

# Luke 14

by Robert F. Adcock

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of discipleship, obedience, and love in following Jesus, and highlights the conditions for true discipleship.*

**Duration:** 36:14

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Luke 14:27, John 13:34-35

**Topics:** "Discipleship", "Obedience"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of putting Jesus Christ first in our lives. He refers to John 15, which teaches that our lives should be channels of blessing to others. The speaker encourages believers to go beyond just believing in Jesus and to fully dedicate themselves to Him. He reminds the audience that they are responsible to obey all that Jesus asks of them and to be true ambassadors for Him on earth. The sermon concludes with a hymn and a challenge for fresh dedication, loyalty, and love for Jesus.

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## Transcript

A scripture reading this morning will be found in Luke's Gospel, Chapter 14. I'd like to give you something to look forward to. Two weeks from this morning, we're going to have something very special.

I say special because not one of us in this room this morning knows sometimes what another day will bring forth. We are encouraged to say, Lord willing, you may hear sometime from a doctor in the course of your life that you have a malignancy in your body. How will you respond? How will your family respond when you receive that kind of news? Very often you can only speculate unless it's happened to you.

We have a dear brother, a part of our fellowship, a Brother Bill Chambers. He received that kind of news from his doctor one day, and he found out how he would respond. He found out in a very special way what it meant to be a believer in Jesus Christ, how his family would respond.

Two weeks from this morning, remember, our Brother Bill Chambers will share with us, out of his own experience, what the Lord has meant to him during this very difficult time in his life. Mark it down, plan to be here. Now, reading from Luke 14, we'll read from verse 25, And there went great multitudes with him, and he turned and said unto them, 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 cannot be my disciple.

And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. Or which of you intended to build a tower, sit it not down first, and count it the cost, whether he hath sufficient to finish it? Lest, perhaps, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. Or what king going to make war against another king, sit it not down first, and consulteth whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an embassy, and desireth conditions of peace.

So likewise, whosoever he is of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, cannot be my disciple. Salt is good, but if the salt hath lost its savor, with what shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill, but men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Last Sunday morning we were talking about a glorious event that could occur at any moment of any day, and that is the return of our Lord Jesus Christ. Indeed, faces brighten up when you talk about the return of the Lord for His own. It could be today.

It didn't happen last week. It may happen this week. I think believers in Jesus Christ should be so optimistic about the return of the Lord that there indeed is a tiptoe expectancy.

He may come today. He may come before twelve o'clock, and we'd be with the Lord, and we would see Him face to face. Well, we have to face reality.

We're still here, and we're here for a purpose. The chief end of man is to glorify God and to live happily ever after. How do we glorify God in our lives? First and foremost, through obedience to what He tells us to do.

And I'd like for us to think in terms of something I believe that is very important for the church today. There's a distinct difference between believers and disciples. You may have thought that they were one and the same.

They may be. In most cases I hope and pray that they are. Believers are not necessarily disciples.

Disciples are always believers. Our Lord Jesus Christ recognized that there are not many that are willing to make the kind of commitment that He asked of us in this passage. So clear, so simple, we understand it, and it will be easier for each one of us this morning as we look at this, as we meditate upon it, to ask ourselves the question, Am I a true disciple of Jesus Christ? Am I a true disciple of Jesus Christ? I'm a believer, and of course we don't have any difficulty in identifying those that are believers in Jesus Christ.

They're born again of the Spirit of God. They've been brought into the family of God. They have acknowledged that indeed I'm just a poor sinner, and I need the mercy and the grace of God, and accept Christ as my Savior, and I'm accepted into the family of God.

And I rejoice over the very fact that all of my sin is forgiven. God hath laid upon Him the iniquity of us all. I know this.

I recognize this. I rejoice in it because I know my sins are forgiven. And now I can go lay me down in peace and just wait for the coming of the Lord.

It's not exactly what the Lord had in mind. It's wonderful to be able to rejoice and revel in what Christ has done for us, but there must be that response from our hearts, in our lives, as to just how much we really appreciate what He has done for us. Remember, there were ten leopards that came to the Lord one day.

He healed them all, but only one returned. And our Lord raised the question, were there not ten in all? Where are the other nine? What happened? Just one returned to give thanks to the Lord Jesus for all that He had done for them. I trust that our hearts this morning will be challenged by what we read in the Word of God, and examine our hearts and our lives, and raise the question again, Am I a true disciple of Jesus Christ? If you pass down in front of the post office sometime, you see a sign out there, the Marine Corps still says, We're looking for a few good men.

I believe the Lord is still looking for some believers that are willing to say, Yes, Lord, with the Apostle Paul, for me to live as Christ, I want to be a true disciple of Jesus Christ. And a disciple is just simply a learner. He's an apprentice.

