

Counting All things Loss for Christ

by Randy Krahn

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Scripture: Isaiah 55:1, Philippians 3:8, Romans 9:3, Malachi 3:16, Proverbs 24:30, 1 John 3:2, Mark 8:34, Matthew 16:24, Philippians 3:10, John 12:24

Topics: "Deeper Commitment to Christ", "Cost of Discipleship"

Description

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Transcript

Lord, I just pray, Father, as you come here and we've gleaned the first fruits, Lord, that there would still be some left for us, Lord, to taste and see that you're good. And I pray, Father, that as you've been moving among us and bringing us, Lord, that you would continue to work and give us a revelation of you, even this morning, in Jesus' name. Amen.

So about a year ago, our little fellowship, we helped support a missionary from Ukraine. He was here yesterday, brought us a report and some pictures, and we're grateful for what the Lord is doing in his life. But during the slideshow, we began to realize something that, you know, we have a relationship with Jesus and we have a love for the Lord, but that love for the Lord is only shallow.

And we know about him. We know some things about him. Some of us know more about him.

But then there's those who give their life completely for the Lord, who have been bought with a price, who have become of the nothing ones, and risking their lives for the gospel. Just looking at pictures and seeing on one picture, 360 some, dressed in white, ready to be baptized in the river. On another picture, sitting with a native Indian in northern Russia, and being with a few people in a teepee, preaching the gospel, walking to a river for a baptism.

Whether we do great things or whether we're just with one or two, not to be too proud, too big, to say it's not worth it for me to expend all that effort and resources just for a few. He went on to talk about this area in northern Russia where no missionary had been for 21 years. And six or seven of them took a hike and took them a number of days.

They had to wait eight hours for the tidal waters to leave the river. And then they went through up to their waist, all of them through the river to go to this region. And when they got there, only unbelievers there, small village.

The unbeliever fellow came and greeted them. They were watching them with binoculars as they were crossing. They thought they were bandits.

Invited them into our home. They didn't have much for bread, few slices of bread, but they had buckets full of roe, salmon eggs. And they were so hungry from the journey, they were eating this roe that this unbeliever fellow had given them, which is a delicacy, I guess, to some.

And shared Jesus with them and played simple guitar with them. And they went hot to hot sharing Jesus. And I thought of the time when we were in Haiti and how we did that.

You know, Dan, you were with us once and Sean, you've been with us. And how the Lord worked among us in just a simple way. And when we would go in the early days, when there was a little rented hut that we rented for a hundred U.S. a year, and we would go there, they would have Bible studies there during the week with a small group that had come to the Lord through Darren's testimony, maybe 30 of them.

And we would go every evening and it was dark and we had no light. They had a generator, but it would run out of gas and stall. And the people would come from the bush and the jungle among the trees and the mangoes.

And I would stand on a little piece of concrete there and we would pray and ask the Lord to show up. And the blacks would come and they would come to the front and I would go and cry with them and they would meet Jesus. And Jesus would meet them there.

And all of a sudden, when we left, the church was like almost 200. And that's how God worked in the beginning when we were nothing and when we were nobody. We had no ambition to succeed.

We just wanted to be sons of God. We just wanted to please God with our life. And we would walk for an hour, half an hour, and we'd go to the mountains and we had backpack and we would bring some clothes that you all donated at that time and shoes.

And we would just go there and share Jesus and give them something that we could bring them. We brought hockey bags in those days. And when I was watching the video, I was remembering these things because we've gone far away from our beginnings.

And we've come to a place like Elam where we can find rest. There's a season for rest. But we want to press on, brothers.

We don't want to be content with where we're at. And I want to read something from Isaiah in 55. This morning, when I was listening to this brother, and I was seeing all the things the Lord was working in his life.

Yes, we are partakers of it because we can throw some money at the problem and help out. But you know what? It's easy to throw money at a problem. You know, just throw 10% at a problem, feel good about ourselves.

We still have 90% to spend on ourselves. God is not interested in your 10%. God is interested in you.

And if he has you, he has everything. He wants our time. He wants our life.

We don't take offerings here, as many of you know. We're not interested in taking money. But we encourage people to give because it's more blessed to give than to receive.

I felt ashamed while I was watching this man show his fittings. I felt like a loser. Because here's a man who gives his entire life.

He's being exhausted and spent for the Lord. He could be doing what I'm doing. Then I saw a picture of the man's house.

