

Forsaking All for Christ

by Anton Bosch

This sermon delves into Luke chapter 14, focusing on the challenging teachings of Jesus regarding the cost of discipleship. Jesus emphasizes the need to prioritize Him above all else, even family and one's own life, highlighting the sacrificial nature of true discipleship. The sermon underscores the importance of counting the cost before committing to follow Christ, urging listeners to forsake all and be willing to pay the price of discipleship, mirroring the sacrificial love exemplified by Jesus on the cross.

Duration: 44:07

Scripture: Luke 14:26, Luke 14:27, Luke 14:28, Philippians 3:7

Topics: "Cost of Discipleship", "Sacrificial Love"

Description

This sermon delves into Luke chapter 14, focusing on the challenging teachings of Jesus regarding the cost of discipleship. Jesus emphasizes the need to prioritize Him above all else, even family and one's own life, highlighting the sacrificial nature of true discipleship. The sermon underscores the importance of counting the cost before committing to follow Christ, urging listeners to forsake all and be willing to pay the price of discipleship, mirroring the sacrificial love exemplified by Jesus on the cross.

Transcript

We're in Luke chapter 14 and this morning I want to look at 25 through 33 but let's read 25 through 35. So Luke chapter 14 reading from verse 25. 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 and whoever does not bear his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.

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. This 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. But what King going to make war against another King does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with 10,000 to meet him who comes against him with 20,000 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 salt is good but if the salt is lost its favor how shall it be seasoned. It is neither fit for the land nor for the dunghill but men throw it out he who has ears to hear let him hear. And so let me remind you again that Jesus is on his way to

Jerusalem on his way to the cross this is this whole all of these chapters in the gospel of Luke and again there's a multitude following him and so it says great multitudes a multitude is many people.

I don't know what a multitude really would be but I would imagine a thousand people maybe maybe more but great multitudes is even more. So great multitudes many people went with him so they're they're following him as he goes towards Jerusalem. I guess this is like a parade you know everybody loves a parade and when the parade starts everybody comes out and everybody wants to watch and everybody wants to be part of that of that parade.

The problem is that Jesus is not in a parade and in fact he's not even on a victory march. Jesus is on a death march if you will and so again he is he is warning his disciples about the cost involved and so it says 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. And so there are three times in this passage Jesus is going to speak about the fact that there are certain people who cannot be his disciple.

Again in today's context we want to make it easy for people to follow Christ we want to make it easy for people to become members of the church and so we will lower the bar as much as we can but Jesus doesn't lower the bar in fact he's not saying just come and join me but he is saying there are people who cannot be my disciples and in fact as we saw a few weeks ago the gate is narrow and those who are able to enter and those who do enter are few and so again he is making it difficult and he is saying there is a cost and you cannot be my disciple unless you are willing to pay the price. Now again let me remind you that we are we are not preaching a work salvation we're not preaching that you can buy your salvation or that you can make some kind of sacrifice and by that gain entrance into heaven but Jesus paid the whole price at the cross of Calvary for our salvation and yet following him is not cheap there is a price to pay and that's the point of this passage this morning and so he says then that if anyone comes to me and notice comes to me we're going to speak about that we're going to come back to that idea in a few verses time if anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother wife and children brother and sisters yes and his own life also he cannot be my disciple he cannot be my disciple. Remember there were those who were onlookers there were those who are following there were those who were just looking at the spectacle of the miracles and all the other things that were going on and then there were those who were the disciples maybe the 12 or the 11 of the 12 and then a few more than that a hundred and twenty maybe maybe 500 but those are the only ones who were true disciples the rest of them were hangers on and of course the truth same is true today and so Jesus is saying there are certain things that need to be brought into consideration before you make a decision to follow him and he's going to speak about counting the cost here is the first cost that needs to be considered and that is family now I want us to understand very clearly Jesus is not teaching that we must hate mystery breakup with family there are those who use this passage for two reasons first of all there are the cults who say well you you have to you have to leave your family you have to leave your husband and your wife you have to leave your children to join the cult and in the process you have to give up all your money and give it to the cult Jesus is not forming a cult in that sense and then there are those on the other side who say you see there Jesus is preaching a message of hate not a message of love no we must understand this passage again in the context of the whole of Scripture and what Scripture is saying here is that or what the rest of Scripture teaches is that we need to love Jesus says if we we need to love our neighbor as ourself love our neighbor as ourself in other words the same way you love yourself we naturally love ourselves we need to love our neighbors in the same way as we love ourselves Jesus taught his disciples to honor their parents this is one of the commands in

