



*Series: A Journey Through Matthew #9
4/21/2024*

Title: "Counting the Cost: Embracing the Sacrifice of Discipleship"

Text: (Matthew 8:18-22) "Now when Jesus saw a crowd around him, he gave orders to go over to the other side. 19 And a scribe came up and said to him, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." 20 And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." 21 Another of the disciples said to him, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." 22 And Jesus said to him, "Follow me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead."

Introduction: Jesus confronts potential followers with the sobering reality of discipleship. This passage challenges us to consider the cost of following Christ, emphasizing the sacrificial commitment required. Through the encounters with two would-be disciples, Jesus illuminates truths about the demands and rewards of discipleship.

"Following Christ demands everything we have, but the reward of knowing Him surpasses any sacrifice we could make."

I. WHAT IS JESUS MESSAGE?

A. The Call to Sacrifice: In Matthew 8:18-20, Jesus encounters a scribe who declares his intention to follow Him wherever He goes. Jesus responds by highlighting the demands of discipleship, stating, ***"Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head"*** (Matthew 8:20, NIV).

B. Prioritizing Kingdom Commitment: Another individual approaches Jesus, requesting permission to bury his father before following Him. However, Jesus responds with a challenging directive: ***"Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead"*** (Matthew 8:22, NIV).

C. Counting the Cost: As Jesus declares in Luke 14:27-28, ***"Whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won't you first sit down and estimate the cost to see if you have enough money to complete it?"*** (NIV)

DO YOU RECALL JESUS' RADICAL philosophy of servanthood? It's found tucked away in His now immortal words: He said to the crowd, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross daily, and follow me." LUKE 9:23

D. The Promise of Eternal Reward: Despite the challenges and sacrifices associated with discipleship, Jesus assures His followers of the ultimate reward. In ***Matthew 19:29***, ***Jesus declares, "And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life"***

II. WHAT ARE THE REWARDS OF DISCIPLESHIP: FOUR BENEFITS OF BEING A REAL DISCIPLE OF JESUS:

Being a genuine disciple of Jesus offers numerous benefits that extend far beyond the realm of spirituality. Here are four significant advantages:

Transformative Growth: A sincere commitment to discipleship with Jesus entails a transformative journey of growth and maturity.

Guidance and Direction: Following Jesus as a disciple provides a clear sense of guidance and direction in life.

Community and Support: Being part of a community of fellow disciples provides invaluable support and encouragement on the journey of faith.

Eternal Hope and Assurance: One of the most profound benefits of being a disciple of Jesus is the assurance of eternal hope and salvation.

APPLICATION : The cost of discipleship is significant and demands unwavering commitment. Jesus calls us to forsake all and follow Him wholeheartedly, prioritizing kingdom values above worldly pursuits.