

Scripture Reference: Luke 14:26-33

Date: February 27, 2013

Title: "Count the Cost"

Focus: Following Jesus Requires the Surrender of Personal Rights.

Intro:

1. The *long-view* is something many people lack. This is capacity to consider the implications of choices made. Being so focused on immediate gratification, we lack an appreciation for considering the long-term impact of our daily decisions.

2. But, it is precisely this Jesus calls people to consider as they look to coming into relationship with Him. He recognized a person cannot adequately live today for Him without considering the impact He will have on their life.

Body:

Jesus Create a Dilemma (vv. 26-27)

- This is a provocative statement that continues to catch people's attention.

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

- Attempts have been made to minimize and marginalize this statement and its implications. This debate only distracts from the core issue.

- God is not asking one who come to Him to hate his family or himself. **He is calling for a life of devotion that places God before everything else.**

- Notice His follow up statement, *"Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple."* (v. 27).

- Discipleship demands attentiveness to God that competes with the devotion one has for father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters, even one's self!

1 Cor. 7:32-24a *"But I want you to be free from concern. One who is unmarried is concerned about the thing of the Lord, how he may please the Lord; but one who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how he may please his wife, and his interests are divided."*

- There are costs to following Jesus. But, people aren't asked to consider them before they accept Him.

Cost #1 - One's affinity for God must surpass that of anyone else.

Cost #2 - Your desire for your life cannot be greater than your desire for His will for your life.

Life Reflects the Necessity of Counting the Cost (vv. 28-32)

- Jesus provides the examples of a construction project and combat in making His point. Is it wise to start a building without knowing whether one can finish it? Is it smart to start a fight with a person there is no hope of defeating?

- Yet, it is implied people can receive the forgiveness of sin, gain heaven, and enter a new quality of life all the while continuing to live as they always have. This is "cheap grace."
- It is illogical to assume people can come into the kingdom of God and continue to live under their own reign.
- The costs associated with following Jesus are directly related to living in His Kingdom.

It is not possible to live as His disciple if a person has not given up all rights to him or herself (v. 33)

- This is not saying God disqualifies people from His Kingdom unless they "*hate*" their families or "*carry [their] own cross.*"
- He is saying it is not possible to love God and family equally or to live for yourself and for Him simultaneously.
- It is no more possible to do this than to be in the sunlight and walk in darkness.
- The life of a disciples places demands on a person that are contrary to personal preferences, reasoning, or comfort.

Closing

1. A disciple's devotion to God demands the release of personal rights.

2 Tim. 2:4-6; *"No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier. Also if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not win the prize unless he competes according to the rules. The hard working farmer must be the first to receive his share of the crops."*

3. This needs to be considered in the living out of your faith.