

Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEACHER'S PACKET

3rd - 5th Grade

Sunday Morning

Study 15

The Cost of Discipleship

The Cost of Discipleship

The Objective is the key concept for this weeks lesson. It should be the main focus of the study

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The “Main passage” is the basis of the study, where the other verse support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the “reward box” found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God’s Word.

Objective This lesson aims to show what the cost of following Jesus is and encourage the students to commit fully to following Him.

Key Verses

Luke 13:22-30; 14:25-33—Main Teaching Passages
Ephesians 2:8-10

Memory Verse - Luke 9:23

“Then He said to them all, ‘If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.’”

Hook

Review last week’s memory verse, Romans 10:9.

Ask the students to think about a friend or family member who is important to them. Have the class raise their hand if they would be willing to help that person all day if they were sick. Would they spend lots of money on them? Would they go somewhere dangerous for them? Would they give up friends for them? Would they die for them? No matter how committed we are to any friend or family member, Jesus asks us to be even more committed to Him, as we will see today.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

On His journey to Jerusalem in Luke 13:22-30, someone asked Jesus if there would be only a few people saved. Jesus responded by telling the crowd to strive to be among the group that enters the narrow door to heaven, as many will not take that path. He warned that one day, the door would be shut, and many would ask to come in, stating that they had heard Jesus teach and had eaten with Him. However, Jesus would tell them that he never knew them, and they were cast into Hell. He then applied the passage to the Jews who thought that, because they were Jews, they would automatically get to go to Heaven. Jesus told them that there would be Gentiles (non-Jews) who would make it to Heaven while many Jews would not.

In Luke 14:25-33, Jesus further clarified what it means to follow Jesus. Verse 26 taken out of context sounds terrible, but what Jesus means is that, compared to our love for Christ, our love for anyone else should seem like hatred. If a decision is between family or Jesus, we must pick Him every time. Even our own self-interest should be nothing compared to love for Jesus. Likewise, we must be willing to take up our cross, which means that we are willing to go to any length, even suffering and death, to obey Him. In order to illustrate this point, Jesus gave two parables. The first was about a man who did not first consider the cost of building a tower. He spent all his money on the foundation and ran out of money before he could finish it. The second was of a king who went to war without considering whether or not he had enough troops. He did not, and so when he met the enemy, he had to surrender. These two parables were meant to show us that following Jesus has a high cost. Before deciding to follow Him, we need to decide that we are willing to pay that cost, lest we get overwhelmed and give up.

LOOK

The Bible teaches us that salvation is only by grace, through faith, and not from anything we do (Ephesians 2:8-10). There is nothing we can do to earn our salvation. However, in today's passage, Jesus teaches us that following Him will cost us everything. Are these two statements in contradiction? Of course not. What we have done does not qualify or disqualify us from following Jesus. Matthew was a traitor and tax collector, Mary Magdalene was demon-possessed. Simon was a radical zealot who fought the Romans. Paul was a persecutor of the Church. All of these people, despite their sins, we allowed to follow Jesus. When they

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK (Continued)

were saved, it had nothing to do with what they did. Even the most religious person cannot be saved apart from Jesus. Faith, not works, is what saved them. This is salvation by grace.

However, those who want to follow Jesus and be saved must be willing to give their whole lives for Him. Jesus is not interested in accumulating multitudes of half-hearted fans. He does not want followers who will begin on the journey with Him and then give up halfway through because it gets too hard. That's why He often spoke about the cost of discipleship. Jesus was not a salesman trying to downplay the negatives of following Him so that He could get as many followers as possible. He wants everyone to know up front that following Him is difficult. We have to decide: are we willing to follow Him if it means suffering? Giving things up? Going against friends and family? Sacrificing our own desires? Even dying for Him? That does not necessarily mean we will do all those things. The question is, are we willing to do them?

For the students who have come who are not currently believers, it is important to tell them that the journey is hard, but the end is worth it. Are they willing to give up everything to follow Jesus? For the believers, ask them to consider whether or not they have considered the cost of following Jesus and committed to Him, no matter what the cost. Are there areas in their lives which they have not given up to Jesus? Perhaps they follow Jesus at home and church, but they do not allow Him to be their Lord when they are with their friends. Perhaps there is a sin that they are not willing to give up in order to follow Him. Encourage them to privately count the cost, take up their crosses, and follow Him.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

As a class, memorize Luke 9:23.

Review the lesson by going over what “the narrow gate,” “hating your family,” “bearing your cross,” “counting the cost,” and following Jesus all mean.

Pray: Ask the Lord to give strength as you all seek to be His disciples. Praise Him for being worthy for all of you to follow.

Parent Question: What does it look like for someone to “take up their cross” and follow Jesus?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on Luke 13:22-30 & 14:25-33 by David Guzik

C. The first and the last.

1. (22-24a) Jesus responds to a question about salvation.

And He went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem. Then one said to Him, "Lord, are there few who are saved?" And He said to them, "Strive to enter through the narrow gate"

a. **Lord, are there few who are saved?** We often wonder about the salvation of others. But in His reply (**Strive to enter through the narrow gate**), Jesus points back to the only person's salvation we can really know and asks, "are you yourself saved?"

i. The rabbis of that day used to love to debate the question of whether many or few would be saved. But Jesus won't be drawn into this debate. His only question is, "are *you* saved?"

b. **Strive to enter through the narrow gate:** The way is **narrow**. We can't bring our self-centeredness, pride, lusts, hate or especially our own righteousness. As the famous hymn sings: "Nothing in my hand I bring, only to Thy cross I cling."

c. **Strive to enter:** Therefore, we must **strive** (the word is literally "*agonize*") in order to lay these things aside and come in. The Greek word for *strive* has "the idea of a struggle or prize-fight." (Bruce)

d. **Strive to enter through the narrow gate** isn't a call to save yourself by good works. Good works aren't the right **gate**. You can strive to enter all your life long, but if it isn't at the right **gate**, it makes no difference. Jesus Himself is the gate; He is the door.

e. Then why must we **strive to enter**? Because there are many obstacles in the way. The *world* is an obstacle. The *devil* is an obstacle. But probably the worst obstacle is your own *flesh*.

