

Counting the Cost

Luke: All Things New



Series Goal

That Mercy Hill Church would be made new as we follow the One who is making all things new!



Sermon Text

Luke 14:25-35



Big Idea

Following Christ will cost us everything and nothing at the same time. We have to let the world go but we become heirs of it in Him. We take up our cross, but therein find our life. His grace is free, but it is not cheap. Jesus calls us to count the cost, find Him worthy, and follow hard after!

(1) The Cost

Jesus wants to make sure that it is crystal clear to us what it means to be His disciple, and, even more, what it will, in fact, cost us if we should endeavor to be so. He forces the issue on us by restating the matter three times—in three distinct, memorable, and even troubling ways.

(1) Hate Your Own _____ (v. 26)—Does Jesus have first place in your heart? Are you willing to let all else go to follow after Him? The irony in all of this, then, is that, when Jesus is calling us to hate father, mother, wife, children, and so forth—though it looks as if He is contradicting the second greatest commandment—that we would love our neighbor as ourselves—truly, He is helping us fulfill it.

(2) Bear Your Own Cross (v. 27)—Taking up your cross and dying for Jesus is not some distant, secondary thing that a few unfortunate martyrs may have to experience at the end of their lives. It is demanded of every disciple at the very beginning. Your Christian life can't even get off the ground if you refuse to pick up your cross. You can't even begin to overcome sin or bear fruit for God if you don't start here. That's the call. Come and die . . . that you might truly live!

(3) Renounce All That You Have (v. 33)—The picture being painted here is you and I gathering together all that we have—our loved ones, our possessions, our achievements, our plans, our hopes, our dreams, our desires—and then we line it all up on the shore. We look at it, we count it, we consider it, we weigh it, then we give our hugs, perhaps . . . and we get in the boat with Jesus and say: "Farewell!"

(2) The Calculation

In vv. 28-32, the first image Jesus gives is that of a tower you start to build but can't finish. The second image is that of a war you enter into but can't win. The point in both is essentially the same: Think it through before you start, weigh the matter, count the cost, look honestly at the project, make sure you are ready to go the distance, to finish the job. The grace of Christ is most certainly free, but it is not cheap. You cannot earn it. But you must let all else in your life go if you are to truly lay your hands on it.

(3) The Commission

Where half-blooded disciples lose their saltiness and turn people off to Christ, full-blooded disciples have a certain flavor to their lives and people are drawn to Christ because of it. You can tell that they love you, that they'd give their life for you. They don't just talk about the cross, they live it!

Reflection Questions



- Did anything in this text make you uncomfortable? What of Jesus' words to us here seemed most troubling? Why? Do you yet see how there is life hidden within it or are you still struggling with what He says and what this means for you?
- Would you agree that every sin results from a shrugging off of the cross you are called to bear with and for Jesus? How have you experienced this to be so even this last week? What would carrying your cross have looked like in that moment?
- Looking at this text, would you say Jesus prefers quality of disciples or quantity of disciples? (Hint: This is really a trick question!) How do the two relate?
- How have you been affected by "nominal Christianity"? Where do you think you have been salty lately? Where have you been a little tasteless?