

Luke 14:25-35

In the name of love...

1. we have reduced Christianity down to the lowest common denominator.
2. We have tried to make it easy.
3. We have attempted to make it palatable to the lost because we want the lost to come be a part of our churches.
4. And what we have done is create something we call Christianity that isn't Christianity at all.
5. **We have created something that we call Christianity that is not Christianity at all.**

Jesus, the author and founder and finisher of this faith does not dumb it down.

1. He does not ease it up or attempt to make it palatable.
2. He is brutally honest...not because he doesn't care or is insensitive, but precisely because He is love!
 - a. The most loving thing to do is give people the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. That is what Jesus does here.
 - b. The most unloving thing to do is to mask the truth, dumb down the truth, ease up the the truth, sweeten the truth to make it more palatable...and therefore create a lie!
3. The crowds need to know the truth and Jesus loves them so much He doesn't shrink from telling them the truth about what His call to follow Him is really like.

READ/PRAY

These teachings are without a doubt extreme, especially in light of our backgrounds. But, if the Bible is true and trustworthy, the nature of Jesus' call is extreme. What does this message teach us about the call to follow him? We see 4 things.

I. The Comprehensive Nature of the Call v25-26

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.

There are those who would preach, teach, and say that the invitation Jesus extends here is not for all

1. It is not a comprehensive call. It was only for those closest to him.
2. Theory is that there are those who see their need of a Savior, they pray asking Christ to forgive them, and redeem them, and they go on with their life never growing and never really changing.
3. Then there are others who really feel led to go deeper.
4. They are really interested in spiritual things.

5. These people are the ones that this applies to
6. This call is not for all Christians. It is only for a certain class of Christians...for the deeply committed.

This gospel call however is a comprehensive call.

1. It is for everyone.
2. **This is not a call to a deeper walk. It is a call to a walk.**
3. This is not a call for the special forces. This is a call that he extends to the crowd.
4. This is a call that begins with "If anyone...."

This is a comprehensive call

II. The Conditional Nature of the Call

This is not an open ended call to come as you choose to come

1. You cannot come as you choose to come
 - a. We have dumbed down a proper response to Christ: to the lowest common denominator...here is how WE think it should be.
 - b. SBC motions.
2. You must meet HIS conditions

There are 3 conditions that he lays down for us in this passage. Three times he says, if you do not meet these conditions you cannot be my disciple.

1. The Condition of Your Relationships v26

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.*

- a. What he is really communicating is not a hatred for your parents and family, but a love for him that surpasses your love for your family
- b. Matt 10:37 *Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.*
- c. Your relationships are all subordinated.
- d. What honors Me, what pleases Me, what I desire, what I will, what I command as the Lord of your life takes precedent over all other demands and relationships.
- e. What's interesting (here is what we so often miss) is what pleases God is for us to
 1. Obey our parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. (Col 3:20)
 2. Honor your father and your mother (Ex 20:12)
 3. Wives to submit their own husbands as to the Lord, and husbands to love their wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.
 4. For husbands to hold fast to, cling to, their wives (Eph 5)
- f. **If we put Jesus 1st, he will subordinate our relationships, but in doing so he will**

cause those relationships to deepen, not diminish

g. But he must be first...really first!

2. The Condition of Your Life v27

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

- a. Jesus' call demands that we bear our cross.
- b. Christ's original audience knew exactly what he was calling for
 - 1. Perhaps some 30,000 were crucified during the lifetime of Christ alone
 - 2. The disciples knew exactly what to expect and it was not good
- c. They immediately pictured a poor, condemned soul walking along the road carrying the instrument of his execution on his own back.
 - 1. And one thing about that man, if he was seen leaving town carrying a cross, he was not coming back. *He was as good as dead!*
 - 2. Jesus is saying, this is what you have to be willing to embrace and endure if you will follow me
- d. Jesus said, you must willingly and intentionally take up your life

e. Luke 9:23 *And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.*

- e. A. W. Tozer noted three things that would be true about the person who was crucified.
 - 1. A person on a cross would be facing only one direction.
 - 2. A person on a cross could never turn back.
 - 3. A person on a cross would no longer have any plans of his own.

