

The Cost of True Discipleship

Hebrews 9:27 (NKJV) — 27 And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,

- I. **Luke 9:18–26 (NKJV) — 18 And it happened, as He was alone praying, *that* His disciples joined Him, and He asked them, saying, “Who do the crowds say that I am?” 19 So they answered and said, “John the Baptist, but some say Elijah; and others say that one of the old prophets has risen again.”**
- A. Most people had a position as to who Jesus was.
 - 1. a good teacher
 - 2. a prophet
 - 3. a man of God
 - B. Unfortunately, too many people today still have the wrong opinion of him. They will never know who he really is unless we tell them.
 - 1. The woman at the well was a better witness for Jesus than his own disciples at that time and they had been with him and did not know he was Messiah.
 - 2. There are many opinions about Jesus in the world but Jesus is more than a good teacher, a prophet or even a man of God.

JESUS IS GOD!

- C. Most people in the world don't know that! And because they don't know it, Jesus tells us they will persecute us because they don't know.
 - 1. They don't know because we don't tell them!
John 15:20–21 (NKJV) — 20 Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. 21 But all these things they will do to you for My name’s sake, *because they do not know Him who sent Me.*
 - 2. We will be persecuted by the world because they do not know Jesus! Because he so different from the world the world hates him and those who proclaim him!
John 15:18 “If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. 19 If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world,

therefore the world hates you. Our children and our children's children will suffer because we have not stood for the message of the gospel.

- a. The unregenerated soul of the individual without Christ, has the nature of man, which is a nature that rejects God or anything that is of God.
 - b. People of the darkness hate people of the light because people of the light expose their wickedness by their righteousness.
3. It is sad that more of us are not willing to stand up for Christ. If we do, we will stand out apart from the world and be rejected by the world.
- a. But if we don't stand up for him in this world we shall find that he will reject many of us because we are afraid to tell people around us we stand for him.
 - b. Most of us are afraid of people of the world and so we go along with wrong things.
 - c. We are afraid of people of the world and we agree with them when we know it is not the will of God
 - d. We are afraid of people of the world and we do things they tell us to do just to be at peace with them.
 - e. We are afraid of people of the world ...but we should be more afraid of God who knows everything about us!
 - f. We must understand that Satan will have the world come against us no matter what we do.
 - (1) It is better to have God for us than God against us.

D. We shall see what we must do to tell them to make our lives much better for us and our children from this message that follows.

II. Luke 9:20 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered and said, "The Christ of God."

- A. This is the most important question that everyone of us has to answer!
 1. The quality of our life and our eternal life and the destiny of our souls is determined by how we answer that one question!
 2. Our soul and our eternal destination is determined by how each of us answers that question.

- a. Whether we will spend eternity with God for eternity with Satan in a place prepared for him and his demonic angels
 - 3. Then, when we answer that question we have a responsibility of how we are to live our lives.
 - 4. Peter did not understand the cost associated with making that statement but Jesus would explain it to him. It holds for us today also.
- B. Peter was saying that Jesus was the one that they had been waiting for. He was not just a man but he was sent by God and he himself was God!
- C. This tells us something remarkable about Peter. We read about in Matthew

Matt 16:17 Jesus answered and said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed *this* to you, but My Father who is in heaven.

18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. 19 And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

- 1. This reveals to us that power is granted to those who make the confession that Jesus is Lord.
 - a. Greater works will be done
 - b. you can do all things through Christ
 - c. no weapon formed against you
 - d. you will be the head and not the tail
 - e. you will be blessed in everything that you do
 - f. all of your needs will be met

III. Luke 9:21 And He strictly warned and commanded them to tell this to no one,

- A. He did not want people to know at this time he was the Messiah because of the fact that people would hate them because of it and his disciples were not ready to stand the heat.
- B. Many of us are not ready to stand the heat. We want all of the good things from God but we are not willing to pay the cost of true discipleship.
- C. Jesus made it clear that for him and for his true disciples life would be a challenge!

Matthew 10:32–39 (NKJV) — 32 “Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. 33 But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven. 34 “Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. 35 For I have come to ‘set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law’; 36 and ‘a man’s enemies will be those of his own household.’ 37 He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. 38 And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. 39 He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.

