

# The Cost

## Count the Cost

Everything worth doing has a cost. And it is incumbent upon each of us to consider that cost and whether being a disciple of Jesus Christ is worth paying the price. Jesus Himself stated the challenge this way:


- 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.'

Luke 14:28-30

- ✓ Underline what one does before building a tower. (v 28)
- ✓ Underline why he must first calculate the cost. (v 28)
- ✓ Circle what others will begin doing if he is unable to finish it. (v 29)
- ✓ Underline what they will say. (v 30)

1. What does this passage reveal about Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. How is this passage related to discipleship? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Why does Jesus challenge us to 'calculate the cost'? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

There are many things in this world that keep us from making a total commitment to Christ. Devotion to these things seem justified at the moment, but after we have been ushered into the presence of our Lord, we will discover that they were unworthy of the price they demanded. For Christ's disciples, there is no option nor compromise. **Christ must be preeminent!**

 Matthew 6:19-21  
2 John 1:8  
2 Peter 2:19-22

► According to the above passages, what happens when we do not 'count the cost' of following Christ?

Memorize 

## For He Alone is Worthy of Our Love & Devotion

- 18 A ruler questioned Him, saying,  
"Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"
- 19 And Jesus said to him,  
"Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone.
- 20 "You know the commandments,  
'DO NOT COMMIT ADULTERY,  
DO NOT MURDER,  
DO NOT STEAL,  
DO NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS,  
HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER.'"
- 21 And he said,  
"All these things I have kept from my youth."
- 22 When Jesus heard *this*, He said to him,  
"One thing you still lack;  
sell all that you possess and distribute it to the poor,  
and you shall have treasure in heaven;  
and come, follow Me."
- 23 But when he had heard these things,  
he became very sad, for he was extremely rich...

Luke 18:18-23

1. Explain Jesus' immediate response to the initial question. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Which commandment(s) was Jesus testing the ruler on in v 22? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Why was this person unable to devote himself fully to Christ? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Memorize 

This world is littered with the pseudo-precious ~ objects that appear to possess intrinsic worth. They may be inanimate objects (such as our possessions, our homes, our businesses, etc.) or symbolic objects (such as money, social status, awards, degrees, etc.). But their worth is false for they will eventually all 'pass away'. Even our family members, our girlfriends, our boyfriends, and others can take God's rightful place in our lives. But only the eternal God is worthy of our full devotion and worship!

Memorize 

*"He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep  
to gain what he cannot lose!"*

Jim Elliot

### Observations

- Underline what 'a ruler' asked Jesus. (v 18)
- Underline what Jesus told him. (v 19)
- Note each commandment listed in v 20.
- Circle from when the ruler had kept those Commandments. (v 21)
- Circle how many things Jesus said he lacked. (v 22)
- Underline what Jesus told him to do. (v 22)
- Circle how he became after hearing these things. (v 23)
- Underline why he 'became very sad.' (v 23)

### Interpreting Scripture

A cardinal rule of Bible Interpretation is to interpret a passage in light of its context, both immediate and remote. Taken at face value, in verse 19 Jesus seems to be implying that He is not deity. But numerous other passages clearly teach the opposite (John 1:1; cf. Isaiah 44:24 w. John 1:3 & Colossians 1:16). So what is Jesus really implying? He is stating in a cryptic (some would say sarcastic) way, that even though the ruler was not aware of it, he was declaring Jesus to be truly divine!

This truth is underscored when Jesus calls on the ruler to obey the first commandment ...

"You shall have no other gods before Me."  
(Exodus 20:3)

... by selling all his possessions and following Him. Only if Jesus was truly God would His challenge be relevant. As it turned out, the ruler had missed the most important Commandment of them all.

# Following Jesus is Worth More Than ...

## ... Our Possessions

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

Luke 14:33

- ✓ Circle what we must give up in order to be Christ's disciple?

Explain why Jesus requires this condition for discipleship. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## ... Our Comforts

19 Then a scribe came and said to Him,  
"Teacher, I will follow You wherever You go."

20 Jesus \*said to him,  
"The foxes have holes and the birds of the air *have* nests,  
but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."

Matthew 8:19-20

Memorize 

- ✓ Underline where a scribe said he would follow Jesus.
- ✓ Circle where the Son of Man has to lay His head.

Explain what Jesus meant by His answer. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## ... Our Obligations

21 Another of the disciples said to Him,  
"Lord, permit me first to go and bury my father."

22 But Jesus \*said to him,  
"Follow Me, and allow the dead to bury their own dead."

Matthew 8:21-22

- ✓ Underline what a disciple said to Jesus.
- ✓ Circle who Jesus said should 'bury their own dead.

