

COUNTING THE COST

Focus Verse:

"For which of you, desiring to build a tower, doesn't first sit down and count the cost, to see if he has enough to complete it?" (Luke 14:28)

The modern portrayal of the Gospel in western Christianity is a betrayal to the true Gospel call. In the west, Jesus and God are presented as the great "Santa Clause in the sky" that are here to grant wishes and dreams- ever ready to bless all who call upon His magical powers of instant happiness and never requiring more than a whispered call for more. Always waiting for the dinner bell to ring and ready to show up in style and grant wishes as the "gospel genie". Yet, this demonic lie is not found in the scriptures. We find that while salvation is free, it will cost us everything. As we turn to Jesus to gain the next life, we must forfeit this life entirely. So, will the REAL Jesus please tell us what He requires of us all?!

The Great Test Of Discipleship

(Luke 14:26-33) "If anyone comes to me, and doesn't disregard his own father, mother, wife, children, brothers, and sisters, yes, and his own life also, **he can't be my disciple.**

(27) Whoever doesn't bear his own cross, and come after me, **can't be my disciple.** (28)

For which of you, desiring to build a tower, doesn't first sit down and count the cost, to see if he has enough to complete it? (29) Or perhaps, when he has laid a foundation, and is not able to finish, everyone who sees begins to mock him, (30) saying, 'This man began to build, and wasn't able to finish.' (31) Or what king, as he goes to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? (32) Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sends an envoy, and asks for conditions of peace. (33) **So therefore whoever of you who doesn't renounce all that he has, **he can't be my disciple.****"

The List Of 3 Sacrifices We Must Make To Follow Jesus:

1. Your Family
2. Your Life
3. Your Possessions

➤ **IT TAKES A CROSS TO FOLLOW JESUS**

(Matthew 10:37-38) “He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he who loves son or daughter more than me isn’t worthy of me. (38) **He who doesn’t take his cross and follow after me, isn’t worthy of me.**

➤ **IT TAKES A LOSS OF LIFE TO FOLLOW JESUS**

(Matthew 16:24-26) “Then Jesus said to his disciples, “**If anyone desires to come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.** (25) For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, and whoever will lose his life for my sake will find it. (26) For what will it profit a man, if he gains the whole world, and forfeits his life? Or what will a man give in exchange for his life?”

Jesus Counted The Cost

***Jesus accepted the call of dying for humanity before the earth was even formed.**

(Revelation 13:8) “Everyone living on earth will worship it, everyone whose name is not written in the Book of Life. That book belongs to the **lamb who was slaughtered before the creation of the world.**”

***Jesus knew the exact cost of salvation: Nothing but His perfect sinless blood would pay the price required by God.**

(Revelation 1:4-6) “From John, to the seven churches that are in the province of Asia: Grace and peace to you from “he who is,” and who was, and who is still to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, (5) and from Jesus Christ – the faithful witness, the firstborn from among the dead, the ruler over the kings of the earth. **To the one who loves us and has set us free from our sins at the cost of his own blood** (6) and has appointed us as a kingdom, as priests serving his God and Father – to him be the glory and the power forever and ever! Amen.”

It Takes A Life

We must count the cost to follow Jesus.

Lay Your Life Down To Prove Your Love!

(John 15:13) “Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.”

JESUS LAYED HIS LIFE DOWN!

(John 10:14-18) “I am the good shepherd. I know my own, and I’m known by my own; (15) even as the Father knows me, and I know the Father. I lay down my life for the sheep. (16) I have other sheep, which are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will hear my voice. They will become one flock with one shepherd. (17) Therefore the Father loves me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again. (18) No one takes it away from me, but I lay it down by myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. I received this commandment from my Father.”

We Must Lay Our Lives Down!

(1 John 3:16) “By this we know love, because he laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.”

Are You Willing To Be Like Christ and Give Your Life As A Ransom For Many?

(Mark 10:45) “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.”

