

2026 Vision: That Cost Me Nothing

Discussion Guide for January 3 and 4, 2025

Summary

This week's message invites us to consider the true cost of following God and the kind of worship He desires. Using King David's story in 1 Chronicles 21, we see that living for God is not passive or convenient—it requires wholehearted worship.

David's decision to count his army revealed a shift from trusting God to trusting his own strength. When confronted with his sin, David responded with repentance and humility, acknowledging both his failure and its impact on others. God's response led David to a moment of costly worship—one that required personal sacrifice rather than convenience.

The heart of the message centers on David's declaration: "I will not offer to the Lord what costs me nothing." True worship flows from love, not obligation, and reflects how deeply we value God. As we enter a new year, the sermon challenges us to examine where God may be asking for costly worship—in our time, finances, relationships, service, story, and convenience—always remembering that our response is rooted in the far greater cost Jesus paid for us.

Intro Prayer

God, we confess that we often desire comfort, convenience, and control. As we reflect on Your Word, help us see where we have relied on ourselves instead of You. Teach us to worship You not out of obligation, but out of love, offering our lives fully and freely in response to all You have given us. Amen.

Ice Breaker

What is something meaningful in your life that required sacrifice or cost in order to gain or keep it?

Key Verses

1. 1 Chronicles 21:1–27
2. Psalm 20:7
3. 1 John 1:9
4. Mark 14:3–9

Discussion Questions

1. David's census revealed a shift from dependence on God to reliance on himself. Where are you most tempted to rely on your own strength instead of God's?
2. Why do you think repentance is such a vital part of a faithful Christian life? What makes repentance difficult at times?
3. David insisted on paying full price for the offering because he didn't want his worship to cost him nothing. What might "costly worship" look like in your life today?

4. The sermon emphasized that worship is a way of life, not just something we do during church services. How does this expand or challenge your understanding of worship?
5. We were encouraged to examine six areas of costly worship: time/focus, finances, relationships, service, testimony, and convenience. Which one stands out to you most right now—and why?
6. Mary of Bethany's act of worship was called "beautiful" by Jesus. What do you think makes costly worship beautiful to God rather than burdensome?

Life Application

This week, prayerfully identify one area where God may be asking you to worship Him at a greater cost. Take one intentional step—adjust your schedule, give generously, serve faithfully, or share your story—responding not out of duty, but out of love for Jesus.

Key Takeaways

1. Living for God means depending on Him rather than ourselves.
2. True worship requires personal sacrifice .
3. Costly worship flows from love, not obligation.

Ending Prayer

Father, thank You for the ultimate sacrifice made through Jesus. Shape our hearts to love You deeply and respond with worship that costs us something. Teach us to surrender our time, resources, relationships, and comfort to You, trusting that You are always worthy. May our lives reflect our love for You in all we do. In Jesus' name, Amen.