



Gary Inrig – The Parables (Understanding what Jesus Meant)

Read the Chapter in Advance of the Weekly Study. Make a Mental Note or Jot Down Something That Struck You – “Strange, New or Different”.

Week 5 – Read Chapter Five: “Finding My Master” Also - Read Luke 14:25-35 (The Parables of the Tower & the King) - *The Cost of Discipleship*

Opening Prayer: Begin the session with a prayer, asking God to open hearts and minds to understand the true meaning of discipleship and the commitment it requires.

Overview: This chapter highlights Jesus' words about the cost of discipleship, which can be startling. He calls us to prioritize our relationship with Him above all else, even family ties. This isn't a call to neglect our loved ones, but rather to reorder our lives with Christ at the center. It's a call to reflect on our own priorities today. What would it look like for you to continually- "*carry your cross*" in everyday life. As Gary points out - this isn't about the pursuit of suffering, but about being willing to follow Jesus wherever He leads; even when the road is difficult. Jesus in **Luke 14:25-35** shares the parables of the tower builder, and the king going to war – these examples are good reminders for us to always - "*count the cost*" - before embarking on our journey of faith. This isn't meant to discourage us, but to ensure our commitment is genuine, sustainable and effective in His Kingdom.

SOME KEY POINTS:

- ❖ **Discipleship to Jesus is not a casual ideal, but unconditional allegiance to His person and work.**
- ❖ **Jesus outlines the conditions & costs of discipleship, emphasizing loyalty that transcends all human relationships.**
- ❖ **True discipleship involves an ongoing "carrying of one's cross" - submitting our goals and plans to Christ's mission – wherever He may lead.**
- ❖ **We must carefully consider both the cost of discipleship and the consequences of refusing it.**

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What struck you – “strange/new or different? Or ... What stood out to you most about Jesus' teachings on discipleship in this chapter? Why?



2. Jesus says we must "hate" our family members to be His disciple. How do you understand this statement in light of other Biblical teachings about family? *(Note: to "hate" – Gary points out two things in his book to help us understand the Lord's meaning. "Hate" in this context does not mean actual ill will, but is a comparative, - Jacob "loved Rachel more than Leah." The next verse is translated, "When the Lord saw that Leah was not loved," - the Hebrew term used is "hated." Jacob did not actually "hate" Leah, **but he did love her less** than he did Rachel. Gary also goes on to point out that - Jesus is indicating that He demands a priority in our relationships. I must love nothing or no one more than I love Him. Families represent the very best things in life. They are God-given, and I am to love them more than anything else, with the sole exception of my love for Christ. This does not mean that I will demean my family or neglect it. The very opposite is true if I take Scripture seriously. But no relationship, no matter how wonderful, must compete with my allegiance to the Lord."- (**Note: from Pastor Bob** – "We wouldn't be – if it weren't for **He** – we don't make our heart beat or draw our next breath –but by His say so -we were His idea and so He should always have **Preeminence** in our hearts).*
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3. What does it mean to "carry your cross" in today's world? How might this look different from person to person?
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4. How does the parable of the careless builder relate to our journey of faith? (Have you ever started something you couldn't finish?)
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3. Gary states, "Discipleship involves a daily act of signing away ownership." What areas of your life do you find most challenging to "sign over" (surrender) to Jesus Christ?
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4. How does the metaphor of salt relate to our role as disciples in the world?

Things to Think On this Week-

1. **Take time** this week to honestly assess your level of commitment to Christ.
Are there any areas - you are holding back?
2. **“Count the Cost”**: Make two lists - one list ... what it might “cost” you in terms of living fully as a disciple for Christ, and the other - list the benefits you would receive. Pray over these two lists.
3. **Ownership Inventory**: Choose one area of your life (finances, time, talents, relationships) and brainstorm ways to more fully submit that area to Christ's will.
4. **Cross-Bearing Challenge**: Identify one way you could "take up your cross" this week by prioritizing Christ's call over personal preferences. Perhaps ask ... “What **Can** I Do?”
5. **Salt Check**: Reflect on your "saltiness" – at work, home or in the community. How can you be a more effective preservative, antiseptic, and or seasoning for Christ?

Closing Prayer: *(this prayer is only a suggestion - please feel free and be encouraged to pray your own as the Holy Spirit leads)*

Thank You Lord for the privilege of being Your child and student – Disciples that You have called each one of us by name – help us to learn more and more how to love others as You have loved us – give us the wisdom and the way to make an impact in our world today – we pray in Jesus name – amen!