

LUKE I Counting the Cost Text: Luke 14:25-35 —Bill Turner

What does following Jesus really require?

1. **You're in a parking lot & you accidentally scrape the paint of a beautiful Porsche...**
No one saw it. The damage is minor, it would be covered by insurance. Would you leave a note?
2. **This actually happened—but people saw it happen, and were watching...**
 - a. So he took out a piece of paper and he wrote on it, 'A number of people around me think I'm leaving you a note that includes my name and address, but I'm not.'" (C. Swindoll)
3. **He Wanted to look like an honest person—but he Didn't Want to Pay the Cost**
 - a. **Doing what is right is the HARD thing... Doing what is selfish is the EASY thing**
 - b. Sometimes we present the gospel like a car salesman... "What's it going to take to get you into this car?" "Let's make a deal" —Not mentioning the Hardship or Sacrifice required!

So What does following Jesus really require?

I. HONORING CHRIST ABOVE ALL ELSE

A. EVEN ABOVE YOUR FAMILY (v.25-26)

1. **Jesus knows where He is going, but the Multitudes following Him do not...**
 - a) Jesus is on the way to Jerusalem— knowing He is on the way to the Cross—
But the people following Him think He is on the way to an Empire.
 - b) He is going to Hang on a Cross—They Think He is going to Sit on a Throne
2. **They all Had Different Motives for Following Jesus—not realizing the cost**
 - a) Some **want to be fed**... some **want to be healed**...
 - b) some **want a King to overthrow Rome**...
 - c) Some wanted **Positions of Power** in the New Kingdom...
 - d) But NOBODY Wanted to Die to Self and Carry a Roman Cross!
3. **Jesus is thinning the crowds of Shallow and Superficial Faith...**
 - a) We know this is not intended to be taken literally for two reasons...
 - b) 1st: Because We are commanded to honor our father and mother / not hate them
 - c) 2nd: because He has already commanded us to Love Our Enemies—
—So why would we love our enemies but hate our families?
4. **The Aramaic means to 'love less' — as Jesus taught before (Matt. 10:37)**

A true disciple must be willing to give up EVERYTHING if necessary for Christ

Napoleon Bonaparte, the French General wrote: "Across the chasm of eighteen hundred years Jesus Christ makes a demand which is beyond all others difficult to satisfy. He asks for that which a philosophy may often seek in vain at the hands of his friends, or a father of his children, or a bride of her spouse, or a man of his brother. He asks for the human heart; He will have it entirely to Himself; He demands it unconditionally, and His demand is granted. Its powers and faculties become an annexation to the empire of Christ. All who sincerely believe in Him experience that supernatural love towards Him. This phenomenon is unaccountable, it is altogether beyond the scope of man's creative powers. Time, the great destroyer, can neither exhaust its strength nor put a limit to its range."

B. EVEN ABOVE YOUR SELF (v.26b-27)

1. Before a man was crucified on a cross—he had to carry his cross

- a) It was a Shocking Statement that They knew understood very well:

“When the Roman general, Varus, had broken the revolt of Judas in Galilee [4 BC], he crucified two thousand Jews, and placed the crosses by the wayside along the roads to Galilee.” (Barclay)

2. Anyone who took up a cross NEVER came back—it was a one way journey

- a) Notice Jesus didn't just say A Cross, or THE Cross—His Cross (**Luke 9:23**)

There is a Cross with YOUR NAME on it

- b) Jesus Carried His Cross and We Must Carry Our Cross

3. The Cross is Heavy—it's hard to carry—until you reach Golgotha

- a) It is heavy until you die to YOURSELF and to the WORLD.

- b) Until you are Crucified with Christ (**Galatians 2:20**)

4. When We have died with Christ in Baptism and raised to new life—

He will Take the Burden of Sin Away from you

and give you the Strength to carry on

5. If You Want to Go to Heaven—Christ must be enthroned in your heart—

—not SELF... not the WORLD...

6. Jesus Christ is King! He is more important than everything we want—

Including the Life Script We Wrote for ourselves.

a) Our Life Script was the Life Story we wanted to experience...

- (1) The Accomplishments we wanted to Achieve
- (2) The Awards we wanted to accumulate
- (3) The Things we wanted to have
- (4) The Places we wanted to go
- (5) The Love we wanted to find

7. POEM titled: 'PRAYER' written by a civil war soldier...

C. EVEN ABOVE WHATEVER TOWER YOUR BUILDING (v.28-30)

1. Jesus is teaching us to FIRST COUNT THE COST of Following Him

- a) Anything in life worth having will cost a price...
- b) To compete in the Olympics, be in the military, or graduate from school,
- c) or excel in anything in life... carries a cost.

2. Many people are 'building a tower' for themselves (Proverbs 18:10-11**)**

- a) Like their own Tower of Babel—a tower to reach heaven on their own w/o God
- b) The largest 'Pyramid' in Egypt belonged to Khufu, an Egyptian Pharaoh.

Researchers believe it took around 10,000 highly skilled workers, around 50,000 of slaves, and 20 years of labor to build.

