

Cost of Discipleship - Part 5

by Paris Reidhead

The cost of discipleship is leaving behind human relationships and attachments and following Jesus on his terms.

Duration: 25:46

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Matthew 22:36-40, Luke 14:7-11, Luke 14:15-24, John 6:1-14, John 14:6, John 15:19

Topics: "Cost Of Discipleship"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher tells a story about a young man who committed his life to Christ despite his mother and grandmother's disapproval. The young man expressed his deep love for them but explained that his love for Jesus was greater and he must obey Him. The preacher then goes on to discuss the importance of understanding Jesus' words and teachings. He suggests that Jesus was more concerned with revealing the desperate need of people's hearts rather than just pleasing them. The preacher encourages the audience to consider the challenge of becoming a true disciple of Jesus rather than simply accepting Him for salvation.

Transcript

Would you turn, please, to Matthew chapter 22. We're going to read again this portion that has been the anchor of our thinking so far these evenings. Matthew 22, and I'll begin reading with the thirty-sixth verse.

Then, by the way, we're going to turn quickly to John the fourteenth chapter and begin with the fifteenth verse. Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment.

And the second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Now, please, to John chapter fourteen. The question this evening is, who is it that that loves the Lord? And what does it mean to love God with all your heart? Last evening we saw the great commandment. Tonight we're going to see the great call, the call that Christ gives to himself.

Now, beginning with verse fifteen of John fourteen. If you love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him, but ye know him.

For he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless. I will come to you, yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more.

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I will come to you, yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more. But ye see me, because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me. And he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. Judas saith unto him, not Ascariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words.

My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings. And the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father which sent me.

Now, at least five times in that portion, the Lord Jesus said that the evidence that you love God with all your heart and mind and soul is that you keep his commandments, that you hear his words, and that you keep his words. It's just that simple. This is the test, and this is the evidence.

Now it's important for us to find out what his words are. What did he say to his day and to his time and generation? I think a good place for us to begin is in Luke, the 14th chapter. In this occasion, the Lord Jesus is speaking to a multitude of people, just passers-by, just the throng that have gathered.

There's a little bit of evidence that perhaps they were the crowd that gathered outside the home of one of the Pharisees where the Lord Jesus had been invited for lunch. Apparently, at that time, the Pharisees thought that if they made an offer good enough, they could get this young preacher from the country on their evangelistic team. And they thought that if you can't lick them, you'd better join them, and the best way to silence him would be to hire him, because no one really bites the hand that feeds them.

So apparently, they brought him in with something of the view of trying to persuade him to do some preaching for them, some street preaching, and at least they're there in a strange and unusual setting. And of course, the first 25 verses in this, or 24 verses, are a lesson in directness, in frankness, in the fact that the Lord Jesus was more concerned about the needs of the people with whom he was having this luncheon than he was about their opinion of him. You might say that he was most insensitive.

You might even go so far as to say that his manners lacked something. Perhaps you could even suggest that he hadn't had the opportunity of reading Dale Carnegie's very helpful little volume, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*. Rather, he seems to be specializing how to alienate people, because he is more concerned that they should see themselves and the desperate need of their own hearts than he is that they should, in a sense, just have very fine ideas about him.

Well, you read that with this in view. Then, after he has spoken so directly to what he saw expressed by the people going up to the chief place and inviting their friends to a luncheon who could invite him back, and so on, one of the good gentlemen raises a question or makes a statement, you know, tries to get the conversation back on safe territory, and says, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God. Well, that started another sermon, a three-point sermon by the Lord.

And he then began to tell about a certain man that made a feast, and he bade his neighbors to come. He invited them to come and sent his servant out to tell them that everything was ready and that they could come to dinner. And he said they all, with one consent, began to make excuse.

And you know what happened. One of the men said, I'm sorry, I can't come. Now, remember to whom he's talking, a group of Jewish businessmen, Pharisees and scribes and so on, and Jewish businessmen are rather able businessmen.

And you know that if you're in the investment business, you aren't going to be caught in the situation that's described here. One man said, I'm sorry, I can't come. I have bought a piece of brown, and I forgot to measure it, so I've got to go out now and measure it.

Now, I don't know what you do about buying property, but I am confident that the people that heard the Lord say this didn't do that. If they were going to have a title search and make absolutely sure that every square meter of land was in that piece before they bought it, I bought a piece of ground, and now I've got to go measure it. Well, the second fellow is in the, that he tells about in his illustration, apparently runs a dredge line.

You know, he's in the transportation business. Maybe he's got some wagons that are pulling goods from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. And he says, I can't come.

I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I have to go out and prove them. Now, I've never bought oxen or driven oxen. I've done a lot with horses, but never oxen.

But I know one thing. You don't buy them and then prove them, do you? You prove them first. And then, of course, the last one.

If you don't think the Lord has a sense of humor, then you see this. He's talking to a group of Jewish men, you know, and he says, and the third man said, I have, I can't come. I've married a wife, and she's already taken over and got a ring in my nose, and she won't let me out of the house.

