

Cost of Discipleship - Part 8

by Paris Reidhead

The sermon discusses the importance of following God's will through the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the commitment required for true discipleship.

Duration: 28:21

Scripture: Matthew 4:19, Matthew 28:19, Philippians 4:7

Topics: "Cost Of Discipleship"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher tells the story of a man named Tommy who went to a village to preach the gospel. Initially, the people were not receptive and even threatened him with violence. However, Tommy persisted and continued to sing and pray for them. Eventually, after 13 days of prayer and perseverance, the people's hearts were changed, and they accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. The sermon emphasizes the power of prayer and the importance of not giving up in sharing the gospel.

Transcript

And he said, you know, that's the way the Holy Ghost works with us. We commit ourselves to serve the Lord Jesus Christ, and as long as we're in the tunnel, it's all right. But when we start to go to the right, we get a negative feedback.

The peace is disturbed. We start to go down, oh, we get a negative feedback. And he wants to hold us there.

Now he said, you've got to make a decision. You've got three invitations. So what you do when you get to California is this.

You take the first letter, forget about the others. You read that letter, you look at it, you examine it, you study it, you examine your heart. And he said, you know, that's the way the Holy Ghost works with us.

We commit ourselves to serve the Lord Jesus Christ, and as long as we're in the tunnel, it's all right. But when we start to go to the right, we get a negative feedback. The peace is disturbed.

We start to go down, oh, we get a negative feedback. And he wants to hold us there. Now he said, you've got to make a decision.

You've got three invitations. So what you do when you get to California is this. You take the first letter, forget about the others.

You read that letter, you look at it, you examine it, you study it, you examine your heart. And if it's according to the word of God, and if they've asked you to do it, and you think you could do it, that's a lot of things. But you can't do it if you don't have peace about it.

And so he said, if you don't feel that you have peace, you say, now, Lord, I've got to make a decision. I kept these people waiting long enough. And he said, you know what I'd do, Father? I'd just take a coin up at the end of your arm, and you'd say, now, Heavenly Father, I've got to make a decision.

I might as well do it sooner or later. I'm going to drop this coin. And when this coin hits the desk, I said, would it mind if I let it hit the floor? He said, when that coin hits the floor, if you don't have peace to say yes, you've got to say no.

Because you've got to let the peace of God referee and arbitrate and umpire. And then he said, you're either going to say yes, if you say yes to that one, or you say no to the other two. And if you say no to that one, then write a letter, and that's finished.

Then take the next one. Well, when I got to California, I got the paper and the pen, and I got my coin, and I thought it over, and I dropped it. And I wrote, dear Stacy, I'm awfully sorry, but I can't.

Put it up. Dear hell, I'm awfully sorry, but I can't. Betray and umpire.

And then he said, you're either going to say yes, if you say yes to that one, or you say no to the other two. And if you say no to that one, then write a letter, and that's finished. Then take the next one.

Well, when I got to California, I got the paper and the pen, and I got my coin, and I thought it over, and I dropped it. And I wrote, dear Stacy, I'm awfully sorry, but I can't. Put it up.

Dear hell, I'm awfully sorry, but I can't. And the other letter. And within a half an hour, I didn't have three opportunities.

I had three letters and no opportunity, because I didn't have peace to say yes about any of them. Do you understand what I'm talking about? Follow me. Follow me.

Well, how? He wired you for guidance. The Holy Spirit will guide you. Let the peace of God rule in your heart.

He wants you to follow him. He wants you to follow him. And the manner by which you're going to do it is the peace of God.

Then when the invitation came to candidate at the Tabernacle, I was the fellow that said, I'll tell you one thing, I'll never go back into the pastorate. I know the Lord wants to use me in Bible conference ministry. And then I said, but if I ever do, there's one place I'll not go, and that's New York.

Well, friend, don't talk like that, because you're just making the Lord have to do things to set you straight. And the invitation came and the responsibility came, and that's where he had me spend ten wonderful years, difficult years, but ten years. I'm grateful for them.