The Threshing Floor

***This reminds me of the story of David and the threshing floor. We can learn a very important lesson from David and what it takes to count the cost to live for and worship God.**

(2 Samuel 24:20-25) “Araunah looked out, and saw the king and his servants coming on toward him. Then Araunah went out, and bowed himself before the king with his face to the ground. (21) Araunah said, “Why has my lord the king come to his servant?” David said, “To buy your threshing floor, to build an altar to Yahweh, that the plague may be stopped from afflicting the people.” (22) Araunah said to David, “Let my lord the king take and offer up what seems good to him. Behold, the cattle for the burnt offering, and the threshing instruments and the yokes of the oxen for the wood. (23) All this, O king, does Araunah give to the king.” Araunah said to the king, “May Yahweh your God accept you.” (24) The king said to Araunah, **“No; but I will most certainly buy it from you for a price. I will not offer burnt offerings to Yahweh my God which cost me nothing.”** So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver. (25) David built an altar to Yahweh there, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. So Yahweh was entreated for the land, and the plague was removed from Israel.”

***We cannot come to the Lord with open hands and not expect it to cost us something. There is no “one way” conversation with God. We must respond accordingly to the call of Christ. Counting the cost we must pay to love him, be with God, and receive eternal life.**

Bought With A Price

We must realize that when we accept Jesus we are forfeiting any claim to our own lives.

(1 Corinthians 6:19-20) “Or don’t you know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God? **You are not your own, (20) for you were bought with a price.** Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

(1 Corinthians 3:21-23) “Therefore let no one boast in men. For all things are yours, (22) whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come. All are yours, (23) and you are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s.”

(Titus 2:13-14) “Looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ; (14) who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify for himself a people for his own possession, zealous for good works.”

(Romans 14:7-9) “For none of us lives to himself, and none dies to himself. (8) For if we live, we live to the Lord. Or if we die, we die to the Lord. If therefore we live or die, we are the Lord’s. For to this end Christ died, rose, and lived again, that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.”

(2 Corinthians 5:14-15) “For the love of Christ constrains us; because we judge thus, that one died for all, therefore all died. (15) He died for all, that those who live should no longer live to themselves, but to him who for their sakes died and rose again.”

(Romans 12:1-2) “Therefore I urge you, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service. (2) Don’t be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what is the good, well-pleasing, and perfect will of God.”

Everyone Will Submit To Jesus As Lord

Many might try to resist the Lord, but this is impossible. The only question of submission to Him is: When? We can submit and live for Him now, or we will submit and die by Him later.

✓ Submission

(Philippians 2:9-11) “Therefore God also highly exalted him, and gave to him the name which is above every name; (10) that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, those on earth, and those under the earth, (11) and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

✓ Judgment

(2 Timothy 4:1) “I command you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at his appearing and his Kingdom:”

***We have been purchased by Jesus to receive salvation; He has also purchased the right to judge unrepentant sinners. Both belong to the Lord- one side to salvation and one side for destruction. There is no escape from submitting to His authority!**

/Dead & Made New Through Baptism

(Romans 6:1-14) “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? (2) May it never be! We who died to sin, how could we live in it any longer? (3) **Or don't you know that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?** (4) We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life. (5) For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we will also be part of his resurrection; (6) knowing this, **that our old man was crucified with him**, that the body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be in bondage to sin. (7) For he who has died has been freed from sin. (8) But if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him; (9) knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no more has dominion over him! (10) For the death that he died, he died to sin one time; **but the life that he lives, he lives to God.** (11) Thus consider yourselves also to be dead to sin, **but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.** (12) Therefore don't let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. (13) Also, do not present your members to sin as instruments of unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God, as alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. (14) For sin will not have dominion over you. For you are not under law, but under grace.”

