

Clearing Up the Luke 14 Confusion

In Luke 14:25-33 Jesus outlines what it takes to be His disciple. First thing He says is *"If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple"* (Luke 14:26).

What?

The multitude that was following Him must have been incredulous! How could Jesus say such a thing? Isn't He a God of love? Now He's talking about hating the very closest relationships we have on this earth? He's even saying we must hate our own life?

Jesus was known for saying some outlandish things but this takes the cake! So, what was Jesus saying to these people?

What is Jesus saying to you and me?

Could it be that He is trying to communicate the unique relationship He wants to have with those who truly follow Him?

I think He's letting those who really want to be His disciples know that it is a relationship like no other on this earth. He wants complete devotion and obedience.

Count the cost

If we are satisfied with attending church on special occasions and maybe volunteering to teach Sunday school once in a blue moon, we are not being a disciple.

Jesus demands total control of our time, resources, talent and will. Yes, ***demands***.

Our relationship to Him must be as submissive as a slave to his master. What Jesus tells us to do we must do. He set the example by being obedient to His Father all the way to the cross.

Are we to really hate our earthly relationships in a way that suggests we are to treat them poorly and with contempt? No, I don't believe that is what Jesus is saying at all. What He is saying is that our relationship with Him should be so unique and single-minded it is as if we hated all others.

There was a song the Eagles sang in the '70's called "You get the Best of My Love," and that's what Jesus wants. The best of everything we have to offer in this life. He wants it all.

Lay down your life

"Whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:27).

What does the cross represent? Death.

We all have a cross to bear. We all have a calling and a path chosen for us by our Lord that we must walk no matter how difficult or tenuous it may seem at times.

Paul exhorted the Romans to present their bodies a living sacrifice. Sacrifice. A word most people don't care too much about. Cross and sacrifice are words that depict suffering.

But aren't we supposed to be experiencing health, wealth and happiness if we follow Christ?

What Bible are you reading? Jesus Himself said that just as He was treated so would we be treated. Again, He is the example. His life on earth represented sacrifice, suffering and the cross.

Being all God, He came as the suffering servant to lay down

His life for you and me. But if you want to simply be a believer who picks and chooses the Scriptures you like that proof text how you want to live, be my guest. But don't call yourself a disciple of Christ. You are not.

Take up your cross and follow Jesus

"... Whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple" (Luke 14:33).

Not exactly spouting the American dream is He?

We're told from our youth to "get while the getting's good." Get a good job, buy a house and fill it with all precious and pleasant things. Accumulate, accumulate, accumulate! Be good consumers. That makes God happy!

Not what Jesus was saying, is it?

Am I saying we are to give away all our possessions and live on the streets in order to be a disciple of Jesus? No, it's not my place to tell you how to follow Christ. But if you consider yourself an owner of your wealth, you are not being wise.

Give ownership over to Jesus.

Treat the things you have as if you are simply a steward and God is the owner. That way if something happens to it you can say *"Father, I guess you wanted Your car dented, or Your guitar scratched."*

I'm talking to those who want to be disciples of Christ. Not your everyday, "Sunday-go-to-meetin'" Christian.

If you're content leading a mediocre life of saying you're a Christian and living like a pagan, then more power to ya'. But there is a remnant who want to follow Christ with all their heart. As Jesus said in this passage we're discussing, we must

be willing to count the cost.

There are lots of people today who call themselves Christians, but there are few who demonstrate that they are true disciples of Christ.

Admittedly, it doesn't sound so appealing when you see what it costs. But for those who are willing to lay down their lives and take up their cross and follow Jesus with their whole heart, there is a fellowship with the Lord that is deeper and sweeter than any nominal Christian will ever experience.

Those who are disciples of Christ get to see the miracles of Christ, get to taste of the goodness of Christ—get to experience the fragrance of Christ.

There are many who know of Christ but few who know Him personally.

My brothers and sisters, are you a disciple?

Would you like to be one?

Count the cost.

Lay down your life.

Take up your cross and follow.

Simple? Yes.

Easy? No.

Worth it? Absolutely!

Adapted from F. Dean Hackett's blog, "Foundational: Raising up a foundation for many godly generations."

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teams to do street ministry in the downtown area and in the parks of Spokane, WA. At this late date on the prophetic calendar he believes it is of utmost importance for the church to double her efforts in the cause of evangelism.