What I'm pointing out to you is this, that he said, follow me. That means that you're committed to do his will, irrespective of whether it's seemingly to your advantage or to your career. I remember one of the men said, you know, I just don't understand you.

You accepted the call to New York. I thought you had better sense than to do a thing like that. I said, I really have.

But I have a heart that says I've got to do what the Lord told me to do, and he's told me to go, and I don't have any choice about it. If I followed my head, I'd know what to do, but my heart's the thing I've got to obey. I've got to follow him.

And this is correct. Let the peace of God rule in your mind. Follow me.

Follow me. Obey me. Now, does what's this mean in respect to mission? Well, he said, as you are going into all the world, preach the gospel, teaching them, and lo, I am with you always.

Christ has committed himself to you. That's the commitment I'm talking about, to the degree to which you will follow him and seek his mind and his will and the fulfilling of his purpose, the Lord Jesus Christ has committed himself to you, to live his life in you, to be your wisdom, to be your grace, to be your love, to be your power, to be everything you're not. But if you make the plan and you make the decision and you set the course, then you have to provide the power and you have to provide the wisdom and you have to provide the grace and the love because he has committed himself to you only on the basis of your following him, on your basis of your going where he wants you to go.

Now, what about this matter of getting the gospel out to the ends of the earth? You said you've already said the commandment isn't to go, no, the commandment is to follow, to follow. And consequently, if you are prepared tonight to say, Lord Jesus, I will follow thee, then, as far as I'm concerned, we're not going to have a shortage of missionaries on the field. There won't be a shortage.

There'll be enough that will go. The reason that they're not going in the quantity that we need for the marvelous opportunities that God has given us. Twenty years ago, we were talking about closed doors.

We don't have closed doors today. The only thing we have is closed stations with open doors because we have the opportunity. What we need is the people that are going to follow the Lord.

I believe the Lord has every station filled and every opportunity man. Why aren't they? Because people have failed to understand that by their definition as Christians are committed to follow Christ. And if he has his way, every station, I drove by the stations in Upper Volta.

This station was closed. The next one was closed. That one was closed.

And my heart ached because I just do not believe maybe one of them should have been closed because the people had moved from the area. But the others never should have been closed. Why weren't they fully banded and staffed? That is only one answer.

His people were not hearing his voice and following him. Perhaps it's because they were waiting for some call to go instead of a command to follow, to follow him. Let me illustrate how God works.

Many years ago in Toronto, Canada, there was a young man by the name of Tommy Titcom. And he learned of a Bible Institute down on the hillside off of the Hudson River at Nyack. And he had a mother to

support, so he came down only for one semester or two.

And he was there under Dr. Simpson. He went to Dr. Simpson and he said, Look, I want to go to Nigeria, to West Africa. And just about that time, the alliance had committed itself very heavily to the Congo, and there wasn't any possibility of it.

Then he had to go back home. He had to go back to work in Toronto and take care of his mother and his family. And he replied to the mission, and the mission said, Sorry, we can't take you.

You aren't well enough educated. You're far too small. You're far too frail.

You have a mother that's dependent upon you. You're just not missionary material at all. And we can't take you.

Well, he could have gone back home and taken a job, but you see, the Spirit of God had burdened him for West Africa. And he was following the Lord. And he wasn't following the dictates and the decisions of the board.

He was following the Lord Jesus Christ. And he knew that the mission working there was the Sudan Interior Mission, and so there wasn't any question in his mind. They had to take him.

So he arranged for his mother to be cared for. He arranged to get his outfit in his passage. He carried his whole outfit in one little suitcase.

And he arrived in West Africa, and he went up to where the whole staff was having a field conference. The whole staff consisted of Dr. Stirrup. He represented 100% of the missionaries, so when Tommy came, it just doubled the entire staff.

