

The Gospel According to Luke - Part 4

FOLLOWING JESUS

PART 2

What's the real cost?

READ LUKE 9:57-62

INTRODUCTION

Something that doesn't take place nearly as much as it should in our modern age is the assessment of cost in any given situation. When a business decides to partner with another company or organization there are various costs involved. Some are going to be costs that the companies are willing to take in order to have relationship and influence from the other but, there will certainly be costs that the companies are not happy or even not willing to take on that may cause them to turn the deal down. As different as it seems we are to count the cost of following Christ before doing so. Just like a contract, there are costs involved in following Him and we cannot just blindly follow Him and not expect certain guidelines and "clauses" to the agreement.

In John 10:27 Jesus proclaims that His sheep will hear His voice. This intention is that the people who are followers of Christ (His sheep) will obey His commands (hear Him). This is no surprise because we have been given His Scripture to be a guide to us as we try to live lives that are more in accordance with His purpose and plan for us. The two men in this passage in Luke have their own desires and plans and while they aren't terrible desires, Jesus has a plan and His plan must be our number one priority. This means that everything else must pass away and we must look to what Jesus wants from us before we worry about anything else.

There is no denying that we have many different pulls on our time and energy. God understands this and is certainly gracious towards us but, we must start to count the cost of following Him and we must encourage others to do so as well. When sharing the good news it does no one any favors to act like there are no costs in following Him. There may be loss of many different types of earthly things (relationships, opportunities, physical items, etc.) but, counting the cost is looking at those losses as gains because we have the benefit of knowing Christ and following Him. (Philippians 3:7-11) If Jesus is not worth losing everything for, then we ought not claim to be His followers.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever sat down to count the cost of following Christ? What are some of the costs associated with following Him? Why can this be difficult for people?
2. Is there benefit in weighing the pros and cons of being a follower of Jesus? If you have been following Him for some time, have you evaluated some of the costs that you may be avoiding due to comfort?
3. Read John 10:27. What do you think it means to “hear Him”? What is so important about His Word in this context? How do we know what we are hearing is God’s direction and voice?
4. Why was it hard for the men in Luke’s passage to follow Christ? How are we similar in our modern days to these men?
5. Read Philippians 3:7-11. How can we be confident that Paul has counted the cost of following Christ? Can you say that all things are loss in comparison to Him? How can we hold each other accountable to counting the cost?

WRAP UP

It is not easy to deny ourselves and take up our crosses and follow Christ. In fact, it is because it is difficult that so many people try and redefine how Christianity should work. We live in a time where everyone does what feels good and what they think is right in their own eyes. This means that to follow Christ, even in some “Christian” circles, we will be counter cultural to what is normal. That being said, it is far greater to have Christ and to follow Him than to have any worldly acceptance or prize.