the Old Testament remember that Jesus died a perfect man he had never sinned he had never broken one of the commandments so if Jesus was teaching us to disrespect parents if Jesus was preaching against family then he would have been breaking the command so Jesus is not teaching against family today there is a tremendous attack against family from the world all the traditional values that we understand are part of family life husband and wife one man and one woman parents and children a gender identity all of these things are being attacked today Jesus is not on that side Jesus is on the side of the family and in fact the book of Psalms tells us that he gathers the lonely into families so he is into families and he represents them in fact the father and the son speak about that family relationship father and son he calls us his children he speaks about we speak about the family of God so God is about family he is not about breaking up families what Jesus is saying here is a I guess you can call it a literary device it's a it's a way of speaking some people call it rhetoric some people call it hyperbole but he is making a point and he's trying to get us to think about these things to think about what we're on about and when he is saying that we need to hate family he is saying that our love for him must exceed the love for family in other words our love for him must make our love for our family look like hate that's how much more we should love him this does not excuse us to or give us a reason to mistreat one another or to disrespect our parents or to break up our marriages as some cults encourage people to do but what it is saying is that we must love him more and if he's going to ask us in order to send us into the mission field or in order to take a stand on the issue of the gospel if that is going to require a choice between family and God then we must choose God remember Abraham leaves his country he leaves his his family except for his immediate family he leaves his possessions his job his lands his inheritance and he follows God and he obeys the Lord as he calls him to go into into a strange land Jesus did in fact the same as he as he leaves the father in a sense not in a in a sense of of of hating him but he leaves the comfort and the joy and the glory of being in fellowship and in relationship with his father he leaves that and he comes to a hateful hateful sin cursed earth in order to die for us at the cross of Calvary if Jesus put his love for the father at a higher level than his love for the for the will of the father we would have been in serious trouble today and so what he is saying to us is how much do you love me do you love me more than you love family am I more important now this does not destroy families in fact here's the here's the reality that unless we learn to love God properly we will not be able to love family correctly you see the problem is that our love generally is self-centered our love is selfish we love so that we can get something out of that relationship we love so that people will love us in return but God's love is is altruistic in other words God does not love in order to get something out of the relationship God just loves God so loved the world and yet the world took his son and crucified him and so he loves us he loves us with a love which exceeds any kind of love that that we have in in the human and in the natural world and until we come into a right relationship with God we won't know true love we won't know how to love but when we come into a relationship with him when we come he's disciple and we begin to follow him and we seek first the kingdom God that begins we begin to learn how to love one another in a self-sacrificing way you see because here's the difference human love is self-centered godly love is self-sacrificing as Jesus revealed to us at the cross of Calvary and husbands until you learn to sacrifice your goals and your agenda and what you want to do for the sake of the love of your wife you will never love her correctly and the same applies to wives we live in a time when when parents worship children and unfortunately there are so many families even in Christian churches where the children is the center of the of the universe and God is somewhere out there Jesus says you're not my disciple you cannot be my disciple if you don't love me more than you love your children and you will not be able to love your children correctly with godly love with sacrificial love with a love that disciplines until you learn to love God more than you love your children and so our love for our family particularly in our context in this church family is everything but until God becomes everything family will be nothing and your