And so they had a field conference, and they decided that it wasn't right for one tribe to have half all the missionaries, so they divided half the missionaries, of which there was Tommy. And Tommy was to go out and open the work in the Yagba area. So he picked up his outfit and carried it on his back and started off, walking down the jungle path until he came to Yagba area territories where the paramount chief was.

Now, he knew he had arrived because strung across the path were human skulls. And any way you went through that aperture into the village, those skulls were going to rattle. And so he gave them a little clout and went on through, walked into the village, saw the chief, threw down his bundle, and he said, where am I going to stay? Well, they were too surprised to kill him and eat him right then.

They thought if they had him there, they could make a meal later. And so they pointed and said, well, go over and stay with that old widow. She's got a place.

So he went over and slept on her husband's grave. That's where he put his blanket. And he stayed there.

And he ate, and he knew sometimes what he ate. He took Paul very literally, asked no questions for conscience sake because it may have been somebody's cousin that they were eating. And he was very careful about that.

And he started to preach. And they said, you can't preach here. We won't listen to that stuff.

And the witch doctor got after him. So Tommy, at night, as he learned the language, would sneak out and up on the hills overlooking the village down in the valley there on the rocks. And Tommy would go out and lean over the rocks.

Now he was a frail little man, maybe about five foot two or three. And he had a high-pitched squeaky little voice until he was there in Yagba territory. And he would lay down on those rocks.

And then he would shout the gospel down and filter through the... And they didn't know what had happened. Here was this voice coming. It sounded like thunder.

Couldn't be that little peeled white man. That's what they called him, Ian Belegby, little peeled white man there. It couldn't be him.

You see he had skin peeled off. That's why it was like he was. And so he would preach the gospel.

And he was over there and he didn't talk like that. God gave him a base voice. And so here he was shouting the gospel down.

And then one at a time these people would sneak out. By this time he built a little house out the edge of the village. And there at this village edge he had this experience of having 11 other men, there were 12 of them, that would meet together for prayer in the morning.

But the witch doctor was very excited about this, very angry. And so he kept festering the people. And so finally one day when they were amidst the morning prayers they heard this dancing.

It was the death dance. And he opened the shutter. He didn't have glass.

And outside were all the people gathered. All the men gathered in their regalia and their markings that meant somebody was going to die and going to be sacrificed, the evil spirit. And they were dancing around the hut.

Well they had a supply of water, they had a supply of corn, they had a little fuel. And they just decided to extend the prayer meeting because it didn't look too hospitable out there. And so they stayed there for 13 days.

For 13 days that witch doctor went up and down railing at the people, screaming. They were taking turns eating and sleeping. And Tommy, Tommy said that on about the eighth day when the men were getting a little discouraged they could hear their names being called.

And they knew what these men would do if they had a chance. They didn't know, as they later found out, that they didn't need really to have worried. Because afterwards the men said, you know who were those figures in white that stood out there that had those very white shining things that kept us away when we wanted to come at you? Who were they? The Lord Jesus appeared to Tommy during those days and spoke to him and encouraged him and told him that there was going to be a great harvest in that village.

They waited until the 13th day and then it was silent and they looked and saw that the people had all gone up the hill to pray to the evil spirit. And Tommy said to his friends, now follow me, do just what I tell you, come with me. And they went out of the house right down to the center of the village and stood under the spirit tree that was just festooned with skull and waited there.

All this time they'd been singing a song with a native tune, one of these death dance tunes. And after a while they came down from the top of the mountain and came by and saw the door open and the tracks leading into the village and came rushing into the village and there stood Tommy Tipcomb and his 11 brethren and they were singing the same tune but with Holy Ghost words, with words God had given, but the same tune. And Tommy was there standing in front of them and worshiping Jesus and adoring him and with the witch doctor at the head and all the warriors coming with their drawn spears, Tommy waited until they were just in front of them where they could release the spears and would reach them and he put up his hand and said, Stop! In the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

And it was as though a cable was stretched across, men were leaning over it, they lost their balance. They stood back and Tommy kept singing, he said, Do you like the song? And the witch doctor ran and he said, Listen, you be quiet. They've listened to you for 13 days and what have you done? Nothing.