That's the essence of what it is. She just isn't going to let me go. Well, now you know that this is ludicrous.

But what's he saying? He's saying that the excuses that men use for not coming to the feast that he is providing are ludicrous and absurd. They're nothing but excuses. And someone has said an excuse is nothing but the skin of a lie stuffed with a reason.

It just doesn't have any substance to it. He says, my investments keep me from coming. My business keeps me from coming.

My family relationships keep me from coming. So that's the message that he has for this group at the luncheon. So when he finishes and leaves, and it's about time to finish, I guess.

He's just about exhausted his friends. They're not going to be too interested in his staying much longer. When he finishes, he goes outside, and the disciples are there, and I think there's this throng of people.

And the disciples have been saying, now, just as soon as he comes out, you just wait around. We'll have him speak to you. Well, be that as it may, that's the way I see it, at least.

Here are the Pharisees that he's been having lunch with behind him, the disciples beside him, and a throng in front of him. And so what's he saying? Now he's talking to the common people who heard him gladly. And so beginning with verse 25, he says, and there went great multitudes with him, and he turned and he said unto them, now, these are just multitudes.

They're not any special class. Now listen to what he said, and remember what he said. He that heareth my words and doeth them, he it is that loves me.

Now what did Christ say to the sinners of his generation? Now this is what he said. If any man come to me and hate not his father and mother and wife and children and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he can't be my disciple. Now let me stop for a moment.

What's it mean, disciple? Years ago a friend of mine wrote a book, and it was a good book. I bought it, I gave it away, and that's why I haven't written many books, you know, because I don't know, I just, he sort of spoiled it for me. He wrote this book, and in it he made the statement, he says, easy to be saved, all you have to do is accept Jesus.

But it's hard to become a disciple. Well, that sounded pretty good. So I found, you know, you pick up things like that.

So I found myself saying, it's easy to be saved, you accept Jesus, but it's hard to become a disciple. Well, one day I got my concordance, and I started to study that word disciple, because I had just taken it for granted that disciple was a kind of a next stage, a next plateau about being saved. And I went through it.

It's like, it's like the lady down south that was given a commentary for her, for Christmas. And about the middle of July, the one who gave it to her, the one she did laundry, says, and how do you like that, the commentary I gave you? And she said, oh, that's a wonderful book. You know, the Bible sure does throw a lot of light on that book.

And I find that the Bible throws a lot of light on a lot of books. And consequently, I just took the concordance, and I began to go through and find out what the word disciple was, what it meant. Well, first I found out that it means a learner.

From the time a child begins to learn to say mama and daddy is a disciple, he's learning. And when he's so old that all he can do is just look into the face of the Lord and learn something new about worship, he's still a learner. All it means is learner.

And you start learning, and you keep on learning, and essentially it was this in the context that when you found a teacher, you attached yourself to the teacher, and what he taught you did. Now the Lord Jesus is applying it. And he is saying to this multitude, just these outsiders, just this unsaved bunch, he's saying, now listen, fellas, I don't want to fool you, and I don't want to con you, and I don't want to mislead you, and I don't want to fill up my ranks with folks that don't know what I'm talking about, so I'm going to level with you right now.

If you want to get into kindergarten and start learning the ABCs about me, then you've got to understand who I am and what I'm requiring. That's about what it is. That's an awfully free translation, and I call it a paraphrase.

I don't think it's a translation at all. But it's the essence of what it is. For instance, you find, and you come to John 6, a very interesting thing.

I studied that, and I was kind of amazed because you remember one day the Lord multiplied the bread and he fed them, and the next day they came and were going to take him by force and make him a king, and he said, listen, you men don't know what you're talking about. You just want to do this because I gave you a free lunch. That's all you are.

You think if I'm king that you aren't going to have to work anymore to get your food. No, you don't understand anything about this. And then he went on to say this, except you eat my flesh and you drink my blood, you have no life in you.

And immediately they began to argue and say, look, we're not cannibals, and we don't eat anybody's flesh, and we don't drink anybody's blood, and we're not going to listen to this kind of talk. And so they went away. And he turned to the disciples and he said, are you guys going to go too? And they said, we've been thinking about it, Lord, but we don't know who to go to.

You're the only one that's got the words of eternal life. And then it says this, and from that day many of his disciples followed him no more. Does that sound like a cut above being saved? Doesn't to me.

They found out how to have eternal life and they became dropouts. They quit school. They didn't like what they heard.

And so they left. Now what's the Lord Jesus saying? That's our definition of disciple. Learner, learner, learner.

Student. Sitting at the feet of a teacher, listening to the teacher, and as long as he does what the teacher tells him, he's a student. When he stops doing it, he's a dropout.

And so the Lord Jesus said, if any man come to me and does not recognize that I am God and that my lordship transcends the right to all human relationships, that's what he's talking about. I'm God. And as God, when you come to me, you have to come on my terms.

My terms. My lordship, my sovereignty transcends the right to your relationship with your father and your mother and your wife and your children and your brethren and your sisters, your own life also. Now, if you don't understand that and accept that, then you can't get into kindergarten and start on the ABCs of what it means to be a disciple of mine, a learner of mine.

