luke 14:33

³³In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples.

The commitment is everything.

Matthew 6:24

²⁴“No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

Being a disciple means making God number one – not only over money, over everything.

That's what Jesus is talking about in Luke 14:26

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.

I don't think Jesus really wants us to hate mom, dad, sister, brother.

There are many places in scripture where we are told to love family – including the Ten Commandments!

Jesus is using hyperbole, exaggeration, to make a point.

In generations immediately following Jesus and his initial disciples,

- No one decided to follow Jesus casually.
- Following Jesus often meant facing rejection, ridicule, stress & tension.

I hope you don't have to choose between family or God.

BUT

If we have to choose between loving mom/dad/sister/brother & loving Jesus, we should be choosing to love Jesus.

People are outcasts today in many cases:

- Converts from Islam often ostracized
- Catholics sometimes ostracized

Letting God be our master means recognizing that God has claim on all areas of our lives.

Illustration of Total Commitment

A hog and a hen sharing the same barnyard heard about a church's program to feed the hungry. The hog and the hen discussed how they could help. The hen said, "I've got it. We'll provide bacon and eggs for the church to feed the hungry." The hog thought about the suggestion and said, "There's only one thing wrong with your bacon and eggs idea. For you, it only requires a contribution but for me, it will mean total commitment!"

To help illustrate his point, Jesus tells two small illustrations:

Luke 14:28-30

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?²⁹ For if you lay the foundation and are not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule you, ³⁰saying, 'This person began to build and wasn't able to finish.'

How many of you have been to Disney Land/World?

- Then you've seen the big Cinderella palace near the front of the amusement park.
- It is modeled after a real castle in southern Germany called "Neuschwanstein"
- If you go to this castle, look in the throne room: there's no throne.
- There are a number of rooms that aren't done.
- Why?!@# \$? Because King Louie ran out of money when he was building it!

A while back I emailed a number of people asking the question, what is the cost for us today to be a disciple of Jesus. All were good answers but one answer was particular striking.

If we TRULY become a disciple, we must stop our own flow, and follow HIM.

We must listen, learn, lament.

We must deny, disturb, discuss, even die.

We must find, follow, forgive, finish.

We must repent, remember, reply, return and when we have some time, or quiet, we must wait and rest, and you know what we pay to do that!

Sometimes in our carefree culture of entertaining ourselves at all costs, the price we pay or the cost we endure of having a close, intimate discipleship relationship with the KING OF KINGS, instead of worshipping the god of self or self indulgence, is human loneliness.

From Deb C.

You may be thinking ... although I'm a Christian, I'm not a disciple.

That may be true, BUT ... God calls you to be a disciple any minute ...

Some of the disciples were fishermen, prior to being called to be a disciple of Jesus.

Luke 5:8-11

⁸ When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" ⁹ For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, ¹⁰ and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners.

Then Jesus said to Simon, “Don’t be afraid; from now on you will fish for people.”¹¹ So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.

In other words, they weren’t disciples of any rabbi when Jesus called them to be his disciples.

Be ready because I have found that God often calls people at very unexpected times ...

CONCLUSION

I truly claim to be a disciple of Jesus.

Let me be the first to tell you: it’s worth it.

Seeing a person’s life turn around following God ...

Seeing someone experience God’s love for the first time ...

Being able to contribute a teeny-tiny hand in serving God ...

Being able to point people to the source of all goodness ...

NOTHING COMPARES TO THIS!

Matthew 19:29

²⁹ And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life.

Russian comedian, Yakov Smirnoff talks about when he first moved to America, he was amazed at the variety of instant products he could buy in the store. There's powdered milk: just add water and you have milk. There's powdered orange juice: just add water and you have orange juice. Then he saw baby powder and thought, "What a great country! If you want a baby, just add water!"

Some people think that's how discipleship works. You take a believer, add a little baptism water, and "poof" you have a fully-devoted follower of Jesus – a complete disciple. But it takes more than water to make a disciple. Disciples are made, not born.

GO BE A DISCIPLE!