They've listened to you too long. Do you want me to go on singing? They said, Yes. Then he said, Tell him to get away.

So the people said, You go away, we've followed you long enough. And Tommy began to sing to them the gospel and God gave him the words. And then they had prayer, and then he preached, and then he went back home.

And the next morning when he got up, he went out and there in the yard were groups of 10 and 3 and 12 and families all sitting alone around in the yard. No one talking to the other, just little groups. And he said, What are you doing here? And they said, We want your talk.

So he said to the near ones, Come in. And he talked with them and they wanted to receive Jesus Christ. And he pointed them to the Lord, led them to the Lord.

And they went out the back door and another group came in the front door. And that went on until there were over 1,500 people. The Spirit of God settled down on that area.

It wasn't all by any means, but God had given a great harvest. It had gone from 12 to over 1,500. It went on, the church was built.

One day Tommy was working in the dispensary and he reached up to get a bottle of sulfuric acid and it slipped out of his hand and it hit a shelf and it broke and the raw sulfuric acid came into his face and into his eyes. He picked up some water, threw it in his face, went in, laid down on the bed, wrapped his head in a wet towel and called one of the people to him and said, Go to the next station, which was about 40 miles away. And the brother, the Christian brother, went as fast as he could, but it was some time before he got there and the other missionary could get back.

But shortly after this happened, two of the godly women came outside the door, outside the window, and they started to pray. And they prayed and they prayed and one of them was there all the time, praying and worshipping and praying. When the missionary came from the other station, Tommy was lying there.

He peeled it back. He saw what the acid had done to his face and to his eyes. He couldn't see.

And he just lay down on the bed and he took him in his arms and he started to sob like a baby. And Tommy said, Don't, don't sob. Don't sob.

It's all right. God's going to heal me. Oh, Tommy, Tommy, your eyes are gone.

He says, God's going to heal me. It's all right. God's going to heal me.

How do you know, Tommy? These two women have been praying ever since it happened and God has told them he's going to heal me. He's going to make me well. And a matter of time went on until he could see daylight, a little bit of light, and then he could see forms.

And when I traveled with him, the skin that had been replaced, no sky. The only thing about it, the new skin that God gave on his eyelids and on his cheeks, never tanned, just always stayed white, never tanned, wasn't like the rest. But his eyes, just as bright as could be, clear as could be.

There came a time when there was a scourge of smallpox. It was just taking the people. And so Tommy went to the Lord about it and he said, Lord, what are we going to do? What are we going to do? You see what's happening? This epidemic is coming.

And he went out to the people and he said, listen, God has told me that he wants a testimony here. Anyone who moves in on the compound will not be affected by this disease. Now that's a brave thing to do.

He didn't know what had happened. But the people moved in. Some did, some didn't.

But as this scourge went through the place, there was not one person that had moved his family and things onto the compound that died from the disease. There was a drought in that area. They'd planted their corn once.

It had come up and it died. They'd planted it a second time. It had come up and died.

And they had to have food or else everyone was going to be hungry. There'd be great privation in death. The Muslims had gone to their sacrifice.

The pagans had gone to their sacrifice. And the elders of the little church now came and said, Ian Blagby, what are we going to do? What are the Christians going to do? What do you mean, what are we going to do? What are we going to do about the drought, about the fact there's no rain? They said, well, what's the scripture tell us? And one of the elders says, it tells us that Elijah was a man of like passion and he prayed and it didn't rain and he prayed and it rained. He said, tell the drums that there's going to be a meeting tonight in the church to pray for rain.

That's all he needed. And so the drums carried the message to the believers together in the church. But then the pagan drums went and the Muslim drums went and they said, well, the pagans have sacrificed to the evil spirits.