family will suffer because you've not put God first you see it's only in the context of God's love that our love for family can find it proper and it's full and it's best expression if your relationship with the Lord Jesus has made you less of a loving father or husband or wife or child then you have not come into a proper relationship with Jesus your relationship with him must make you a better person in terms of loving and how you love those around you but Jesus is saying you need to get your priorities straight you need to decide what it is you want to put first in your life you remember the problem in the church of Ephesus you have left your first love what should have been number one has become number two or three or four instead of Jesus being number one he is something else may I challenge you again this morning what is your number one love oh you say of course God is but how easily do you miss the meetings because your kids have got something on who's more important you say well my kids are important I have to develop them physically and emotionally intellectually and spiritually I have to develop them in all these areas but you're actually teaching them that loving God is secondary to loving family I think I've made many so I know I've made many mistakes in raising my children I have many regrets but I pray that there's one thing that they will recognize and remember and that is that I love God with all my heart and that I was willing to obey him no matter what the cost where is your love this morning and not only must we hate those around us in other words our love for them must look like hate in comparison to the greatness of our love for God but we need to hate our own lives also in other words and then and this is where we really get down to brass tacks this is where where the rubber meets the road because the gospel that is being preached today is a self-centered gospel it's a gospel about self the songs that that churches sing is about me and I and myself the message that is being preached is is how I can be whoever I want to be and be a better me and and how everything how God revolves around me Jesus says no you need to put yourself aside if you're going to be my disciple look how many of us really love him more than all these things and yet don't give me a knee-jerk reaction it's easy to say yeah of course I love God what is the reality how do you spend your time how do you make your choices how do you spend your money it's a self first family second and God third for the reality is that this is modern Christianity no it cannot be that order it has to be God first and everything after that now verse 27 Jesus says whoever does not bear his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple and Jesus spoke about this earlier in the gospel of Luke the need for us to be willing to deny ourselves and to take up our cross I'm not going to repeat that whole message so I trust that you remember that taking up your cross or bearing your cross means going to the place to die now in the same way as in the family God may not necessarily ask you to give up your family but he may the point is not whether he does or doesn't the point is are you willing to make that sacrifice here is the same point it's not that every Christian will be a martyr and die on a cross or of or of or a but this bird be burnt at the stake or be killed in some way as many Christians are today but every Christian must be willing to die every Christian must be willing to die and again we will just respond we say yeah I'm willing to die for him but when he asks you to do small things you choose to be disobedient so if you're disobedient in the small things how can and will you ever die for him but if you don't bear your cross in other words bear the tool of your execution with you every day you cannot be his disciple the Christian must be willing to die to his family he must be willing to die to himself he must be willing to die to everything that he holds precious in this life and it's not so that we can get Christ but that it may be an expression of our love for him an expression of the fact that we appreciate that he indeed gave up everything even to his last drop of blood and to his last breath in order to save us and yet as Christians we want to cruise to heaven we want to be on this great ship with entertainment and the best food and just everything needs to be wonderful and and easy and comfortable as we as we cruise our way to heaven are you willing to die what is it that God has been asking you to give up in recent weeks months maybe for years he's been asking you to give up something and you're not willing to make that sacrifice but you say I'll die for him Jesus says if you're not