The man doesn't even have carpet on his floor in Germany. He has OSB plywood on his floor. And he just put some varnish on it and a throw rug down.

They're having fellowship there. I was ashamed. I said, Lord, we need to think more about others and less about ourselves so that we can fulfill the purpose and call of God on our life.

It says in Isaiah 55 verse 1, O everyone who thirsts, come to the waters. And you who have no money, come buy and eat. Yes, come buy wine, buy milk without money and without price.

Why do you spend money for what is not bread and your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to me and eat what is good and let your soul delight itself in abundance. Incline your ear and come to me. Here and your soul shall live.

And I will make an everlasting covenant with you, the sure mercies of David. He says, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters, come buy and eat free, without money, without cost, so to speak. He says, why do you spending your money on what is not bread, what does not satisfy? Brothers, sisters, we spend much of what we earn on ourselves.

We have too much self-interest. We're not interested in the things of Christ. And the Lord has brought some conviction among us that we need to go lower and we need to start thinking about the things that Jesus thinks about.

We need to start carrying the burdens that he bears. Can he share his burdens with you? It says, come buy without money, buy and eat wine, milk without money, without price. The gift of eternal life and salvation is free, but let you make no mistake about it.

It will cost you dearly, but it won't cost you money. It'll cost you your life. There's a parable of a man that Jesus shared about, who was going through a field and while he was walking through a field, he found hidden treasure in that field.

I can imagine him opening up this treasure and looking inside all the beautiful things and the valuable things and the gold, the silver, the precious stones, all those things that he found in that treasure. And then it says, what he did is he closed it up again and he put it back where he found it. And he covered it all up

and he hid it again in the ground where he found it.

And then he went and sold everything that he had to buy the field. I want to tell you something, for God so loved the world, that he gave his son, that whosoever believes on him should not perish, but have everlasting life. God sent his son Jesus to the world.

The field is the world from one Corinthian's dream. He said he sent his son into the world and when he was in the world, he saw hidden treasure. He saw you, my friend.

He died for you and for joy over it. He knew not what we see with our eyes, but what we shall be when he is revealed. It says in 1 John 3, we shall be like him.

Because we're going to see him as he is. He died for us. It says, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us, being ungodly, making a big mess.

But yet he doesn't see us the way we are, brothers, sisters. He sees us as what we will be. And that is why he shed his blood on the cross for us, so that we could become like him.

And there was no other way for that to happen, except he gave his life as a ransom for many, the riches of his goodness and his grace. What he found in the field is he found a church. He found a people, past, present and future, who would know him, who would be found in him.

Not having their own righteousness, brothers, but a righteousness which comes by faith in Christ. And he hid them back in the ground. He says, unless a grain of wheat go into the ground and die, it remains alone.

But if it dies, it will reap a harvest. Jesus Christ, he is that grain of wheat who was buried for us, sown in weakness, yet raised in power. We can be partakers of the divine nature which is in Christ through being buried with him in baptism into this death.

So also that we might be raised in the likeness of this resurrection, so that we would be new creations in Christ. Brothers, sisters, look in the rear view mirror and say, all things are passing away. And then look ahead at Jesus and say, all things are becoming new.

Be done with the things of the past. Lay aside the weights and the sins that ensnare us and entangle us in this life. And get your eyes on Jesus.

Because you know what? Our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. We have to go ahead, brothers, because the end is coming. The Lord's return is near.

We cannot just do the work of the Lord with slackness. If we look in verse 6, seek the Lord while he may be found. Call upon him while he is near.

Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts. Let him return to the Lord and he will have mercy on him and to our God. And he will abundantly pardon.

There's something to be said about seeking the Lord. There's something to be said about being a prodigal and being not right with the Lord and searching in the world for things that satisfy. The prodigal asked the father for his inheritance because somehow, in some way, he seemed delusioned with being with the father and having everything the father had.

He seemed that there was more to be had. He was a youth and he thought, you know, in my youth, I want to enjoy my youth. You know, the foolish pleasures of youth.

He left his father's house as a youth and he went into the world to go and find out what it was all about. But I tell you, in the process of time, he got a good taste of what it was all about because it left him empty and it left him bankrupt and it left him hopeless and he took a job working for a man feeding hogs and he was there at the trough longing to eat what the hogs were eating and he came to his senses like Nebuchadnezzar, who was a proud king who boasted in his accomplishments and he was made to eat grass seven times in a field like an animal, like an ox. His hair grew long like feathers and his nails long.

