

# THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

## The Cost of Being a Disciple of Christ

November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Have you considered the cost of being Jesus' disciple today? Jesus talks about leaving everything to follow Him and to be His disciple in **Luke 14:25-33** where it says; *"25 Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them, 26 'If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. 27 And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. 28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it— 29 lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see 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, does 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 still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace. 33 So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple."*

This may sound harsh, but it isn't. Salvation is a free gift, but being a disciple will cost you your entire life. Jesus admonishes us to count the cost of being His disciple, lest if we don't, we'll be mocked at because we didn't finish the race, the Christian journey.

Jesus also admonishes us to take up our cross and follow Him in **Mark 8:34-38**; *"34 When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, 'Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. 35 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. 36 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? 37 Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? 38 For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."*

Regardless whether Jesus took your sins and conquered the devil, He still clarifies that we must take up our cross, deny ourselves and follow Him. That cross may be different for each person, but each person must take up his cross. It almost seems contradictory and backwards in the natural that to lose your life you'll save it, but Jesus was talking about the supernatural side of discipleship.

✓ The cost is: self denial of one's own life and all that it entails.

You may only want to go to church, sing some songs and hear a sermon, but Jesus is asking you to die to self. To carry your own cross is a cost and whatever personally that would entail. Worldly gain could be the cross to carry because if in pursuing it your faith and walk with Christ is compromised, it will cost you your soul. Is it worth your eternal destiny in heaven to pursue the love of wealth and lose your soul? It's not.

**Romans 12:1-2** says that even our bodies are to be living sacrifices to Christ; *"12 I beseech[a] you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your [b]reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."*

**Philippians 3:7-8** says; *"7 But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. 8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ."*

## THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

That's how as disciples of Christ we need to view the things of this world, as rubbish. The devil knows how to put the perfect thing in your path to get you off your Christian race.

Jesus warns us too that the world will hate and persecute you if you're His disciple in **John 15:18-20**; *"18 If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. 19 If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. 20 Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also."*

Are you sure you want to be Jesus' disciple after reading that? It's the cost you have to count before opting in to be a Christian. Persecutions will come in one way, shape or another if you're really preaching the gospel by not watering it down, allowing it to be seeker friendly, warm and fuzzy with no lifestyle change. Sin has to be called sin, not a dysfunction, mental illness, codependence, habit, feeling or issue etc.

The Apostle Paul counted the cost when he says this in **2 Corinthians 6:1-10**; *"6 We then, as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain. 2 For He says: 'In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you.' Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation. 3 We give no offense in anything, that our ministry may not be blamed. 4 But in all things we commend ourselves as ministers of God: in much [a]patience, in tribulations, in needs, in distresses, 5 in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in fastings; 6 by purity, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by [b]sincere love, 7 by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, 8 by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; 9 as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastened, and yet not killed; 10 as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things."*

Being a disciple is more than being nominal. The flesh will keep you lukewarm but on judgement day, Jesus says He'll vomit you out of His mouth because you weren't totally hot for Him or totally cold in denying Him.

- ✓ The cost is: persecution, that may cost you everything as a disciple of Christ.

In **Matthew 10:34-37** Jesus also said that being His disciple would bring division; *"34 Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. 35 For I have come to 'set[a] a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law'; 36 and 'a man's enemies will be those of his own household.' 37 He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me."*

The sword Jesus is talking about is the word of the God. Whenever the Bible is brought up in the family, it will bring division between the Christian and non-Christian because you're standing up for righteousness.

- ✓ The cost is: the love of your family members.

There needs to be less focus on the family and more focus on Jesus and the harvest of Souls to be saved. Jesus is not saying to not love your family members, but to not love them more than Him. It's about keeping your priorities straight.

Jesus says in **Luke 14:33**; *"33 So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple."*

## THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

✓ The cost is; forsaking all that you have.

It's important to examine your life and see if all that you have does not have you. There's a big difference to being a steward as a homeowner and a steward owned by the home. This can apply to what ever material possession you are a steward of as an owner, be it great or small. If it owns you it will interfere with Christ and His call on your life.

We've shared now on the Cost of Discipleship, now let's discuss what Costly Grace is. We start by reading **Titus 2:11-14** where it says; *"11 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, 12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, 13 looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, 14 who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works."*

God's grace will keep you on the straight and narrow road to live as Jesus has required you to live. Why is grace costly when apparently it is free?

**Ephesians 2:1-10** says; *"2 And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, 2 in which you once walked according to the [a]course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, 3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. 4 But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His 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, lest anyone should boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."*

It almost sounds contradictory because it says we're saved by grace and not works, yet we're created in Christ Jesus **for** good works. Many interpret grace is something that covers your past, present and future sins and that a person is eternally secure and saved. But that is not true. Works are still part of your salvation where your will is involved to say no to the world, the flesh and the devil. People will know you're a Christian **by** your love and good works.

Grace is the power that the Holy Spirit gives you to live holy, and it is a gift that enables and empowers you to keep the laws of God and resist the temptation to sin. That is what saves you through faith. It's not your own good works that save you but rather the gift of grace that enables you to do good works of righteousness. Grace is what saves you by enabling you to live holy. That grace enables you to resist satan and the temptations he throws at you to sin. You can keep God's commandments by grace. You have the Holy Spirit in you when you're born again and He makes you holy, but you still have to work out your salvation with fear and trembling.

The Apostle Paul also says in **1 Corinthians 10:13**; *"13 No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to [a]bear it."*

No matter what the temptation is, Jesus knows your weakness and limits but will always make a way of escape to that temptation. Satan will tempt you, that's a fact. But **you** have to choose the way of escape by the power of

## THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

grace that abides in you by using the scriptures in the Bible that pertain to the area of temptation. God will not interfere with your free will, and when tempted will provide a way of escape, but you still have to make a decision to take it or not take it. The Bible is the sword and is the offensive weapon that we use in spiritual warfare against the devil. By quoting it back to the devil in the face of temptation, he has to flee, he cannot stay in and stand against the word of God.

So, we have God's grace and His word as a sword, does that give us a license to continue in sin? The Apostle Paul gives us the answer in **Romans 6:1-14** says; *"6 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? 2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? 3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be [a]done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. 7 For he who has died has been [b]freed from sin. 8 Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, 9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. 10 For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. 11 Likewise you also, [c]reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. 12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. 13 And do not present your members as [d]instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. 14 For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace."*

The reason sin does not have dominion over you as a Christian is that grace gives you the ability to not sin when tempted.

Before the free gift of grace was given, you were under the law and sin had dominion over you, but after being born again, grace is what now enables you to live a sanctified life as a Christian and sin no longer has dominion over you, and when tempted, you are able to take the way of escape found in the Bible scriptures that pertain to the temptations.

When you do sin, you have Jesus as your advocate and He is faithful and just to forgive you of your sin and cleanse you from all unrighteousness. That forgiveness is available for sinful thoughts, actions and deeds. There is no condemnation for those walk after the Spirit, but if you're walking in the flesh, you will feel condemned.

What makes grace costly, is it will cost you your sinful worldly life that leads to hell in exchange for a sanctified Christian life that leads to heaven.

So, grace gives you the power to submit to God, to resist the devil and his temptations and to watch him flee. From the time you became a Christian until the time you die, you will have to use God's word – the Bible – to resist the devil with. It's spiritual warfare every day. The Bible is the most valuable book you will ever have. Don't leave home without your sword, the Bible.