3. The Condition of Your Riches v33

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

- a. Along with willingness to place him above family and life, Jesus also calls his followers, to surrender their possessions to his Lordship.
- b. The original language in verse 33, "give up," *apotasso*, say good-bye to.
- c. We must be willing to give up our finances to follow Christ.
- d. Peter, Andrew, James, and John gave up their nets, boats, and jobs to follow him
- e. Matthew gave up his high paying position as a tax collector to follow Him
- f. Zachaeus paid back all that he had stolen and gave half of his goods to the poor
- g. Christ will subordinate your riches, and if he hasn't, you need to examine yourself.
- h. The Rich Young Ruler

This is clearly a conditional call

- 1. You cannot be my disciple, you cannot be my disciple, you cannot be my disciple!
- 2. Here is what he is asking.

- a. If your family was going to become your enemies and hate you because you became a follower of Christ would you come?
- b. And if you had plans and ambitions and I asked you to do something else...if My Spirit directed you to give your life in some other service, would you be willing to do that?
- c. And if I asked you to take everything you have, sell it all and give it to the poor, would you be willing to do that?
- d. And even if I asked you to die in the cause, would you do that?
- e. **Are you willing to become a steward of everything and an owner of nothing.**
- f. Is Christ worth everything to you?

3. Phil 3:8 *Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ*

III. The Costly Nature of the Call

The conditions are so great for one to follow Christ and answer the call that one must consider carefully the cost of this call.

Jesus does not solicit a hasty, emotional decision.

1. Instead, he urges those who would follow him to think seriously, to count the cost.
2. Do not promise to follow Jesus unless you understand the cost and are willing to pay it.
3. Jesus never encouraged an unthinking, impulsive leap of faith into discipleship in hopes that later on they would be willing to pay the price.
4. The ramifications are great.

He used 2 illustrations to drive home the importance of serious deliberation over this call.

1. **Buildings 28-30**

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.'

- a. Jesus says, Don't start building unless you can finish.
- b. John Stott writes in Basic Christianity, "*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. For thousands of people, still ignore Christ's warning and undertake to follow Him without first pausing to reflect on the cost of doing so. Large numbers of people have covered themselves with a thin veneer of Christianity.*"

2. **Battles 31-32**

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.

- a. What man, what king, what leader is gonna put his army in danger before

he sits down and assesses his chances of winning the battle.

- b. And if he comes up with the conclusion that he can't win, verse 32 says, he's going to send a delegation and ask terms of peace.
- c. There's no sense in spilling all this blood to get to the same end that we could get to by negotiating.

Talk about being between a rock and a hard place!

1. In the first parable Jesus says, "**Sit down and decide whether you can afford to follow me.** Determine the cost of the building before breaking ground.
2. In the second parable he says, "**Sit down and decide whether you can afford not to follow me.** The King's army is coming soon! Can you stand against Him?
3. Jesus does not want disciples who do not realize what they have signed up for.
 - a. I'm not offering you a makeover. I am calling for a takeover.
 - b. When you come to Me, Jesus says, you're not just adding Me to your life. I become your life.

The call is costly

IV. The Continual Nature of the Call v34-35

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."

This is not a call that you answer on June 7, 2009, never to be concerned about again.

1. This is a call that demands persistence.
2. This is a call that demands a present tense faith
3. This is a call that is continual in nature.

If the salt ever loses its saltiness, what good is it. It will be thrown out!

1. If we lose our temperature, we will be spewed out.
2. Rev 3:15-16 *I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth.*
3. **Half hearted disciples do more damage than good.**
4. Luke 9:62 *No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.*

- a. Daily Repent
- b. Daily Believe
- c. Daily die to yourself and follow Him

Conclusion:

Jesus doesn't dumb the truth down, ease up the cost for us, or make the difficulty more palatable to get us to sign on the dotted line.

1. He tells the truth
2. I've tried to tell you the truth...and here is one more.
3. Jesus is worth it!
 - a. This is not a cost...or sacrifice
 - b. This is an investment!

You turn away from sin which leads to death and turn to Christ which leads to life...and even abundant life. Do you have it?

GOSPEL