He's seeking to walk in a pathway of obedience in which he will learn more and more about the person of Jesus Christ, his will for his life. That I might know him, says Paul, the power of his resurrection, the fellowship of his suffering, being made conformable unto his death. That I might know him, the learner, the apprentice, walking through this life.

Every believer should be seeking day by day to know more intimately the person, the will, the way of Jesus Christ for our lives. It's more than just learning. It's more than just accumulating a vast amount of knowledge concerning the person of Jesus Christ and his will.

The part that is so important is obeying what he tells us to do. And we're told in Scripture, Happy are you if you do these things. I believe a lot of the unhappiness among God's people today is traceable to the very fact that they know a whole lot about the will of God from the Word of God, but they're not obeying.

There's a smitten conscience. There's something that probes and bothers us within, I'm not obeying what the Lord asks me to do. And that bothers you.

Praise God, I trust that the Spirit of God will just deepen that conviction in your heart, in my heart, when there's a lack of obedience to what the Lord Jesus has asked us to do. In John 8, verse 31, our Lord says, If ye continue in my word, if you abide, if you continue in the word that I've given you, the truth that I've entrusted to you, then are ye my disciples indeed. I can mark you out.

I can identify you so easily because you obey what I ask you to do. Are we identifiable in the sight of God as those that respond and obey what Jesus Christ has asked us to do? We've already read these things. We're going to look at them.

It will indeed be very revealing. I trust if there's anything exposed in which we acknowledge, Lord, I've fallen short, we will remedy that this morning by a renewed commitment to the cause of Jesus Christ, a fresh dedication of all that we are to the person of our Lord Jesus. If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed.

The thirteenth chapter of John's Gospel also says this, A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another the same way that I have loved you. And that thirty-fifth verse says, Love for one another is a mark of true discipleship. Are we great lovers for Jesus Christ? Do we love the souls of men? Do we pray and ask God by His sovereign grace to speak to the hearts of those that are outside of Christ?

Acknowledging that apart from that divine, sovereign work, they will never be saved, unless that deep conviction of sin, of righteousness and judgment, a work of the Spirit of God, unless it happens in their hearts, they won't be saved.

Oh, our love for those that are outside of Christ, our love for the family of God, our love of our brothers and sisters in Christ, esteeming them, each one of them, better than self, and seeking to serve the cause of Christ as we minister to others, all a part or a demonstration of our love, as our Lord has willed. But here Luke lays down, I believe, conditions which, without these, our Lord says, this is very emphatic, You can not be My disciple unless this is proved in your life. I didn't say this.

Just as in John 3, our Lord said, Ye must, ye must. It's not an option. You must be born again if you are to have a part in the kingdom of God.

Here our Lord says again, You can not be My disciple unless this is proved of your life. Well, verse 25 tells us that there were a great multitude of people that were following our Lord. As you well know, as you read through the Gospels, there are various reasons why people followed the Lord Jesus.

Some of them wanted a handout, meals, bread, food. Some wanted healing, and some of it was just pure curiosity. Some, like the Pharisees, would stand afar off and make some judgment about what He was doing, crying all the while to gather some information so that they could disprove Him, so they could do something that would bring upon Him discredit.

Well, our Lord always knows how to sometimes get rid of the casual follower. He knows how to scream. He knows how to winnow out those that are not really serious about following Him.

And this statement, I believe, is intended to separate us, because He says, If a man come to Me and hate not his father and his mother and his wife and his children and his brethren and sisters, yea, in his own life, he cannot be My disciple. You say, That seems to run contrary to everything that I've ever thought that the Word of God taught. If you don't understand it aright, it sure does.

Certainly, our Lord Jesus Christ never intended for one of us as believers in Him to hate our mother and our father. Doesn't the fifth commandment say, Honor thy father and thy mother? And our God, through the person of His Son, never says anything that contradicts something that He's already said. Honor thy father and thy mother.

What about your wife? Hate your wife? The Lord Jesus says, Love your wives, even as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it. Children, we're to love our children. We're to encourage our children.

We're to seek to dedicate our children to the cause of Christ in the world today. Our brothers and sisters in Christ, we've just read in John 13, we're supposed to love each other. It marks us out as being true disciples of Jesus Christ because we love each other.

Obviously, he has something else in mind. Well, he does, and for the lack of a better word, the word hate here, in the sense that you and I are supposed to hate our brothers, our sisters, our wives, our mothers, our children, is a comparative term. And our Lord is saying this, in comparison to your love, your devotion, your loyalty to me, that deep love that you feel for your mother and your father, for your wife, for your children, for your fellow believer.

It's like hatred in comparison to what you feel for me. Can you say that this morning? Does love and devotion for your mother and father, does it have precedent over your love and your loyalty to the person of Christ? These are earthly ties. You know, some have made statements in the Scripture, those that indicated they wanted to follow the Lord, and they began to give excuses as to why they couldn't.

