

COUNTING THE COST
jkroberts_us@yahoo.com
www.pacolethillsbaptist.org
July 21, 2019

Luke 14:25-35

1. Over the years I have preached, heard and read quite a few messages from this passage of Scripture.
2. For instance I have from time to time preached on how Jesus defined discipleship and three of the definitive statements Jesus made about being a disciple are found in this passage.
NOTE: The other three are John 8:31, John 13:34-35, and John 15:8
3. Most commentators and speakers teach that in this passage Jesus is stressing the importance of counting the cost before committing ourselves to Him.
4. Now I believe that it is important for every person to embrace Jesus Christ with their eyes wide open and with the knowledge that following Jesus Christ may cost a great deal, but I also believe that it is impossible for any believer to know in advance what full surrender to Jesus Christ might ultimately mean for them.
5. The emphasis should not be placed on our need to count the cost, but rather it should be placed on our willingness to pay the price whatever the cost.
6. Our willingness to pay the price will depend on our love for and devotion to Jesus Christ.

I. The setting.

- A. Jesus was in the final stages of His earthly ministry, and He had “set His face (was determined) to go to Jerusalem.” Luke 9:51
- B. We are told that large crowds were going along with Him.
- C. During His earthly ministry people followed Jesus for various reasons.
 1. Some followed Him because of the signs He was performing on those who were sick. John 6:2
 2. Some followed Him because He fed them. John 6:26
 3. Some followed Him because of their messianic expectations.
 4. Some followed Him because God had revealed to them that He was the Christ, the son of the living God. Matthew 16:16
- D. What was true then is true today.
- E. A careful study of Scripture reveals that prior to Pentecost there were relatively few true believers although Jesus had impacted many lives on various levels and in various ways.

II. The situation.

- A. Jesus spoke of a builder who wanted to build a structure and a king who was going to meet another king in battle.
 1. Before he started the builder would need to sit down and determine if he had enough resources to cover the cost of the project.
 2. The king, knowing his army would be outnumbered, needed to determine if his ten thousand soldiers were capable of defeating an opposing army of twenty thousand soldiers.

B. I believe that in both instances Jesus is talking about Himself.

1. Jesus clearly declared that He would build His church. Matt 16:17-18

17 And Jesus said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. 18 "I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock **I will build My church**; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.

2. Paul made it plain that Jesus Christ is the King of kings and Lord of lords. 1 Tim 6:12-16

12 Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. 13 I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate, 14 that you keep the commandment without stain or reproach until the appearing of **our Lord Jesus Christ**, 15 which He will bring about at the proper time — He **who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords**, 16 who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen.

C. Only Jesus Christ knows in advance what it will cost to build His church, and only Jesus Christ knows what must be true of His soldiers if He is to win the eventual victory.

NOTE: An example of this truth is found in the life of the Apostle Paul.

1. In reference to Paul the Lord told Ananias, "But the Lord said to him, 'Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel; for I will show him how much he must suffer for My name's sake.'" Acts 9:15-16

2. Are we to suppose that the Lord revealed to Paul all that he would suffer in advance so that he could count the cost?

3. No, it was revealed to him as he lived out his life and fulfilled his ministry.

4. Notice Paul's summation of what he suffered. 2 Cor 11:22-33

23 Are they servants of Christ? — I speak as if insane — I more so; in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death. 24 Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes. 25 Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep. 26 I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren; 27 I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. 28 Apart from such external things, there is the daily pressure on me of concern for all the churches. 29 Who is weak without my being weak? Who is led into sin without my intense concern?

30 If I have to boast, I will boast of what pertains to my weakness. 31 The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, He who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying. 32 In Damascus the ethnarch under Aretas the king was guarding the city of the Damascenes in order to seize me, 33 and I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and so escaped his hands.

III. The standard.

A. As Christians we are:

1. The Lord's building blocks. 1 Peter 2:4-5

And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God, 5 you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

2. Soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Tim 2:1-4

You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. 2 The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. 3 Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. 4 No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier.

B. Jesus has fully counted the cost related to building His church and He fully understands what must be true of those who enlist in His army.

1. They must love their King supremely.

2. They must lay down their lives for their King and follow their King wherever He might lead.

3. They must surrender to their King total control over their lives and their resources.

APPLICATION

1. We are not told how the large crowd responded to His words, but I suspect that many in the crowd lost their enthusiasm, at least until they could forget what He had said.

2. The modern church, at least in most western nations, suffers from an inadequate view and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. The Apostle Paul:

a. Came to understand the depths of his depravity and sin.

b. Fully understood that he deserved to be judged.

c. Came to understand the greatness of God's love for Him and the full implications of Christ's sacrificial death on his behalf.

d. Embraced Jesus Christ as God's anointed Savior and Lord.

e. Came to love the Lord Jesus with all his heart and soul.

f. Did with his whole heart what he encourages us to do. Rom 12:1-2

Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

g. Was a living example of a man who loved Jesus supremely, followed Him fully, and trusted Him totally.

4. The question is what are you and I an example of?