This man who was in charge of many of the kingdoms of the earth and the Israelites came in bondage to this guy. God humbled this guy because he became proud. This youth who was proud, he left his father's house to make his claim for the world and he found himself eating at the pig trough there, so to speak.

And he said, Lord, what am I doing here? May this morning be a moment where you say to yourself, what am I doing here? Where have I come? What have I accomplished in my walk with God? Brother, our pockets might have a little gold and some silver, but there's leanness in our souls. Maybe God has answered many of our prayers to provide for us through dark times. We've come through some difficult days, but there's yet leanness in our souls.

Oh brother, sister, taste and see that the Lord is good. My father has bread enough in his house. There's enough bread in my father's house.

I'm going to humble myself now. And I'm not worthy because I've caused him so much shame. I've ruined the family name.

I've called myself a Christian. I'm not even worthy to be his son. Make me like one of the servants because even the servants have enough bread to eat in my father's house.

I will ask him, please father, make me like a servant that I could be in your house because I know that you're good and I'm sorry for my sins. And it says that he began to seek the Lord. He began to take some steps back to his father's house and it was while he was a long ways off.

His father met him. Why? Because his father was looking for the boy every single day of his life. He was looking for that boy.

He wanted to go get him and kidnap him and bring him home, but that's not the way. Prayer changes things, my friend. God is able to be patient enough to wait for us to come to the end of ourselves and our running.

To come to the end of ourselves and all of our scheming and all of our efforts to realize that you know what? I'm not happy here. It's not an extra dollar an hour that's going to make me happy. It's not getting off an extra half an hour or getting two percent extra on my vacation pay.

It's not about getting that position of honor that people will respect. I'm the boss. No, it's not about that.

It's about Jesus. In him all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in bodily form and we are complete in him. Are you complete in him this morning or are you lack? If you have a lack, I'm going to tell you come by and eat bread and wine and milk free without cost.

Just humble yourself and say I've wasted all my money on what is not bread and things that don't satisfy. Seek the Lord while he may be found and call upon him while he is near. Let the wicked man forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts.

Call on the name of the Lord and he will answer thee and show thee great and awesome things which thou knowest not. It says when they that feared the Lord spoke unto one another from Malachi in chapter 3. It says the Lord hearkened in. He listened in.

Can you imagine the God of the universe? There's billions of people on the face of the earth and one or two brothers sit down and talk about their struggles about the Lord. The Lord is listening in to hear what they're saying about him. Not what they're talking about on the internet.

Not about a flat earth or some other stupid foolish thing. What they're talking about him and the Lord says they shall be mine on the day that I make them my precious treasure. My jewels.

The God's full of the world brothers. And he gave his son. He came to the world.

He came to his own. And his own did not receive him. But as many as received him to them he gave the right to become children of God.

And it has not yet been manifested or revealed what we shall be brothers. But what he has revealed has Christ come to you. We shall be like him and everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself just as he.

Are you still infatuated with tin and metal and rubble and wood and clay and stummel? Repent and look to the Lord and be saved. For my ways he says my thoughts verse eight are not your thoughts nor are your ways my ways saith the Lord for as the heavens are higher than the earth so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts for as the rain comes down from heaven and snow like this morning on the earth to water the earth and to make it bring forth in bud that it might give seed to the sower and bread to the eater so shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth and it shall not return to me void but it shall accomplish what i sent it out to accomplish and it shall prosper in the thing which i sent it to achieve brother sometimes the word of God comes to us and it falls like rain and it refreshes us and brings forth the seed of God the word of God becomes alive and it produces a change in us brings forth the fruit of the spirit in us but brother sometimes the word of God falls like snow because our hearts have become hardened and they have waxed cold it says in the last days the love of many will wax cold but yet even then there is a remnant according to the election of grace that the Lord says the word of God will penetrate the heart when God causes the earth to warm the heart to warm and then the seed will receive the moisture and it will sprout and spring forth life sometimes it falls as rain and sometimes like snow but it will accomplish that living oracle of God that which was sent out to accomplish and it will bring forth life in your life we don't understand all the word of God we only see in part but at the right time when you're able to receive it it'll refresh you and it'll bring forth life in your life it says man shall not live by bread alone but by every seed of the word of God feed on the word of God eat of his flesh and drink of his blood or you have no life in you Jesus himself is God's bread from heaven he said the one who feeds on me shall live we can feed at the table with the master recently my son-in-law come to the Lord my daughter also we were having some prayer the other night he said you know he said I've been at the table with the Lord and I've been feeding at his table and he says I haven't yet got around to throwing away all the rubbish that's laying on the floor and in the corner to clear out those idols out of my old life because I've so consumed at his banquet it says he brought us to his banquet table and his banner over us love we have to become so

