

# Cost of Discipleship - Part 9

by Paris Reidhead

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*Paris Reidhead emphasizes the importance of loving God and others as central to true discipleship and faith.*

**Duration:** 20:35

**Scripture:** Exodus 19:5-6, Exodus 20:3-17, Leviticus 19:18, Deuteronomy 6:5, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 22:37-39, John 14:23

**Topics:** "Cost Of Discipleship"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the downfall of the people at Frining Eye, who had initially experienced God's holiness and protection. However, within just three generations, they had turned away from God and sought peace with the gods of the land. The speaker emphasizes the importance of loving God and loving one's neighbor as evidence of true devotion. The sermon also highlights the issue of unemployment in Cali, Colombia, particularly among young people, and calls for concern and action. The speaker references biblical passages, such as the commandments and the Epistle of John, to support their points.

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## Transcript

Will you turn, please, to Matthew, chapter twenty-two, twenty-second chapter of Matthew. In these evening hours, we have anchored our thinking to that most important and, for me, at least for years, very neglected portion of Scripture, the First Commandment, the Great Commandment, and the Second, which he said was like unto it. Let me read these words again.

We should be reciting them from memory now. I trust that they're fixed firmly in your mind. 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. We have not time tonight to review what the ground we've covered.

We've seen the Great Commandment as it related to the First and then to the Second. We've seen the Great Call and the Great Commitment. And tonight I want you to share with me in the group what the ground we've covered.

We've seen the Great Commandment as it related to the First and then to the Second. We've seen the Great Call and the Great Commitment. And tonight I want you to share with me in the Great Confirmation, the confirmation of the fact that you love God with all of your heart and with all of your soul and with all of your mind.

Now, for you that have joined us tonight, let's establish again the definition, the biblical definition of love. We've seen as of the Sunday evening service that love, as used in the Scripture, does not refer primarily to sensibilities and emotions and feelings. Rather, it refers to a deep, firm, total commitment of the will, of the purpose, of the intention of the life to seek the greatest blessedness and joy, happiness, and satisfaction of the one that's loved.

In this case, to love God means that you've committed every faculty and power of your being to that end of seeking to satisfy him, to gratify his heart with you, to seek his blessedness and joy and the fulfillment of his purpose for your life. To love yourself means that you seek the highest good and blessedness and fulfillment and satisfaction of yourself as a worthwhile individual in keeping with seeking the greatest joy and blessedness and happiness and satisfaction of God. And to love your neighbor as you do yourself means that whatever you want for you, whatever you desire for you, that blessedness and joy and happiness and satisfaction and fulfillment that you want for you, you have to for your neighbor.

Now, with this as the definition, we see it's in total contrast to sin, because sin is defined as the committal of the will to the principle and the purpose and the practice of pleasing oneself and gratifying oneself and satisfying oneself without regard for the joy and delight and satisfaction and blessedness of God, and without regard for the well-being and the interests and the satisfaction and fulfillment of others. And thus we find that this commandment, thou shalt love, implies repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. And thus tonight we're asking the question, how can I confirm to my own heart that I do indeed love God as he has commanded with all of my heart, with all of my soul, and with all of my mind? Where in the scripture can you take me that I might test my own relationship and confirm to my satisfaction that I do love God as he has prescribed? Will you turn, please, to 1 John chapter 3, and we shall read from that third chapter and then again from the fourth and from the fifth chapters of 1 John, the little epistle of 1 John.

Now, in times past, in other visits here, I've had the joy of speaking to you of the evidences of new life in Christ from this little letter. I believe that's why it was written, was to satisfy us that we have passed from death to life, and I think it well that I begin actually with the second chapter, and then I'll carry you over to the third chapter. So, the second chapter of 1 John, and the third, fourth, and fifth verses.

Hereby we do know that we know him if we keep his commandment. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whosoever keepeth his word in him verily is the love of God perfected.

Hereby know we that we are in him. Now to the third chapter, verse 14. We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love our neighbors as we do ourselves.

We because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth, whosoever intends to harm his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

Hereby perceive we the love of God because he lay down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, but whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his heart of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? The evidence that you love God with all your heart and soul and mind is seen in the fact that you love your neighbor as you do yourself. When you learn, for instance, that in our work in Cali, Colombia, that 90 percent of the graduates of the schools, ours and others, have no--or the school leavers as well as graduates--have no employment for at least two years after leaving school, this ought to be a matter of concern.

When you learn that in all of the major cities of Colombia, that 35 percent of the workforce has no jobs, utterly unemployed, this ought to be a matter of concern. When you discover that 80 percent of that 35 percent of the workforce unemployed are young people from 15 to 30 years of age, this ought to burden you. When you realize that 70 percent of those 80, that 80 percent, the young people between 15 and 30, have no jobs and yet have the equivalent of college entrance requirements, then you begin to realize how serious is this problem.