2. (24b-27) The reason why it is important to strive in entering.

"For many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open for us,' and He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know you, where you are from,' then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.' But He will say, 'I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.'"

a. The punctuation supplied by translators in [Luke 13:24-25](#) is poor. It should read *will not be able when once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door*. The point is that there will come a time when it is too late to enter—that is why one must have an urgency to enter *now*.

i. This is true regarding our soul's salvation. You can know something about Jesus and not be saved. You can be in the presence of Jesus and not be saved.

ii. It is likewise true of so many areas where God challenges our lives. We must be urgent to do what God tells us *now*. For example, many men are terrible husbands, until the day when their wife just gives up-then they wake up, but it may be too late.

b. **You begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, "Lord, Lord, open for us":** Many will seek to enter (in the sense of *wishing* to enter), but they will not be able to. When the door is open, it is open; when it is shut, it is shut.

i. There is a real difference between a mere *seeking* and *striving* to enter. A casual wish to be saved isn't enough, because there are too many obstacles on the way.

3. (28-30) The destiny of those who *don't* strive to enter.

"There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out. They will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God. And indeed there are last who will be first, and there are first who will be last."

a. **There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth:** They will be in hell (the place of **weeping and gnashing of teeth**), and they will see that others enter instead of them.

i. One woman protested to an evangelist that **weeping and gnashing of teeth** cannot apply to those who have lost their teeth. The preacher solemnly replied, "teeth will be provided!"

b. Yet, **indeed there are last who will be first, and there are first who will be last.** The makeup of those in (or out) of the kingdom may be different than what some expected.

C. The cost of receiving the invitation.

1. (25-26) Disciples must put Jesus first.

Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them, "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."

a. **He cannot be My disciple:** With this teaching, Jesus will help us define what a **disciple** is. The word **disciple** simply means "learner." A disciple is someone who is a student, a learner of Jesus.

i. So, what does it take to become a learner of Jesus? Jesus has just shown us that coming to God is like accepting an invitation ([Luke 14:16-24](#)); is that all there is to it?

b. **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:** First, Jesus boldly says that nothing can come between you and God. Even good things such as family and the instinct of self-preservation cannot become idols to the true disciple.

i. Think of how audacious Jesus is! He asks for this kind of ultimate commitment, and we give it to Him-why? Because of love. When we know the love of Jesus; when we are in a love-relationship with Him, only then can we be committed to Him with this great devotion.

ii. Napoleon understood this principle when he said, "I know men; and I tell you that Jesus Christ is no mere man. Between him and every other person in the world there is no possible term of comparison. Alexander [the Great], Caesar, Charlemagne, and I have founded empires. But on what did we rest the creations of our genius? Upon force. Jesus Christ founded his empire upon love; and this hour millions of men would die for him."

c. **Hate** is a strong word, but that is exactly how it can seem to family members and friends when we put Jesus before them.

2. (27) Disciples must count themselves as dead; they must go all the way.

"And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple."

a. **Bear his cross and come after Me:** The one carrying a cross essentially walked down death row to their place of execution. They knew there was no turning back, and it was a total, complete commitment, with your life was completely yielded. You knew your life didn't belong to you any more.

b. This is total commitment; Jesus gave Himself for us totally, and expects us to give ourselves to Him totally.

i. We can understate the demands of Jesus when we preach the gospel to others. We can give them the impression that coming to Jesus is only believing some facts instead of yielding a life.

c. "The general idea that these words of Jesus about *bearing the cross* refer to passive submission to all kinds of afflictions, like disappointments, pain, sickness and grief that come upon man in life, is totally wrong ... only a person who for the sake of His service surrenders all self-seeking and abandons all striving after his own interests can be His disciple." (Geldenhuys)

3. (28-33) Counting the cost before you come to Jesus.

"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*; lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see *it* begin to mock him, saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.' 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? Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace. So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple."

a. **Sit down first and count the cost:** In the parable of the tower, Jesus says "sit down and see if you can afford to follow Me."

b. **Sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand:** In the parable of the king, Jesus says "sit down and see if you can afford to refuse My demands."

c. **Whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple:** We have a difficult challenge in understanding and communicating the gospel here; there are two extremes to avoid.

i. We can *never* give people the impression that they have to clean up their lives before they come to Jesus; that is like washing up before you take a bath.

ii. But also, we can *never* give people the impression that Jesus won't want to clean up their lives with their cooperation after they come to Him.

iii. It is as if we have an apartment and give the ownership of that apartment to Jesus. We don't have to remodel the apartment before we give it to Jesus; but once we do, He comes in and starts tearing down walls and fixing up things. Being a disciple means that you help Jesus in that work instead of resisting it, or changing things back to the old way.

d. When the ancient Greek phrase **forsake all that he has** was applied to people meant, "to say goodbye to." Jesus tells us to "say goodbye" to everything we have, entrusting it to Jesus.