So here's the first issue, and he's confronting the people. Well, now let's go back. What happened? Mother Eve was beguiled.

She was led away by the deceitfulness of sin and by the deception of Satan, and she ate. And there was an issue presented to Adam. He either stayed with the Lord and let God do with Eve as God saw fit, or he committed himself to the human relationship.

And it isn't surprising, therefore, that when the Lord Jesus comes back and stands among men, that he begins at the very place that the crime of sin entered into the world. And he is saying that when you come to me, you must understand that I am God and that my sovereignty and my lordship transcends all human relationships. I remember we went out in the fall in the plains of Zendinka, out of Malut, in the upper Nile

province of the Savan, to bring the students back to the school.

We came to this little village, and there was a young boy, Dang, Dang Roon, and he was supposed to come. And when we came into the village, there was his mother, and she'd taken a piece of broken pot, and she had scarred her breasts, and the blood was there. She put ashes over her face.

She was crying, Ah, my Dino. She was holding on to Dang. She didn't want him to go, and she was saying, Dang, Dang, Dang, you hate us.

If you didn't hate us, you couldn't go, you couldn't leave. The grandmother was there doing the same thing. And this fine young man, who committed his life to Christ, had such great pity and love in his face and his eyes for his mother and his grandmother, handed his bundle up to one of the students on the back of the truck, and he took his mother's hands, he took his grandmother's hands, and in his large, strong hand, he held them together, the four of them.

And he said, Listen, I love you. You don't understand now how much I love you. You'll never know how much it hurts to have you feel this way about me.

But mother, grandmother, as much as I love you, as deeply as I feel with you the pain that you're feeling, I love Jesus Christ more, and I am committed to him, and I must obey him. And so with that, he held their hands out. He put one foot on the tire.

He took the bars of the truck body and the other, let go of them, held them back a moment, swung up and said, Please go. And there were the two old ladies screaming, You hate us, you hate us. No, he didn't hate them.

He loved them, but he just loved Jesus Christ the way Christ says he must be loved. Elsie Klor was a Jewish girl in Chicago. There at the Chicago Hebrew Mission, these dear two godly women witnessed to this young Jewish girl, and she opened her heart to Jesus Christ.

She was just in high school, getting ready to go into nurses training or in nurses training. Her parents said, Elsie, you must now. We thought that this was just something that had come like a disease and you'd get over it.

But now you either must renounce this Jesus as Messiah or elsewhere, we'll have to disown you and have a funeral for you. And Elsie said, Mother, Father, as much as I love you, I can't do it. I cannot.

And so the day came when they asked her to pack her goods. They took her to the door and they gave the little formula that said, You're dead, you're dead, you're dead, you're no longer our child. And out they went.

The next day, they had a funeral in the synagogue. There was a casket. There was a picture of Elsie in the bottom of it.

There were flowers. The family came. They passed by it and they wept.

And my mother-in-law was out in Iowa. And one of the dear women in Chicago had learned about Central Holiness University, later John Fletcher College. And Elsie Klor went out there and she roomed with my mother-in-law in those early days when she was so heartbroken.

She finished her nurses training and she finished her college and then she went with the Southern Baptists as a missionary to Jerusalem. And she was there. She had no desire to come home.

She stayed with her co-worker, Eunice Henderson, for many years. And then she came back on furlough. Walking down the streets of Chicago one day, she saw her mother and her father coming.

And she stood there, her face lighted, her eyes lighted, and her arms outstretched, and mother, father. And they parted and walked around her. She didn't exist.

She was dead. Not a flicker of an eyelid, not a facial expression, not a sound escaped that pair that had buried this girl who had betrayed them. Then, one day, a letter came from one of the sisters to whom Elsie had been writing, and it said, Mother has been taken ill.

The doctors think it's terminal. We know you're not scheduled for a furlough for another year, but we've talked with the mission, and if you like, would, they would let you come home, because mother is asking for you to tend her at the hospital. So Elsie came home, and the mother recognized her.

She said, Now, Elsie, don't talk to me about your Jesus, but I do want you. You understand me. But it's the night when there was nobody around, when they were alone, when the mother couldn't sleep, when the pain was so acute.

She'd say, Elsie, is Jesus really the Messiah? Is he really, is he really the long-awaited one? And one night, a few days before she died, that mother said, Elsie, just to be quiet. And she turned her face up and closed her eyes, and she started to talk to Messiah Jesus, and she received him. She said, Don't tell father, it'll kill him.

Don't tell your sisters. Elsie said, No, I won't, but mother, you will, because if you love him, you will confess it. So it was not long before she died, they gathered the family, and she said, I have trusted in Elsie's Messiah.

His, her Jesus is now my Jesus. And shortly she died. The father was, wanted to be bitter.

On the other hand, he knew that his wife had died in peace, that he couldn't understand. This is the end of side one. Please stop the machine at this point and turn the cassette over.

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