infatuated with this Jesus that all the things that we have valued in our past lifetime become like dumb idols that need yet to be demolished and thrown out to make room for fellowship you shall go out with joy you will be led forth with peace and the mountains and the hills shall break forth into singing before you and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands and instead of the thorn there shall come up the cypress tree and instead of the briar there shall come up the myrtle tree and it shall be to the Lord for a name and everlasting sign that shall not be cut up cut off the thorns and the briars they come up in the field of the lazy man I went by the field of the lazy man it says in Proverbs I think in 24 and there the field was all overgrown with thorns and thistles thorns and briars and the protective heads the wall was broken down and the wild boar was coming in whatever fruit there was he was eating away at that fruit he was picking away at that fruit what has happened to the people of God what has happened to the vineyard of God he said instead of thorns and briars there's going to be life now God's going to bring forth good fruit good seed the field is the world and we've been in the world brothers all that's in the world we've lusted after the flesh we have lusts of our eyes we covet everything that we can't have and we boast in our accomplishments the boastful pride of life brother sister this is not from God it's from the world and the world is passing away in the last of it but he who does the will of God will abide forever this is the will of God for us brothers your sanctification be set apart from the old life be come to the Lord Jesus and let him make you a new creation in Christ that all things pass away and let everything become new this field of the lazy man overgrown with thistles and thorns just being at ease in Zion putting our feet up we're not praying for our family we're not praying for our lost relatives we're not praying for our neighbors we could care less we have our own problems but now the Lord's going to change all that the Lord is going to share his burden with us when we become his when we become responsible to bear burdens he'll share his burdens with us finish in Philippians chapter 3 some of us have done a fantastic job of looking good on the outside but inside we're full of whitewashed bones dead bones religious bones Paul speaks here in Philippians in chapter 3 he says finally my brethren rejoice in the Lord for me to write the same things to you is not tedious but it's safe beware of dogs and beware of evil workers and beware of the mutilation for we are the circumcision who worship God in the spirit you know what often happens is we get a touch from the Lord in order to fit in we have to drop off some bad sins which they should fall off if we're following the Lord but you know what some of us we have these doctrines and these man-made teachings you know and so we have to follow these teachings well if you're wearing gold you got rid of your rings or if you're if you don't have long hair you better let it grow or if you're you're wearing pants you better throw them in the garbage because you only got to wear skirts and for sure you might be a Jezebel but you have to wear a head covering but you you don't submit to your husband at all and so you have all these things that men are enforcing I'm going to tell you this is the circumcision there's no life in it you might get all your ducks in a row and got every iron cross your keys you will not find Christ there but you will find Christ when you humble yourself like the prodigal and say I'm coming now I'm not worthy to be a son the father wasn't looking to see whether he was rightly dressed and fit properly and didn't stink he stunk like something like nothing else but the father he came and fell on his neck and kissed him we have to come to love that stink and that smell as men and women of God we go up to the camp at the creek some of them reek there of alcohol and drugs and sexual sins and homosexuality we're taking all the confessions this last week but in Jesus name the devils come out we hug it out with them and then we pray for them and the devils come out not in our own name but in Jesus name we have no confidence verse 3 in the flesh though I might have confidence in the flesh if anyone else thinks himself to have confidence in the flesh what does Paul say I'm more so he goes on to talk about his pedigree circumcised the eighth day of the stock of Israel the tribe of Benjamin a Hebrew of Hebrews concerning the law of Pharisee concerning zeal persecuting the church concerning the righteousness which is in the law he was blameless outward righteousness does