willing to die you cannot be my disciple and if you're not willing to give up that TV program or that addictive habit or that drug whether it's a prescribed or not doesn't matter you're not willing to give up certain friends certain lifestyles certain ways of thinking certain values if you're not willing to make these sacrifices how can you be his disciple and certainly you will never die for him I recently spoke with a Christian I can't remember who it was it was an email if I remember correctly but he was deeply disturbed about the fact that he did not think that he could die for the Lord wasn't someone in this church and he was right because he had a lifestyle that contradicted the gospel and he wasn't willing to change his lifestyle he wasn't willing to give up the stuff that he was doing that he knew was displeasing God and yet he was worrying that maybe if I was if he had to face persecution he would he would he would capitulate and he would surrender and recant the faith and he's a hundred percent right he will because if you if he if he will if he won't take a stand concerning his flesh concerning his carnal desires he will not take a stand before the firing squad where are you this morning are you willing to take up your cross and be the disciple of the Lord Jesus verse 28 says and so Jesus has made these two statements you need to be willing to hate everything secondly you need to be willing to die take up the cross and now he says you need to count the cost and again this is where the gospel is so different today because the gospel that is being preached today and it's popular today is about all the wonderful blessings about becoming a Christian nobody tells you that if you become a Christian there is a price to be paid you may have to give a family or the family may give up on you you would have to turn away from certain things that you just enjoy doing but that doesn't please God are you willing to do this I don't hear preachers saying these are the things these this is the potential cost of becoming a Christian and so people are making decisions and praying this in his prayer and coming to the altars and they're they're becoming Christians but they've never counted the cost and Jesus is now going to tell us two things that teach us the principle that we must count the cost and this morning as you've listened to this message I want you to count the cost before you make a decision don't go out of here and say yes God I'm going to do a lot I'm going to do this I'm going to do that count the cost can you do it fuck I'm tired of Christians you make commitments that they cannot keep or that they will not keep which of you intending to build a tower does not sit down first and count the cost whether he has enough to finish it list 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 every time you come to church those who come from the south side of town come past a building site one block from here where the community college used to be I've lost count how many years that building has been standing I think you all know what I'm talking about it's got a big green fence around it the builder had all sorts of fancy plans for a hospital I believe he was going to build or a frail care center but he didn't count the cost he ran out of money I don't know four years five years six years ago and all you left with is a shell and a big hole in the ground and a testimony to somebody who couldn't add these make his sums who couldn't add up and add up what the cost would be in comparison to what he had it's a foolish thing to do and yet people do this every day walking into car dealerships and signing on the dotted line without figuring out whether in fact they can afford the payments six months later the car has to be repossessed the only difference between a building and a car is the fact that the building just stands there is an eternal testimony to someone who can't do math who can't add what he has and subtract from that what the cost is going to be and Jesus is saying if you want to be my disciple you need to count the cost there is a cost involved he said well what is the cost well I don't know what the cost is going to be for you but I know there's going to be a cost and what we need to do in calculating the cost is we we have to adopt a worst-case scenario what I mean by that is in and I have recently bought a house and I had to work out whether we can afford and what we can afford how much can we afford and it was no good saying well yeah I think I can do it no I had to do my sums and in doing my sums I did how to adopt a worst-case scenario in other words if the interest rate is

at the highest if my income drops to the lowest will I still be able to afford it hopefully it's never going to come to that worst case but I need to be ready otherwise it's not going to work and the same is true of the gospel so what is the worst case Jesus has just told us the worst case is that you can lose everything including your family including your life that is the worst case hopefully it doesn't come to that but are you willing to pay that price and of course I don't need to tell you that it's worth that we're serving Jesus Jesus elsewhere promised that no man giving up family and houses and lands will not receive back many told not just in this life but in eternity the things that they have surrendered for Christ nothing you give up for him no price you pay including your life will ever remain unrepaid he will repay he will reward and he rewards abundantly maybe not in the way that we think we said what about the man who dies at the stake what about the Christian who is put in the road and and this and this and the steam roller runs over him in North Korea what what is he gonna get out of this but he's going to get a crown in eternity he's going to get a reward that you and I can't even begin to imagine and understand but God is no man's debtor and no sacrifice that you make will remain unrepaid he will repay but you must be willing to pay the price are you able to finish it's no good saying yes Lord I'll serve you to the end when in fact you can't even make it to the meetings for a month without dropping or missing one or more meetings and of course it's not about the meetings it's not about the church but that if you can't make the meetings faithfully how are you going to pay whatever other price he's asking you or may ask you to pay count the cost and if you're not willing to pay the price then bow out now that's really what you say well that's a terrible thing to say preacher you shouldn't be telling people to leave well what was Jesus doing remember where we began this passage this morning there's multitudes following him and Jesus says you better count the cost if you want to follow me and remember it wouldn't be long after this when they would all turn against him because they didn't listen they didn't count the cost then he uses another example he says 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 it comes against him with twenty thousand now there's many stories of foolish Kings and foolish generals who go into war without even calculating whether they have what it takes to win but a good general and a good King will gather the intelligence how big is the army how where are they placed what weapons do they have where is their airplanes where are they ships where are they tanks where are they guns what have I got can I win this battle war is a terrible thing and when I was in the military I used to read a lot about the wars of time gone by Second World War First World War and other big wars and the strategies and the tactics that was employed you know one of the terrible things was the calculations that these men had to do and in the Second World War they would count in thousands just as Jesus is saying here and I remember specifically reading about the invasion of Normandy how that the Allied General sat down and said we have so many thousand men the opposition is such and such we will lose so many thousand men at the landing we will lose so many thousand men at the first mile we will lose so many thousand at the second mile they were just writing off thousands and thousands of lives and the question was not whether they how reckless they could be but the question was when we attain the objective will we be able to hold what we have attained will be able to get where we need to get or will we be wiped out before we get there what a terrible business those who glamorize war don't have a clue what they're talking about and unfortunately there are many people in our country today who are who are wanting war and bloodshed they don't know what they're talking about but what these generals are doing in these intelligence officers were doing is the right thing they're doing what Jesus says and he's saying you need to count the cost can you finish the course can you do what you plan to do verse 32 or else while the other is still a great way off he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace well of course this guy didn't have a lot of sense to begin with because he got involved in a war that he couldn't win but at least he got some sense when he saw the opposition and he asked for peace and again we know about other foolish

