

Cost of Discipleship - Part 12

by Paris Reidhead

The sermon explores the profound implications of accepting Christ and the transformative power of true discipleship.

Duration: 20:50

Scripture: Matthew 25:35, Romans 8:10, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 2:20

Topics: "Cost Of Discipleship"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker explains that when we open our hearts to receive Jesus Christ, we close the gap between us and God. Through faith, we can connect with God and receive His blessings. The speaker emphasizes that when we receive Jesus, we receive the broadcast from Calvary, where our sins are forgiven and we have peace with God. The sermon also shares a powerful story of a man named Karga who, despite the pain of his father's murder, chose to share the message of Christ with the people responsible. Through his testimony, many people came to know Jesus and a church was established. The sermon concludes by highlighting the mystery of the Trinity and the fact that God is present in every aspect of our lives.

Transcript

Now, don't tell me you understand that, because if you do, I then am not going to be able to believe anything you tell me. And don't feel badly because you don't understand it, because you don't even understand electricity. Did you know that? You don't know what electricity is.

A professor in college in physics was lecturing, and there was a sleepy student, and he wanted to get his attention, so he said, Smith, stand up! And the fellow shook himself and stood up. He said, Smith, define electricity. And he scratched his head and he said, well, professor, for the moment I can't think.

He said, before class I knew, I've forgotten. And the professor put his hands to his head. You don't know what it is.

Oh, I said that out in Cranford, New Jersey at the Alliance Church, and a young InterVarsity chap took me to the train. He said, oh, I'm so glad none of my college student friends were here. Oh, I said, what did I say? I have hoof and mouth disease, and I never know when I'll get an outbreak.

Now, what did I say? He said, you said that nobody knows what electricity is. I said, well, he said, I know. He said, electricity is the flow of electrons.

Just one little question. What are electrons? And even in the car with nothing but the green light from the dashboard he blushed, because all he could say was electrons are small particles of electricity, and you can't define it that way. And consequently, we use electricity.

We are exposed to it. It's a great servant. It's around us.

We don't really know what it is. It hasn't been defined. And so how God can exist in three persons and yet be as he is, perfectly one, we do not know.

But we know that this is true. We know this is true. Now, in God you live and you move and you have your being.

God is not far from every one of us. Actually, we're living in three environments tonight. The first environment is the one with which we're the most familiar.

It's air, cold or warm, muggy or dry, as the case may be. But we're familiar with it. We walk at the bottom of a sea of air.

It extends several miles above us, and it exerts a heavy pressure upon us. And when we go quickly up in an elevator or an airplane, the pressure isn't equalized, and our ears will hurt as we get toward the top of this sea of air in which we walk and live and move and from which we have our being. Now, there's a receiving set that we have by which the air becomes our life.

We're sustained by it, and that's the lungs. It's valuable around our body, but if I held your nose and my hands over your lips so the air couldn't get to your lungs, five, six, seven minutes and you'd be a statistic because you have to have it in just one place in your receiving set that gets the benefit from it. Now, there is a second atmosphere around you, and that is electronic sound and impulse.

This room is filled with television impulse or pictures and radio sounds. Why, if we wanted to have all of the sound in this room audible, we'd have to put racks up here and put radio and TV and shortwave receivers up in order that we could get it all. You're just surrounded by it.

But it isn't troubling you, and it's not interfering with what I'm saying, and it doesn't obscure you from my--me from your vision because you don't have a receiving set. Now, there's a third atmosphere, and that third atmosphere is God. And as long as you remain in rebellion against God, indifferent to his love and his grace and his mercy, committed to please yourself as the end of your being, then there will be no communication.

Oh, you have a receiving set. Not your lungs, not your eyes or your ears or your intellect, but your spirit, your spirit. You have all the capacity to know God, everything that's necessary to know him.

But as long as you remain committed to this thing called sin, which is the supreme choice of the life, to please yourself without regard for the will of God and the rights of others, God refuses to reveal himself to you. But when you are awakened to the serious--the criminal nature of this, this rebellion against just and proper authority, when you decide that you no longer are wise enough and good enough to rule and control your own life, when you, as it were, like a rebel that's been aiming it with a gun at the head of God

in warfare against him, even though it may not have been open and avowed, it's been a kind of a Viet Cong type of guerrilla warfare with God, you've been his avowed enemy by virtue of the fact you've been committed to do that which was contrary to his plan and his will, to please yourself without regard for his will or purpose. Now, when you are awakened to this and convinced of the criminal nature of it, and you decide to change your mind from depriving him of that which is his just due, namely, your obedience, your service, the committal of your will to please him as the end of your being--the Bible calls it to love God--when you decide to receive Jesus Christ as God come in the flesh, the one who loved you, who died for you, who rose again, and now wants to rule in your life and invites you to receive him, urges you to take him just as he's presented, Lord and Christ, Prince and Savior, when you so receive him, then something happens.