That's just one of the many problems that I could cite to you tonight. But what it does is this. It brings us face to face with some very practical, very, very practical problems.

Whoso has this world's good, and seeth his brother have need for a job with which he can earn his livelihood, provide food and clothing and shelter for himself and his family, and shutteth up his heart of compassion from him, be warm, be cold, be fair, said James, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our hearts.

And knoweth all things, beloved, if our hearts condemn us not, then we have confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. And this is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.

And he that keepeth his commandment dwelleth in him, and he in him. And thereby we know that he abideth in us by the Spirit which he hath given us. And then in the twenty-first verse of the fourth chapter, and this is the commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God love his brother also.

And then the fifth chapter, and the second and third verses, by this we know that we love the children of God when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments, and his commandments are not grievous. Now, what have we read? We've read precisely what we saw in John's earlier gospel in the fourteenth chapter, when the Lord Jesus spoke to the disciples that night when he was with them, and before he left them, when he said, If a man love me, he will keep my words, and 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 saying. He that heareth my words, and doeth them, he it is that loveth me. Now, what are the commandments to which he refers? What is this evidence that you have committed yourself to seek the blessedness and joy and satisfaction and happiness of God? What is, what does it mean to love God with all your heart and soul and your mind? Well, let's go back.

Let's go right back where it all started, into Exodus, the nineteenth and the twentieth chapters. God has brought his people out of Egypt, brought them through the Red Sea, and they've come to Sinai. And Moses went up unto God, and the Lord called him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shall I say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel, Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bear you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.

Now therefore, if you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people, for all the earth is mine. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

And God spake all these words, saying, I am the Lord thy God, which hath brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other god before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor serve them. For I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate me, and showing mercy unto the thousands of them that love me and keep my commandment. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.

For the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.

In it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth and sea, and all that in them is, and resteth the seventh day. Wherefore, the Lord bless the Sabbath day and hallowed day.

Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor. And all the people saw the thundering and the lightning and the noise of the trumpet and the mountain smoking. And when the people saw it, they removed and stood afar off.

But in spite of the fact that God gave them such a revelation of himself and of his holiness, just within days they had made a golden calf and had bowed themselves down to worship it and came under the judgment of God. One of the most tragic things in the Old Testament is given in the book of Judges, when we are told that after God had brought his people into the land and given them rest from all of their enemies, that there arose up a generation that knew not Joshua, and they worshiped the Lord and they served the gods of the land. Here, within just three generations, all that God had done at Sinai in giving this revelation of his holiness had been dissipated, and those that had come in under the protecting hand and might and power of God had thought that they could make league with the gods of the land.

Now, we know a little bit about these gods. We're told just something about them. We get a little picture of them.

We're told by John, in his second chapter of the Epistle I read, that all that's in the world is the lust of the eye and the lust of the flesh and the pride of life. There's nothing else. That's all there is.

We find that the gods of the land that Israel served were three, at least in number. The first of these was that which had begun that worship that had begun back at the Tower of Babel, when Nimrod, a mighty rebel before the Lord, had, according to some records, at least it's suggested, an incestuous relationship, taken one of his father's wives, a woman by the name of Semiramis, married her and enthroned her in the place of God and established an order of worship that was committed to immorality and essentialism. There were various types of succession of this.

It came down through the centuries in the worship of Ashtaroth or Ashtati, the worship of Juno, the worship of Venus, the worship of Diana, of the Ephesians, as we've seen. But essentially it was an appeal to the appetites of men, giving them a religious license to gratify their appetites outside of the will of God. And in so doing, of course, it gave satisfied or assuaged or calloused their consciences.

Now, we would like to think that when the last temple to Diana or Venus or Juno had been torn down or abandoned, that the worship of essentialism had ceased. But this is not the case. Our generation, as much as any generation in history, is afflicted by the worship of the first counterfeit religion that was established in an organized way.

And our young people, as well as our older people, are exposed constantly to it. And yet, with all of the fact that it is given the credibility by the psychologists and the psychiatrists and the sociologists, and they talk about new morality, down to the present hour thunders the truth of God, thou shalt have no other god before me, thou shalt not commit adultery. And thus the word of God remains unchanged to the very present.

There's another form of idolatry that came down. That was the worship of Baal. The word Baal is a Semitic word, an Arabic or a Hebrew word, going back into that reach, which really means owner.

And it refers to the evil spirit that was in control of a geographical area. This is the end of side one. Please stop the machine at this point and turn the cassette over.

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