The Muslims have prayed to Allah and now the believers are going, we'll see whose God is God. Donnie didn't know, but he did know that the Lord Jesus said, you go and as you're going, Lord, I'm with you always. He didn't have any question about it when he went into that church that night.

He said, these people had all brought their great big rain hats. That's right. The outside aisles were filled with rain hats and there wasn't a cloud in the sky as big as your hand.

And they came to church to pray for rain and they weren't going to get wet going home. They brought their rain hats. He said, they started to sing.

They sang one song. They sang a second song. They had some prayer and then they heard a patter on the roof.

And then they sang a third song, but they couldn't finish it because they couldn't hear. That tin roof rattled with rain until it sounded like an inside of a drum. They just couldn't.

And anyway, all they wanted to do was praise the Lord because the rain had come. I happened to be with Tommy just after he'd come back. He'd come home.

He'd been doing deputation work and he'd gone back. Well, it was his last trip to that part of the world. He'd gone around to the churches.

He'd seen the people and the day had come when he was to leave to go back to America. He'd come in from preaching in the morning. He'd had lunch with one of the missionaries.

He didn't know what was going to happen. But when he came out from lunch, there were over 50,000 people that were there. They'd been walking for two or three days from various villages because they were all coming to see the Yimbo Egbi and bid him goodbye because they wouldn't see him until they met him at Jesus' feet.

And so there was a truck and they had a little pulpit on it. They had a chair and they had a canopy over it. He didn't know that was prepared.

And he got up on it and they parted and he went out into the square of the village near the front of the church. And there they were. There were some of these old men that had been dressed in war paint with 13 days dancing with their spears to call for his blood.

Instead of seeing Tommy die, they'd received the Lord Jesus Christ and had been faithful followers of Christ for all these years. And there was two of the men that had been with him those 13 days in that prayer meeting. And there they were, over 50,000 people who'd come in from all over the area to see this little man that had walked in under the skull strung across the path and threw his bag down and said, where am I going to stay? And there they were.

And when the last message had been given and the last testimony and the last embrace of the last of the leading brothers, they started the motor of the truck and it slowly moved out. And Tommy said, 50,000 voices lifted all hail the power of Jesus. Let angels prostrate fall.

Bring forth the royal diadem and crown him Lord of all. Oh dear friend, that's what we're talking about. If you love me, keep my words.

If any man serve me, let him follow me. Tommy followed him. The Lord Jesus is asking you to follow him tonight.

He's asking you if you're prepared to just follow him. He isn't going to tell you where he'll lead you. He doesn't have to.

He's God. What difference does it make where he leads you? Where he leads me, I will follow him. Not because of where he leads me, but because of who he is.

I'll follow him. That's what we're talking about. And he said, if you'll follow me, I'll commit myself to you.

And I'll be with you. I don't think what happened to Tommy Titcomb is an unusual chapter. I brought these things to you so that you can see the implications of what it means when Jesus Christ is with you.

Oh, he isn't going to do the same for everyone, perhaps for you. But he's the same Jesus. And he's able to do exceeding abundantly above all we can ask or think.

Now the question tonight is, do you love him? And will you follow him? If you love him, you'll follow him. If you follow him, then you do love him. Let's bow our heads and close our eyes.

I'm particularly asking tonight for the young men and the young women under 25, 28, who will say, yes, I do love Jesus Christ. I've been washed in his blood. I've been born of the Spirit.

And I know I belong to him. But tonight, I want to tell the Lord Jesus, perhaps for the first time, that I will follow him as far as he leads me and wherever he leads me. And I want to slip my hand into his hand and I want to start going with him.

And if he wants me to go out to the ends of the earth, I'm willing to go. I'm ready to go. And more than willing and ready, I'm going to start going.

I'm going to start going. And I'll just let the Lord show me where and when and how soon. But I'm going to follow Christ.

In a new way tonight, I want the Lord Jesus to know that that's what it means to love him, to follow him.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/0/SID0602.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/paris-reidhead/cost-of-discipleship-part-8/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net