not commend us to God this guy who was blameless according to the law who had everything done right found himself fighting against Christ found himself going in Jerusalem to every single house that's the zeal this man had knocking on every door and finding out if there were any Christians there either men or women arresting them and throwing them in jail this is the kind of hatred he had for Christ surely you would think God would have no hope for someone like that but yet God uses the foolishness he uses them to confound us who think we're wise and he stops him in his tracks on Damascus Road and there's a bright light that blinds him and he says Paul or Saul why are you persecuting me who are you Lord I'm Jesus of Nazareth it's hard for you to kick against the goads or the pricks or the sticks with sharp sticks imagine trying to kick against sharp sticks and poking through your shoes and wounding your feet this one Saul of Tarsus who became the Apostle Paul he was fighting against God outward righteousness was not where it was at my friends and so he comes on from here and he says but what things were gained to me these I have counted as loss for Christ your reputation before the brothers in the church what if you go and cry with the sinners what will they think about you I was really listening to Earle O'Sheegan the other day and he was in Africa and he said he was among the blacks and the God was working among them and that's where he was working and he was he's a white brother missionary there and he started crying there and the blacks were crying and and he thought oh man what will people think and he walked over because it was hot there and he went and closed the window so people wouldn't hear him crying there with the blacks and the Holy Spirit spoke to him and he said Earle he says now I will be outside and you will be inside because you're ashamed of me being found in him not having our own righteousness brothers to go as low as we need to go to kneel beside people who are broken because of sin and cry with them and weep with them that they might be reconciled back to Jesus back to God verse 8 indeed I count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord for whom I have suffered the loss of all things and I count them as rubbish that I may gain Christ are you willing to suffer the loss of all things to gain Jesus what does that look like your reputation a man who wears a suit and tie a man who's proper the man who makes wonderful long prayers are you willing to just have a heart cry Lord have mercy on me and help me I need the every hour whatever you want from me Lord wherever you send me I will go you're not talking about sin here brothers counting the love for the world lost he's talking about his brothers his countrymen according to the flesh he was a Pharisee of Pharisees he was the head guy and it says in Romans 9 he said I not lying I'm telling you the truth I wish I myself were a curse from Christ for my brethren my countrymen according to the flesh he had a love for them like nothing else he had a love for them like Jesus himself who became a curse from God brothers when you get a burden for your lost relatives and your nieces and your family and your friends and you take it to the Lord broken and contrite and you come out of prayer and your shirt is soaked and you said Lord spare thy people oh God who is the man who will stand between the porch and the altar and say spare thy people oh God will you be that man will you be that one will you count all things lost are you still excited when you make an extra buck may the Lord help us he gives us things richly to enjoy but we can't live for these things because tomorrow you will be as miserable as anything because it won't satisfy verse 9 and to be found in him I woke up this morning with his verse ringing in my ears and to be found in him oh Jesus I'd be found in you now not having my own righteousness my own accomplishments all the things that I'd like to boast in the things that used to make my father and grandfather proud about me letting all that go and counting those things but lost and done to know Jesus to be of no reputation before men but a reputation before God being considered as a deceiver and yet true being considered as a blasphemer and yet well known to God being considered as a nothing one yet being rich in Christ not having my own righteousness which is from the law which is outward righteousness of doing and keeping of the commandments of God but not knowing Christ through faith a righteousness which is from God by faith that I may know him the power of his

resurrection and the fellowship of his suffering not suffering because we did something stupid on the job brothers we made our wife mad not suffering because that because not suffering because we told somebody what we thought about them not suffering from these things suffering because we did not revile when we were reviled suffering because when we were reviled we held our tongues suffering because we as a lamb before the shear was made silent we didn't open our mouths but we took it to the Lord in prayer being conformed to his death if by any means brother we might attain to the resurrection from the dead now I'm going to finish here we need to attain to this resurrection the sufferings of Christ Jesus he came into the world he was a king but he never lived like one he counted all things loss for that treasure that he saw buried in the ground and he bought the field he gave his life for the world and he's given his life for us and he also gives us the same burden that we would give our lives as a ransom for many not 10 in the box not a not not doing a little helping here and there for the Lord giving your life for Jesus so that whether you're working or whether you're at home or wherever you are it's all to Jesus I surrender all to him I freely give may the Lord help us to surrender our hearts wholly to him because he is worthy to receive the reward of his sufferings we have brothers but we need more let's keep going with God let's get our eyes on Jesus not on what we're leaving behind but get our eyes on Jesus it's all gonna burn out burn off anyway it's on fire already let's keep going through humility and a good humble heart let's find ourselves in the streams of refresher where abundance flows in Jesus name

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