

Gospel of Christ vs. Gospel of Man

by David Platt

Jesus' teaching is challenging and requires us to prioritize our relationship with him above all else, even if it means sacrificing relationships or possessions.

Duration: 4:11

Scripture: Luke 14:27

Topics: "True Discipleship", "Radical Commitment"

Description

This sermon delves into the challenging teachings of Jesus in Luke 14 and Luke 18, where he emphasizes the radical commitment required to follow Him. Jesus calls for a level of devotion that surpasses all earthly relationships and possessions, urging his followers to be willing to give up everything for Him. The sermon highlights the contrast between the comfortable Christianity often portrayed today and the radical demands of true discipleship as outlined by Jesus.

Transcript

Later in this book, Luke 14, large crowds are following after Jesus. And so what does he do? He turns around to them and he says, if anyone would come after me, he must hate his father and mother, wife and children. How's that for an opening line? Imagine yourself following an obscure religious teacher.

He turns around and he says, if you're going to follow me, you need to hate mom and dad, your wife and kids. He just lost most of us at hello. The very next verse, he takes it a step deeper.

He says, if anyone would come after me, he must deny himself. Take up his cross and follow me. Now we have, for great reason, reverence and respect for the cross.

But we've got to put ourselves in the shoes of first century hearers. When they hear this statement, pick up an instrument of torture reserved for the most vile and shamed of criminals. Imagine following an obscure religious teacher in the 21st century and turning around and saying, if you're going to follow after me, you need to pick up your electric chair and follow me.

This is really weird. Then you get to the end of that passage, the pull at your heartstrings conclusion. Jesus says, you must give up everything you have in order to follow me.

Give up everything you have. Pick up an instrument of torture. Hate your mom and dad.

That's a lot different than admit, believe, confess and pray the prayer. Luke 18, you know, another person approaches him. Young, influential and rich.

If anybody needs to be in, this guy needs to be in. Think of all that he can do for the kingdom. Put him on the circuit.

Unfortunately, Jesus doesn't have the personal evangelism methods that we have developed today. And in the classic example of letting the big fish get away, he looks at this guy and says, go sell everything you have and give it to the poor. Now put yourself, let's put ourselves in the shoes of these first century hearers.

What if Jesus told us to give up everything we have? What if Jesus told us to hate our mom and dad, wife and kids? What if Jesus told us to deny ourselves and take up an instrument of torture? And this is where we come face to face with the frightening reality. Jesus has said these things to us. He has told us to give up everything we have.

He has told us to love him in a way that makes our closest relationships in this world look like hate in comparison. And he could tell any one of us in this room to sell everything we have and give it to the poor. But we don't believe this.

We take passages like this and we say, well, what Jesus really meant was, we begin to twist this picture. We begin to redefine Christianity according to our preferences, our thoughts, our ideas. We begin to twist the Jesus of the Bible into a Jesus that we are a little more comfortable with.

A Jesus who doesn't mind our materialism. A Jesus who thinks like us. A Jesus who wants us to avoid dangerous extremes and for that matter wants us to avoid danger altogether.

Here's the danger though. As we do this, we are twisting Jesus into a nice middle-class American Jesus who looks like us and talks like us and feels like us. We're twisting Jesus into our image.

And when we do this, then when we gather together in our churches to sing our songs and lift up our hands, the reality is we are not worshiping the Jesus of the Bible. We are singing and lifting up our hands to ourselves.

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