D. Then he told them the cost of True discipleship —suffering!

IV. **Luke 9:21 And He strictly warned and commanded them to tell this to no one, 22 saying, “The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.”**

A. Why did he not want to share it? The people weren't ready. They weren't mature enough to hear the whole truth just yet and the disciples had not received the Holy Spirit to give them the courage to speak the truth.

B. Why? Because that is not what people the people wanted to hear. They wanted to hear that he would reestablish the kingdom of Israel and not be killed.

1. The gospel is hard to swallow when it's not what we want it to be

2. All of us are willing to follow God when he makes the way easy for us. But it is not through easy ways that God proves himself. It is through the more difficult times that we come to realize that God is God.

a. **The story of the traveler in the sand**

b. God's strength is perfected in our weaknesses. In our hard times is when we come to know that God is with us.

c. If we never had hard times, we would never know that God can and will save us.

(1) James 1:2–5 (NKJV) — 2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith

produces patience. 4 But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. 5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

- (2) God uses the hard times to strengthen us. To mold us and make us into what he wants us to become.
- (3) It is through the trials that we are perfected. We are made complete and mature through our trials.
- (4) Jesus, our example, had to go through trials and had to suffer on the cross before he could be crowned King of Kings and Lord of lords.

3. But Peter, was not hearing any of this! Suffering cannot be part of the will of God.

Matt 16:22 Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!"

- a. Surely Peter meant well. He did not want Jesus to suffer. Let alone considering what would happen to all of them if Jesus had to go through something!

4. **23 But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men."**

- a. The things of men are for things to happen the way they want. They do not like any challenges.
- b. But yet, we see many situations where men of God and people of God suffer challenges.
- c. Look at the power of God for deliverance in many situations but also notice there are ways God works that we don't understand! Look at the power of faith! **Hebrews 11: 35 Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. 36 Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. 37 They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and**

goatskins, selecting following him destitute, afflicted, tormented—38 of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, *in* dens and caves of the earth. 39 And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, will

C. Then, and we realize the cost of true discipleship.

JESUS DIED FOR US AND WE MUST LIVE FOR HIM!

Romans 12:1–2 (NKJV) — 1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

1. To live for him requires a renewing of your thought process. There is a way that seems right to the man but in the end its way his death.
 - a. You must be retrained to think God's way and not the world's way.
 - b. For this because he has given some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists and some to be pastors and teachers to help perfect you in the works of service for the glory of God.
 - (1) For this reason you must be very careful of the church you associate with.
 - (2) Is the church you are in that helps you be all God created you to be.
2. My ways are not your ways says the Lord. We keep looking for the easy way out but the word shows us the broad and wide way is the way that leads to destruction.
 - a. Narrow is the road and the gate that leads to life
3. We must be willing to sacrifice for God even when we don't feel it's the right thing to do.

JESUS DYING FOR US DEMANDS TOTAL COMMITMENT FROM US

- V. Many of you may not want to hear this but I must say it to you, His death demands total commitment from us.

Luke 9:23 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.

- A. We will deal with these issues even further next week. But I must make it abundantly clear that once we recognize Christ there are things we need to do to build upon the foundation of the message that Jesus is Lord.
- B. God will not force you to do any of the three things he has said must be done. You must choose to do those things of your own free will.
 - 1. deny yourself
 - 2. take up your cross – mission
 - 3. follow him
- C. It is unfortunate, but many people do not do these things. You cannot complete all three unless you complete the steps in the order listed.
 - 1. We have too much of a tendency to run after the world in the way the world says we should do and not the way God says.
 - 2. It is easy illustrated by the way we allow our emotions to direct our life. It is clear when we become angry, upset, bothered that we are after the things of man and not the things of God.
- D. It is imperative that you remember you cannot complete these three things unless you begin with the first – **denying yourself!**
 - 1. Consider the last time you let yourself get angry
 - 2. Consider the last time you chose pleasure over righteousness living and self-control
 - 3. Consider the last time you thought more of yourself so you refused to serve in ministry
 - 4. Consider the last time you choose your comfort over your commitment to Christ
 - 5. Consider the last time you allowed what you thought best to overrule what the word of God says!
 - a. We are told to let the mind of Christ be in us but rather we all learn to think for ourselves.
- E. To die to yourself means to stop thinking for yourself. It means to simply do what God says without question.
 - 1. Remember, Adam and Eve did what they thought was best!