(Colossians 2:11-13) “In whom you were also circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of the body of the sins of the flesh, in the circumcision of Christ; (12) **having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead.** (13) You were dead through your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh. He made you alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses,”

You Are No Longer Living As Yourself, But As Christ Himself

(Galatians 3:26-27) “For you are all children of God, through faith in Christ Jesus. (27) For as many of you as were baptized into Christ **have put on Christ.**”

(Ephesians 2:1-10) “You were made alive when you were dead in transgressions and sins, (2) in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the children of disobedience; (3) among whom we also all once lived in the lusts of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. (4) But God, being rich in mercy, for his great love with which he loved us, (5) even when we were dead through our trespasses, **made us alive together with** Christ (by grace you have been saved), (6) **and raised us up with him, and made us to sit with him in the heavenly**

places in Christ Jesus, (7) that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus; (8) for by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, (9) not of works, that no one would boast. (10) **For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works**, which God prepared before that we would walk in them.”

With this in mind, we can understand Paul better when he says:

(Philippians 1:21) “For to me **to live is Christ**, and to die is gain. So to live is to be like Christ,”

Or, to clear it up: “to live is Christ” means “to be like Christ” or “as Christ”: Dead, yet alive; Dead to self and alive to the will of God.

(Colossians 2:6) “As therefore you received Christ Jesus, the Lord, **walk in him**,”

(Colossians 3:17) “**Whatever you do, in word or indeed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus**, giving thanks to God the Father, through him.”

(Colossians 3:23-25) “And whatever you do, **work heartily, as for the Lord**, and not for men, (24) knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ. (25) But he who does wrong will receive again for the wrong that he has done, and there is no partiality.”

(1 Corinthians 10:31-33) “Whether therefore you eat, or drink, or whatever you do, **do all to the glory of God**. (32) Give no occasion for stumbling, either to Jews, or to Greeks, or to the assembly of God; (33) even as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of the many, that they may be saved.”

The Self Denial Lifestyle

(1 Peter 4:1-5) “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 you no longer should live the rest of your time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God**. (3) For we have spent enough of our past time doing the desire of the Gentiles, and having walked in lewdness, lusts, drunken binges, orgies, carousings, and abominable idolatries. (4) They think it is strange that you don’t run with them into the same excess of riot, blaspheming: (5) who will give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.”

The Devil's Trap

(2 Timothy 2:3-4) “You therefore must endure hardship, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. (4) No soldier on duty entangles himself in the affairs of life, that he may please him who enrolled him as a soldier.”

(Luke 21:34-36) “So be careful, or your hearts will be loaded down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that day will come on you suddenly. (35) For it will come like a snare on all those who dwell on the surface of all the earth. (36) Therefore be watchful all the time, praying that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will happen, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

Are You Willing? **VERY FEW ARE!**

(Matthew 9:37-38) “Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest indeed is plentiful, but the laborers are few. (38) Pray therefore that the Lord of the harvest will send out laborers into his harvest.”

(Isaiah 6:8) “I heard the Lord’s voice, saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” Then I said, “Here I am. Send me!”

Closing:

*There is only one choice that will provide you life!

(Mark 8:35-38) “For whoever will save his life shall lose it; but whoever shall lose his life for My sake and the Gospel’s, he shall save it. (36) For what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? (37) Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? (38) Therefore whoever shall be ashamed of Me and of My Words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man shall also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.”

Recap:

It takes 2 crosses to receive salvation. The first cross Jesus died upon for your sins. The second cross we must die to ourselves on- for our love of God and Jesus. As we count the cost, let us remember what is required to follow Jesus: denial of our lives, families, and possessions. This is why Jesus said we must pick up our cross and follow Him. This is why, through baptism, we die and resurrect with Him. This is why we are seated in heavenly places with Him. Finally, this is why when He returns, He will tell God our Father that He knows us, because we have known His suffering and sacrifice! We will be kindred spirits doing it God’s way. Salvation is a free gift. Now that we have received it, we must ask: “What is required of us?” The answer is complete and total surrender of our lives to be used by God- holding nothing back, counting it all as loss for the cause of Christ. In short, we must become just like Jesus! In every way, in every act, on every occasion, we must mimic Jesus! Understanding that it takes a life- **OUR LIFE!!**