

Counting The Cost

Luk 14:25 And there went great multitudes with Him: and He turned, and said unto them, 26 If any man come to Me, and hate (*Gk.3404- love less*) not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. 27 And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after Me, cannot be My disciple. 28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and **counts the cost**, whether he have *sufficient* to finish it? 29 Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, 30 Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. 31 Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? 32 Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace. 33 So likewise, whosoever he be of you that **forsakes not all that he hath**, he cannot be My disciple.

- In many ways we are to be prepared for the task of being a disciple of our Lord. It's not to be taken lightly. It truly is a "living sacrifice" but the rewards definitely outweigh the costs!

Rom 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a **living sacrifice**, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service.

- We are not to think if it in terms that we deserve His grace because we can never do anything without it in order to obtain a home in Heaven.

Luk 17:10 So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.

Part of the cost of discipleship involves 1.) being content.

Php 4:11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in **whatsoever state I am**, *therewith* **to be content**. 12 I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. 13 I can do **all** things through Christ Who strengthens me.

- Some Christians aren't happy unless they have the latest and greatest of everything. Does the church really need another depression in this country to knock us all back into a spiritual reality? Do we even know what it would be like to truly be in want? We need to stop voting for candidates that say they'll lower our taxes (*they all just say that just to get elected anyway*) but won't save babies from the abortionists or who vote to legalize pot and homosexual marriage. **Where are our morals** in this country? I thought having certain modern conveniences was to help us to be able to spend more time with the family, more time in the word of God and other things that would bring glory to Him. Now it seems most families in this country spend more time on smart phones or video games and can't go anywhere without them. Many Christians forget their Bibles on Sunday morning but don't go anywhere without their cell phones or MP3 players. Wouldn't it be nice if it was the other way around? Do we really need another round of persecution to grow the church?

Act 8:1 And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout

the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles. **2** And devout men carried Stephen *to his burial*, and made great lamentation over him. **3** As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed *them* to prison. **4** Therefore they that were **scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word.**

- Time spent on winning one soul to **Christ** is worth more than losing the millions lost to **Satan** because of time we waste doing things that won't matter anyway in the end.

2.) Stepping outside our comfort zones.

Luk 10:29 But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour? **30** And Jesus answering said, **A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. 31** And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. **32** And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked *on him*, and passed by on the other side. **33** But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion *on him*, **34** And went to *him*, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. **35** And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave *them* to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. **:36** Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? **37** And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, **Go, and do thou likewise.**

- Jesus used for His example in this parable, a Samaritan. Since the Jews hated the Samaritans, the thought that using such a vile person to them, as an example of good, over those who they idolized as being the ultimate in good, should have impacted their desire to go out and be a better example in their dealings with others.

Jas 2:4 Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?

Heb 13:1 Let brotherly love continue. **2** Be not forgetful to entertain strangers (*Gk.5381-hospitality*): for thereby some have entertained angels (*Gk.32-[probably derived from Gk.71; compare Gk.34; to bring tidings]; a messenger*) unawares.

- We have to be willing to alter our established schedules, if/when the need arises, to aid someone who is in need of help. Remember, the good **Samaritan** went out of his way to assist someone he didn't even know.

3.) A financial commitment.

- The church should never be about having a big bank account as in many of the denominations where there are contributions taken in every service, asking even non-members to "add to the pot" (*as it were*) to promote and support their agendas. Ours has to be more personal than that. Ours should be from the "heart...not grudgingly" (**2 Cor 9:7**) as we "have prospered" (**1 Cor 16:2**).

Luk 10:35 And on the morrow when he (*the good Samaritan*) departed, he took out two pence, and gave *them* to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

- What we possess is not ours. We are just stewards until we pass it to the next generation. How that stewardship is handled determines even the likelihood of our own rewards.

Mat 19:20 The young man saith unto Him (*after Jesus had explained what the law demanded*), All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? 21 Jesus said unto him, **If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow Me.** 22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions. 23 Then said Jesus unto His disciples, **Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.** 24 And again I say unto you, **It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.** 25 When His disciples heard *it*, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? 26 But Jesus beheld *them*, and said unto them, **With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.**

- And even when there are things we receive without having worked for them, there's a tendency to "*grab it and grow!*" as I was told when I was a kid.

Luk 12:13 And one of the company said unto Him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me. 14 And He said unto him, **Man, who made Me a judge or a divider over you?** 15 And He said unto them, **Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.** 16 And He spake a parable unto them, saying, **The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:** 17 **And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?** 18 **And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.** 19 **And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.** 20 **But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?** 21 **So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.** 22 And He said unto His disciples, **Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.** 23 **The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment.**

- When we think our possessions are what define us we begin to lose sight of what really matters in this life. Rich, middle class or poor, we all have been blessed to be able to give of our time, possessions and finances to help others who find themselves in difficult circumstances. (*And we all have 24 hours in every day, so it behooves us, from time to time, to remember there are situations when sudden events warrant change and stepping out of those comfortable, established patterns that most of us have set.*)

Mar 12:41 And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. 42 And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. 43 And He called *unto Him* His disciples, and saith unto them, **Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury:** 44 **For all *they* did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, *even* all her living.**

- "*Well I worked very hard to get to where I am without any handouts to get me here!*" Yes, but we all, including the non-believer, prosper by the good graces that come from God so that really **is** to be considered a hand-out.