- F. You will never know the mission -- **the cross you must bear** -- unless you can listen to hear what God is saying absent of your will.
1. What is it that God has placed in your heart to do? Are you doing it?
 2. It may acquire a great deal of work on your part. The cross is not comfortable!
 3. Have you submitted your mind to the study of the word of God so that you might be transformed into what God wants you to be?
 4. Are you even studying at all? Or are you letting people the world dictate how you are to live your life? Or even the church you attend?
 - a. don't you know that God decides what church you belong in, not you!
 5. The cross is an instrument of death. Are you willing to do what Christ said to do even if it means suffering the persecutions of the world?
 - a. Not many of us are willing to get other people mad with us. So we go along with the wrong things so that other people will not think bad of us
 - b. You are to die to yourself and live to Christ!
Galatians 2:20 (NKJV) — 20 I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Galatians 5:24 (NKJV) — 24 And those *who are Christ's* have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

MAT 10:38 HE WHO DOES NOT TAKE HIS CROSS AND FOLLOW AFTER ME IS NOT WORTHY OF ME.

- G. You must be a follower of Christ. You must become a disciple. Your mind must seek to be in union with him. You were created in the likeness of God for a reason; so that you can do the things that God intended for you to do!
1. You must be willing to follow Christ even if it means you must deny yourself and suffer displeasure from your fellow man.

2. You must have a zeal for Christ. You must be hot and not cold or lukewarm in your service to him.
3. No matter what it costs you, remember you must follow him!
1 Peter 4:1–2 (NKJV) — 1 Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, 2 that he no longer should live the rest of *his* time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.
4. Quo vadis!
5. Remember, following in his steps leads to death before it leads to glory!

VI. **Luke 9:24 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life *for My sake will save it*. 25 For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost?**

- A. You have got to learn to take this world as secondary and your focus must be on your eternal life!
- B. Do not live your life searching for material possessions. You cannot keep them forever. This life quickly passes away it is not worth the hassle trying to get rich in this world.
Psalms 37:16 (NKJV) — 16 A little that a righteous man has *is* better than the riches of many wicked.

**GOD DOES NOT MIND YOU HAVING RICHES
 BUT YOU MUST NOT LET RICHES HAVE YOU!**

- C. Jesus encouraged the rich young ruler to sell all he had to follow him.
Luke 18:22–24 (NKJV) — 22 So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, “You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.” 23 But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich. 24 And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, “How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!
- D. **Luke 9:24 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life *for My sake will save it*. *for My sake will save it* - you must be willing to do things for the glory of God.**
 1. God created you for his glory not your glory!

- E. We all must learn to live our lives for Christ! We must be willing to take up our cross and follow him.

John 20:21 (NKJV) — 21 So Jesus said to them again, “Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.”

1. How did the father send Jesus?

Matthew 20:28 (NKJV) — 28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

ABOVE ALL IN THIS LIFE WE MUST LEARN TO STAND FOR THE THINGS OF GOD AND NOT THE THINGS OF MEN

- VII. **Luke 9:26 For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His *own* glory, and *in His Father’s*, and of the holy angels.**

Revelation 22:12 (NKJV) — 12 “And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward *is* with Me, to give to every one according to his work.

- VIII. Once you acknowledge Jesus as Lord, if you are going to come after him, you must be willing to pay the cost of

- A. denying yourself,
B. taking up your cross and
C. following him

- IX. You have a responsibility now to make up your mind and remember what Jesus said

Matthew 10:32–33 (NKJV) — 32 “Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. 33 But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.

IT IS TIME TO BE MORE THAN JUST THE CHURCH MEMBER

IT IS TIME TO BECOME TRULY A DISCIPLE OF CHRIST

It may cost you but remember

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