



The Cost of Discipleship

“So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:35).

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It is often said that salvation is free but discipleship costs everything. This is true because Jesus paid the full price for salvation of the entire world with His own blood. However, the decision to be a follower of Christ may entail sacrificial choices, but the rewards both in this life and in eternity is worth far more than the price. Jesus illustrated the cost of discipleship in His teaching reproduced below:

“And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them, 26 If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. 27 And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. 28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? 29 Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, 30 Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. 31 Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? 32 Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace. 33 So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple. 34 Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned? 35 It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; but men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear” (Luke 14:25-35).

We learn the following from this story:

1) A great multitude followed Jesus, and He used it as an opportunity to expound serious scriptural truths. Some might see such as opportunity to entertain or teach sensational things that would draw even larger crowds,

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but Jesus was always concerned about the eternal destiny of the souls, and therefore teach truths with eternal values.

- 2) The use of “if” (vs 26) illustrates that discipleship is not forced on anyone but is a choice that one must voluntarily take, as it demands primary loyalty to God above human affiliation.
- 3) Bearing one’s cross and following Jesus (vs 27) are not only the features and hallmarks but also the criteria to qualify for discipleship.
- 4) Jesus used two illustrations (vs 28-32) to teach the importance of informed decision on discipleship, as God is not interested in a person that lays his / her hands on the plough and looks back or one that reneges on earlier commitments (Luke 9:62; Ecclesiastes 5:4-6).
- 5) Jesus spelt out clearly the cost of discipleship as forsaking all (vs 33) to follow Christ.
- 6) Although discipleship is voluntary, Jesus outlined the danger of a Christian failing to volunteer for discipleship. S/he is like a salt that has lost its savour (vs 34). God saved Christians for a purpose. Failure to fulfil those purpose makes one “Not fit for purpose”.
- 7) God has no space for people or materials that are not fit for purpose - hence their being cast out (vs 35; Revelation 3:15-16; Luke 13:6-10).

During His earthly ministry, Jesus called people to be His disciples. Today is your day of decision on whether to positively respond to God’s clarion call to discipleship.