This God, in whose presence you live and move and have your being, joins himself to your spirit. Why, in a sense, it's like putting the switch on in your television set. The pictures were there all the time, but the break, the gap, kept the flow from occurring.

And when you open your heart to receive Jesus Christ, you close the gap. Faith reaches out and closes the gap, and then God begins. And the first thing you get on the receiving set of your heart is the broadcast from Calvary.

You can call Almighty God Abba, Father. You've been born into his family. Your sins are forgiven, and you have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

And he comes to bring life. Now, he said that everyone into whom he comes thus is going to be a partaker of his nature. Now, you've seen this judgment scene here.

You've looked at it. What did you really read? What did the Lord Jesus say in Matthew 25? He said this, I am looking for myself in my people. What? Well, you see, when he saw people hungry, he said, give ye them to eat.

He fed them. When he saw people thirsty, he gave them drink. When he saw them as strangers, he took them in.

And naked, he clothed them. And sick, he visited them. And in prison, he came to them.

And so what he is really saying is this, I am looking for myself in my people. Now, there were two classes of people here. I think they all would have passed the test of orthodoxy.

Probably were evangelistic in their zeal, missionary in their fervor, premillennial in their hope, devout in their prayer. I think they both would have passed the test. That's why they got to this point.

But there was one group in whom Christ found himself. And he was looking for himself. And the ones in whom he thus was and where he found himself, these were his people.

Now, he tells us in another place in Matthew 7 about the people that built a house. It had the same floor plan. It had the same facade.

It had the same material. Everything about the two houses was identical, except one was built on sand, one was built on rock. And the two houses stood right there side by side until the judgment came, and then one of them fell down.

You've got the same thing here. You've got two people that have just stood together, and now Christ is looking for himself in his people. You see, when Jesus Christ comes in, he comes in to make us new creatures.

And the great judgment that we find is that occasion when Christ is going to expose us to ourselves. He's going to expose us to ourselves. Now, what a tragedy it is to wait until that time to find out, since he's told us precisely what the judgment's going to be.

It's going to be a surprise to a lot of people. It shouldn't have been, should it? Because here it is. It's all previewed.

It's all set forth. So why should you wait to find out in that day, hear him say, Away with you, I never knew you. Why? Why wait? Why not just examine your heart today as Paul commanded, prove your own self, test your faith, knowing that if you are that faith which is saving faith, heart faith, then Christ is in you, and the evidence is that Christ always is himself wherever he is.

And when he is in you, he is himself. He's himself. Missionaries went out to the Tongali tribe in Nigeria in 1915, Gordon Beecham and John Hall.

They went up into the Tongali country, and they started to minister. The first one that came to Christ was a young cannibal from the Tongali people, and the second one was a very fierce and feared young man. His father had been killed by the Valiri people, and this young man had lost one eye in a battle with the spears.

And after his father had been killed by the Valiri people, he'd taken a blood oath in front of the elders of the tribe that he would not rest until he had killed 14 people of the family, of which he found out there were 14 males, and he was going to kill all of them in reprisal for their having killed his father. Now, Tongali was a strange people. No one could marry in the Tongali tribe until he had taken the head of one of the neighboring tribe's people and brought it to the father of the girl that he wanted to make his bride to prove his manhood.

There were no graves in Tongali land, because when anyone died for any other occasion other than leprosy, in which case they were put in a certain place for the hyenas, but any other place, the Tongali people would go out to the sacred family spirit grove, and there the body would be cut into portions in the sacred pot, and the family would eat until it was gone. Then the bones would be put under a cairn of stones as an altar to which they would make regular sacrifice. I was into this tribe that the gospel came.

Targa came to work as an informant and as the houseboy for the missionaries. One night when he was sleeping, the Lord Jesus spoke to him and said, Targa, the mothers in Beleri land make their children be quiet at night by saying that if they make a noise, Targa will hear them. They fear you, Targa.