Jas 1:16 Do not err, my beloved brethren. 17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is **from above**, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. 18 Of **His own will** begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.

- No matter what we've accomplished in this life will be forgotten in the generations to come, if the Lord wills that they do, but ultimately will be dissolved when Jesus comes for His bride. How then, in this present time, are we to think of and use the possessions we've been blessed with?

2Pe 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. 11 *Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved*, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, 12 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

- “Oh, but I've worked too hard, spent too much money and exuded too much sweat to just take in someone I don't know who might make a mess of my stuff!” So where does that say my heart is then?

Mat 13:44 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof went and sold all that he hath, and bought that field. 45 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: 46 Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

- We have found the “pearl of great price”. What are we willing to give in exchange for it?

Mat 16:26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

- Gaining the kingdom, we gain our souls. Losing it...

Mar 12:32 And the scribe said unto Him (*after Jesus answered his question concerning the greatest commandment*), Well, Master, Thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but He: 33 And to love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love *his* neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. 34 And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, He said unto him, **Thou art not far from the kingdom of God**. And no man after that durst ask Him *any question*.

Mat 13:47 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: 48 Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. 49 So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, 50 And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

- This is not in reference to all the denominations that have arisen since the inception and establishment of the church either. The net represents the gospel which is able to, as Jesus said, “draw all unto Me” (Jn 12:32). As a net draws every kind of fish from the

sea, which represents restless humanity of Jew and Gentile alike, the message of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ is able to draw all the lost of every nation down to the very least into the kingdom, a.k.a., the church of Christ. But the net first has to be cast! And that is where our cost of time, abilities and even our very souls, comes into play.

Ecc 12:13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this *is* the whole (*Heb.3605- properly the whole; hence all, any or every*) of man.

- Our very being is to be given in service to our Maker!

Mat 25:40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done *it* unto Me. 41 Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: 42 For I was an hungred, and ye gave Me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink: 43 I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in: naked, and ye clothed Me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited Me not. 44 Then shall they also answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto Thee? 45 Then shall He answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did *it* not to one of the least of these, ye did *it* not to Me.

Mat 10:42 And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones (*a newly converted follower to Christ*) a cup of cold *water* only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.

- Whenever we take care of the recently converted, even if it means taking care of the least of their needs, we “shall have treasure in Heaven” (*Mat 19:21*). What a payoff!

Mar 9:38 And John answered Him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in Thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbad him, because he followeth not us. 39 But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in My name, that can lightly speak evil of Me. 40 For he that is not against us is on our part. 41 For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in My name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward. 42 And whosoever shall offend one of *these* little ones **that believe in Me**, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea.

- There are different stages, genders and meanings of discipleship. Generally a disciple (*Gk.3101- a learner, that is, pupil*) is a mature individual who has just been introduced to a certain doctrine and who becomes a student of the one who instructs him by the standards found in it. There are specific meanings of this such as in Acts 9:36 where Tabitha is specifically mentioned as a “female pupil” (*Gk.3102*). Either way, when Jesus referred to those who did “a miracle in My name” He was concluding that they could not do such if they could “lightly speak evil of Me”. Remember, this was all done during the age of miracles when demonic forces existed outside the spiritual realm.

1Co 12:3 Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and *that* no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

- An example of this would be the seven sons of **Sceva**.

Act 19:13 Then certain of the vagabond (*Gk.4022-to vacillate [these were Jewish exorcists who went everywhere performing their dark arts for the purpose of notoriety and financial gain]*) Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth.¹⁴ And there were seven sons of *one* Sceva (*pronounced "Scaevus"*), a Jew, *and* chief of the priests, which did so. ¹⁵ And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? ¹⁶ And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. ¹⁷ And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.

- What **Jesus** went on to say in verse 41 (*Mk.9*) should be a comfort to all those who give their all to **Him** for the "**kingdom of God's sake**" (*Lk 18:29*). As **His** servants who take care of the newest brethren among us, we also benefit from being taken care of by other members whenever we are in need because we belong to **Him**. And what a payoff **that** is! So, have you counted the cost of discipleship, of belonging to **Jesus**?

1. Have you heard?

Romans 10:14 ... "how shall they believe in Him **Whom they have not heard?**"

#2. Do you believe?

Heb 11:6 ... "for he that commeth to God **must believe that He is...**"

#3. Have you repented?

Act 3:19 ... "**Repent** ... be converted, that your sins may be blotted out..."

Rom 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

#4. Have you acknowledged Christ as the Son of God, Who alone can save you?

Joh 14:6 **I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.**

#5. Have your sins been washed away?

Mar 16:16 **He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.**

#6. If you've done all these things, have you remained faithful?

Romans 6:4 "...we also should walk in newness of life."

#7. Are you growing?

2Pe 3:18 But grow in grace, and *in* the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him *be* glory both now and forever. Amen.

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