generals and kings who in spite of the fact that they realized they were outnumbered just kept going and just had their entire army wiped out all the men killed what a terrible waste is Jesus saying you better give up now I think he is if you're not willing to pay the price what's the use of wasting the rest of your life trying to be a disciple trying to be a Christian when in fact you're not even not a Christian trying to follow him when in fact your hearts not in it you may as well go and enjoy your life in the world enjoy your best life now because that's all you've got brother and sister we must count the cost we must be willing to pay the price whatever it may be I pray that it is not the worst case scenario but unless you're willing to go all the way it's not gonna work so likewise just as the man needs to count the cost before he builds the tower just like the general needs to count the or the king needs to check whether he has enough resources to go against the enemy in the same way likewise whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be my disciple so Jesus began by speaking about family he then spoke about our own life but now he has come to the bottom line and he says if we are not willing to forsake all that we have all that he has he cannot be my disciple are you willing to give up everything you have everything you are folk easy believism is not the gospel cheap grace is not the gospel you need to be willing to forsake everything nothing held back the same way as Jesus held nothing back they took his last stitch of clothing from him and hung him naked they bled him dry literally he gave up the last breath and yet we want to get into heaven with all of the world and yet what is a man profited if he gained the whole world and lose his soul what will a man give in exchange for his soul I want to close with Paul as he writes to the Philippians and these are here's a man who had counted the cost and who had paid the ultimate price rejected by his friends and family rejected by his own nation beaten so many times imprisoned so many times shipwrecked so many times stoned and left for dead he knew about paying the price and not only did he know about paying the price but he had a lot to give up because in the same passage in Philippians chapter 3 the first verses tells us about who Paul was his education he's standing amongst these people as one of the foremost leaders of Israel at the time one of the foremost scholars of Jewish tradition at the time and also seems that he came from a wealthy family because he's his father had become a Roman citizen but he says what things were gained to me whatever things I thought was good or profitable worthwhile these I have counted loss for Christ you see there's the bottom line your sinful habit how can you compare that with Christ your possessions how can you compare that with Christ and that's the issue which is more important and Paul says I've counted everything the loss I've done the sums I've done the cost calculation I've done the projection and on the one side is Christ and the other side is all that I have and he says I've counted those things loss that I may have Christ verse 8 of Romans Philippians 3 yet indeed I will so count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord for whom I have suffered the loss of all things and I count them as rubbish that I may gain Christ can you see the words of the Lord Jesus put into practice and that I may be found in him not having my own righteousness which is from the law but that which is through faith in Christ the righteousness which is from God by faith that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings being conformed to his death if by any means I may attain to the resurrection of the dead father we pray that you'd help us to be realistic about the price and about the cost Lord talk is cheap it's easy to make commitments that we cannot keep Lord I pray that we may be those who are true disciples Lord we remember that of those disciples that Jesus was talking to at this time it seems that only John stood at the cross the rest fled from him thank you Lord that they repented and returned Lord I pray that we may not be those who flee and we may particularly not be those who turn against you but Lord but we pray that you'd help us to to not make promises concerning the big things when we're not even able to make keep the commitments on the small things the Lord that in all things you may have the preeminence that in all things you may be number one Lord that we'd be willing to die to our families to our loved ones to ourselves to our possessions and to anything else that stands in

the way of loving you first help we help us Lord to love our families and help us Lord to love those around us in a godly way but Lord we understand that that cannot happen until we love you first and that your love is poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit Lord we pray that these things may be real I pray that you'd keep us protect us and go with us now in Jesus name amen you

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