Your name strikes fear into the hearts of the Beleris. And now you've come to me, and I've given you, for salvation I've come into your heart. And Targa, do you think the Beleri should still be afraid of someone into whom I've come? That night Targa met the Lord Jesus in reference to the blood feud, and the Lord Jesus won.

The next morning at daylight when the station stirred, Targa came out, carrying his cloth, just a staff, and he said to the missionaries, just a few words, I go to Beleri. Now they thought that somehow in the night a message had come that some of the Beleri people were on the path, and he could ambush them and add to this number this total of those that he had vowed to kill. And the missionary looked at him and said, oh

Targa, you're a Christian.

You can't go to Beleri. Oh, he said, you don't understand. Last night Jesus spoke to me, and he told me that the Beleri are still afraid of me, and I must go to the Beleri and tell them they don't need to fear me anymore.

And then the missionary said, but Targa, you can't go to the Beleri. They'll kill you. He said, that's all right.

If they kill me, they kill me. But Jesus has said go, and I must go. It was six miles from the station into the edge of the Beleri country, and Targa started out.

And he came to the village where the family that had killed his father resided, and here he came and all of them knew him, striding down the middle of the way. They were too frightened and surprised to do anything. He walked right up to the compound of the man that had killed his father, and he came in and stood in front of them.

And he said, I have come to tell you, you don't need to be afraid of me anymore. And he sat down with them, and he told them what had happened and how Jesus Christ had come into his heart. That evening he came back, and they said, will you come back and tell us more about this Jesus? If he can change someone like you, then we should know about him.

So every day, when he finished his work in the afternoon, Targa would walk the six miles to Beleri, to the compound of the man that had killed his father, and he would sit down with them and tell them about Christ. A year went by, and he one day walked into the mission station, and behind him were nearly fifty of the Beleri people that he had led to the Lord Jesus, and he had prepared for baptism. And they had come to give their testimony to the missionaries, to follow the Lord in baptism, and to establish a church.

And after this, which had taken several weeks, had been done, they then said, we must have someone to teach us. You don't need Targa anymore as your houseboy and your informant. We must have him as our pastor.

He will come to you when you teach him. Then he will come back to us and tell us what you've taught him. And when he was there years ago, when first I learned of Targa, he had a church of over fifteen hundred Beleri people, like himself, all of savage background, and all that he had personally won to Christ.

He only had seven hundred in the evening service, because in the afternoon about eight hundred of the Beleri people went out into the other villages and compounds and held little fireside services, telling their neighbors and friends and other tribespeople about Jesus Christ. What had happened? Well, you see, if any man's in Christ, he's a new creation, a new creature. He's passed from death to life.

That's what the apostle is talking about. He's talking about a change. And he said, examine yourself.

Christ be in you, except you be reprobate. And at that great judgment, the Lord Jesus Christ is going to look for himself. When I was hungry, you fed me.

When I was thirsty, you gave me drink. Why? Inasmuch as you did it unto one of the least of these, you did it unto me. What's he saying? He's saying, I am always myself, whether I am in heaven, whether I am on earth in my ministry, or whether I am at home in the hearts of my people.

I am always myself. Is Christ living in you? What do your family say about you? What do your friends say about you? What do your neighbors say about you? What do they say about me? This is the question that ought to engage us as we prepare for this great judgment. It's not going to take us by surprise.

Nothing is going to be sprung on us we don't know about. It's all right here before us. And if you have the kind of insight that I ascribed to you tonight, you pretty well know where you are.

In fact, I'm going to go so far as to say this. That if tonight were the last night you live and the morning you stand before Jesus Christ, every one of you know right now whether you'd hear him say, enter into the joy of our Lord or away from me. I never knew you.

Everyone here. I believe in your state of consciousness you know that. Now tonight we're going to give you an opportunity to respond to the truth you've heard.

Some of you have a head faith, perhaps a dead faith or a devil's faith. And you need to settle this. You need to make sure.

And perhaps we can help you. We would certainly want to. Others of you say, yes, I know that I've been born of God.

I know I've passed from death to life. But this indifference has kept over me. This coldness has come.

This sin has come into my life. And I must deal with it. I must be right with him.

But whatever the need, we're asking you tonight to have your own preview of this judgment. You find out the worst about yourself while it's still time enough to do something about it.

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