All to prepare him for the After-Life

- c) Some are Building High Walls of protection to feel safe...
- d) Towers of Significance or Prominence or Protection...

3. Of the many high towers in Silicon Valley—the oldest is Winchester House.

- a) Sarah Winchester was one of the richest women in American History
- b) After her husband died she inherited the equivalent of half a trillion \$ (today's \$)
- c) Plus the daily revenue of the Winchester Arms co. \$27,000 /day (today's \$)
- d) But Instead of peace of mind → it made her lose her mind.
- e) She felt cursed by the guilt of every human ever killed by a Winchester rifle
- f) To Find Help she went to a psychic who convinced her that if She built a house for all the spirits killed by Winchester rifles, the spirits would not haunt her.
...as long as she kept building it.

4. Whatever Tower You're Building—STOP and COUNT THE COST...

- a) Are you building a Tower to Reach Heaven on Your Own Terms?
- b) A Tower of Investments to Keep You Safe? (**Prov. 18:10; Psalm 91:2**)

D. EVEN ABOVE THE BATTLE YOU'RE FIGHTING (v.31-32)

- 1. In the first parable of the tower—Jesus is saying: Count the cost—
—can you afford to Follow His Demands?
- 2. In the next parable of a King going to war, Jesus is saying: Count the Cost
—can you afford to Refuse His Demands?
- 3. You Have to Look at Both Sides of the Equation!
 - a) the cost of FOLLOWING Jesus...
 - b) and the Cost of REFUSING to Follow Jesus
- 4. Now Let's Think This Through—
 - If You Wage a War [Alone] Against Satan—you will lose!
 - If You Wage War Against Christ—you will lose!
 - This Leaves Only 1 OPTION! to Surrender and Make Peace with God

Napoleon Bonaparte: "I know men and I tell you that Jesus Christ is no mere man. Between Him and every other person in the world there is no possible term of comparison. Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne, and I have founded empires. But on what did we rest the creations of our genius? Upon force. Jesus Christ founded His empire upon love; and at this hour millions of men would die for Him"

- 5. It costs something to follow Christ—but it costs much more to reject Him

E. EVEN ABOVE EXCUSES or DEFENSE MECHANISMS YOU'RE USING (v.33)

- 1. We are called to Worship GOD—not SELF
 - a) To Serve God—not SELF
 - b) To Praise GOD—Not SELF
 - c) Luke 9:23 ²³ Then He said to *them* all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.
- 2. **EX: I heard about an American preacher who travelled to China...**
 - a) Christianity is against the law in China
 - b) and the Totalitarian State is Enforced by a Surveillance State
 - c) Chinese Christians meet in secret having to avoid cameras that record everything

3. Teaching a Bible class, he asked if someone would read a passage

- a) a Chinese woman raised her hand but she didn't have a Bible,
she quoted the entire passage word for word by memory.
- b) Later he asked her how—she said that many of them had been jailed for their faith.
They were not allowed Bibles so they wrote passages on small strips of paper and smuggled them into the prisons to read.

4. As they were she asked the preacher to pray for them that they could be more like American Christians who are free to worship...

He said I absolutely will... NOT Pray that you be more like American Christians

Your meeting in secret under threat of prison—> In America people miss church if it's inconvenient

You walked several miles on foot to be here—people in America miss church if their tired

You're sitting on a hard floor for hours—in America they complain if the pews don't have padding

Your in a hot room with no air-conditioning — in America services would be cancelled with no A/C

He said: no—I won't pray that you become more like us, but that we become more like you

5. Jesus Carried His Cross and We Must Carry Our Cross (Matthew 16:24)

F. ABOVE THE COMPROMISING INFLUENCE OF THE WORLD (v.34-35)

1. Salt does two things: 1. It flavors life and 2. it preserves from corruption

- a) But if it becomes diluted and polluted—then it is worthless...

2. A Christian woman once told a preacher, (Gus Nichols)

"I would give the world to know the Bible the way you know it."

Brother Nichols looked at her and said, "That's exactly what it cost me."

- a) Think of all the hours he spent studying the Bible.
- b) While maybe she was watching TV, or reading the newspaper,
- c) or just out and about going wherever she wanted to go / doing whatever she wanted

He Gave Up the World—to Know the Truth!

Others give up the Truth—to know the world! (Wesley Simmons).

3. Christianity is more than a 1 week or 1 month journey its a lifetime journey!

- a) The Pioneers in wagon trains on the Oregon Trail—Couldn't Bring Everything...
- b) They had to leave some things behind—to Reach the Goal!

4. There are things you must give up to follow Christ (1 John 2:15-17)

CONCLUSION:

1. Christ is worth more than everything your afraid of loosing— —and You will GAIN much more than you loose!

2. You might think this is a hard & lonely road—but you don't walk it alone

- He will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you can bear...
- He will never leave you nor forsake you
- He is with you always, even unto the end of the world!

3. (Galatians 2:20) When we die with Christ—We can live again forever