Explain what Jesus meant by His answer. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

 Luke 9:25

After proudly showing off his treasure filled estate, the missionary taking the tour sadly commented to the host, "These are the things that make dying hard." Possessions can dominate our hearts and eclipse God's place in it. As a sojourner in this world, it is best to travel light so that we can more quickly heed our Master's call.

 2 Corinthians 4:7-9

He Never Said It Would Easy! Jesus makes no guarantee that following Him would be easy. When I served on the mission field, I sometimes found myself sleeping in flea infested bush huts, or on concrete floors or while freezing in a jungle camp at 5000 feet. It wasn't easy, but it was always worth it!

 Luke 9:61-62

**A Matter of Priorities**  
What at first seems to be a very inconsiderate request by Jesus, on closer inspection is shown to be a statement about our priorities. Jesus is telling His would be disciple that following Him is of greater importance than burying his father, as horrible as that may seem to our thinking. However, it is not Jesus who must change His thinking, but us!

## ... Our Families

- 25 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.

Luke 14:25-26

- ✓ Circle what kind of crowds were following Jesus.
- ✓ Circle each and every person Jesus said one must 'hate' in order to be His disciples.

What does Jesus mean in this passage? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How can one be devoted to one's family and Christ at the same time? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## ... Our Own Lives

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- 23 And He was saying to *them* all,  
"If anyone wishes to come after Me,  
he must deny himself,  
and take up his cross daily and follow Me. ...  
25 "For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world,  
and loses or forfeits himself?

Luke 9:23, 25

- ✓ Circle whom one must deny in order to follow Jesus.
- ✓ Circle what one must take up in order to be Jesus' disciple.

What does it mean for a person to deny himself and take up his cross daily?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What does Jesus' question tell you about the value of riches vs. a person's life?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Hating Others

Many find this teaching difficult to receive. Remember that Biblical Interpretation must always be done in context. Scripture clearly teaches that we are to love and honor our parents, spouses and children.

Jesus is utilizing the common practice of *hyperbole* whereby exaggerations are used to emphasize a point. He is not calling us to 'hate' our parents, spouses or children, but to love Him so much more that our love for them would appear to be 'hate' in comparison.

Only after we prioritize our devotion in this way will we be unencumbered in our commitment and obedience to Christ as Lord.

### Giving to Gain

Many Christians view Jesus' call to discipleship as having to give up valued possessions or relationships. It becomes a burdensome sacrifice that for some is too much to bear.

But Jesus' challenge is really a wake-up call to get us to see what is truly valuable. As His question in Luke 9:25 shows, all the riches in the world are not worth dying for, much less living for. The true treasures are the eternal souls of people.

It isn't a sacrifice to give-up temporal things for eternal purposes. The real loss would be in turning our backs on a lost world to pursue worldly riches!

## Therefore, Prize Him Supremely!

- 65 And He was saying,  
"For this reason I have said to you, that no one can come to Me  
unless it has been granted him from the Father."
- 66 As a result of this  
many of His disciples withdrew  
and were not walking with Him anymore.
- 67 So Jesus said to the twelve,  
"You do not want to go away also, do you?"
- 68 Simon Peter answered Him,  
"Lord, to whom shall we go?  
You have words of eternal life.
- 69 "We have believed and have come to know  
that You are the Holy One of God."

John 6:65-69

- ✓ Underline unless what happens will no one come to Christ. (v 65)
- ✓ Underline what happened as a result of what Jesus said. (v 66)
- ✓ Underline what Jesus asked 'the twelve'. (v 67)
- ✓ Underline what Peter asked Jesus. (v 68)
- ✓ Circle what kind of words Peter said Jesus has. (v 68)
- ✓ Underline what the disciples had come to know and believe. (v 69)

When a person truly comprehends the unsurpassed worth of Christ, all other things become as nothing in comparison. One day we will stand in His awesome presence either ashamed at the things we valued in place of Him, or assured that we calculated the cost and treasured Him above all else!

## The Cost

List key Truths and Principles you learned from this study:

- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_

### Jesus' Worth

It is amazing, considering today's preoccupation with numbers and statistics, how little Jesus valued a large following. In fact, He seemed to make it a practice to sift out the less committed.

Here, Jesus not only calmly watches another group of followers leave, but even asks if the Twelve aren't thinking of joining them! Never let it be said that Jesus' standards weren't high.

Peter, as always, responds with an answer that must have brought a knowing smile from his Lord. He recognized that Jesus alone spoke life giving words and was the Holy One from God. For all his faults, Peter was no dummy.

Investing in the Kingdom  
Luke 18:28-30 teaches that whatever we give up for Christ in this life, He will return in greater manner in this life and in the age to come, eternal life!

In light of what you have learned, list what you will do.

- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_

Memorize 

*“More than that, I count all things to be loss  
in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord,  
for whom I have suffered the loss of all things,  
and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ.”*

*Philippians 3:8*