I remember that rich young ruler, he had a lot of wealth. Our Lord says, go sell everything you've got and come follow me. He went away very safe.

In comparison to that deep love, I trust that you do love your mother and your father. I trust that you have obeyed them and you've sought to honor them in your life. But in comparison to that love and devotion you felt for mother and father, your loyalty and your love and devotion to the person of Christ is so far, supersedes all of that.

It can be compared to hatred. It's a comparative term. And our Lord is seeking to get the attention of these people.

I trust this gets our attention this morning. Your love for your wife, your husband, it's strong, it's deep, it's real. What about your devotion and your love and your loyalty to the person of Jesus Christ? What about it? Does it even compare? Is it a comparable term? You say, I don't love anybody more than I love my wife.

No one, not even Jesus Christ. Those people that are a part of my life, all that's a part of this life, it means so much to me. And I wouldn't sacrifice that love and that devotion to them for anything or anyone.

Well, our Lord says, if you can't do that, then you're not my disciple. I demand, I ask of you complete devotion and love to me that is above everything that you've experienced on the human level. Isn't that asking a lot? You better believe it is.

You better believe it is. But sometimes our concepts of what we've been called into as believers in Jesus Christ, what we have accepted when we accepted Him as our Lord and Savior, to be reminded that we're not our own, we were purchased with a price, His precious blood. Could your mother or father shed their blood as a sacrifice for your sin and save your soul? You say, no.

Your wife, as much as she loves you, your husband, could they give their life in exchange for yours? The penalty of your sin, could they bear it away in making an offering of themselves as a sacrifice for sin? You say, no. There was only one, the Son of God, that could bear away in His own sinless soul the penalty of our sin. Divine righteousness and justice were satisfied in what the Son of God did for us when He died for us upon the cross.

He deserves our loyalty, our love, our devotion. The Apostle Paul says Jesus Christ must have the preeminent place. You know what that means.

It means first. First. Do you mean my love for my parents, my wife, my children, even the family of God? Loyalty and love to Him comes first? Yes.

Yes. Every time without exception? Yes. Yes.

And there's something that follows that's even harder to take than all of that. He says this, Yea, and His own life also. And our Lord says, You cannot be My disciple unless you deny self and take up your cross

and follow Me.

You think self is hard to deny? I'm sure you're already looking right down in your own heart, and you're aware of just how hard it is for you to deny self. It's more than just self-denial. By strong discipline, I suppose most of us could deny ourselves some of those little dainties that we like to eat.

Those things that we've already been told is not good for you. It's going to hurt you. It's going to cause all that stuff to build up in your blood veins and the part of your body, and it's going to bring about maybe even sickness and death.

But when we're told that, it shocks us, and finally we say, You know, I'm going to leave it all. We can, by discipline, we can, through the exercise of self-denial, maybe leave that all. Maybe some pleasure, some pastime, something that we can do on our own.

Well, denial of self is more than that. Denial of self entails total submission to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Thy will be done, becomes the watchword.

Not my will. Thy will be done. I look for guidance and direction from you for my life.

I'm in submission to your will. I have put aside the exercise of my will, my way. It's not as important as knowing your will and your way.

You think that's easy? Try it. Try it. In the course of life, purpose, I will do nothing with my life, but what I am determined is the will of God for my life.

I will daily seek divine guidance and help as to where I should go, what I should do. Every thought, every word, every deed, it will be under His control. You think that's easy? Try it.

Try it. If you've never tried it, perhaps you don't even know what I'm talking about. But our Lord says, You cannot be my disciple.

You cannot be a learner. You cannot be an apprentice unto me, seeking my will and my way, unless you do these things. These things are so clear, they're so simple, and yet they strike right at the heart of the problem that exists among God's people today.

So many people that grow weary along the way, that lack any true devotion and excitement about what it means to be a believer in our Lord Jesus Christ, submission to the Lordship of Christ. I'm not my own. I was purchased at great price, and self cannot be the center of true discipleship.

Christ is my life. Christ is my life. Without Him, I'm dead in trespasses and sin.

When I accepted Him, He imparted to me. He indwelt me. He lives in me.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God. By faith, I live the Christian life because Christ is living out His life through my life. I must submit to this.

I must deny self. And then He goes further, and He says this, 27th verse, And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. I've heard people say that just because they had an ingrowing toenail or a little hangnail on there, I'm bearing my cross.

I'm bearing my cross. It has nothing to do with physical problems. Not even the most distressing thing you've ever had happen in your life is not bearing your cross.

You're bearing the cross of Christ. What did the cross mean to the Lord Jesus Christ? It meant death. Never had meant anything else.

That cross is a symbol of death. Whereas the big I, the big I, when we say He will be Lord of my life, it crosses out I. It becomes our cross. His cross becomes our cross.

After all, hasn't God reckoned us to have died with Him when He died upon the cross? That wasn't very popular in the day that our Lord died upon the cross. The cross of Jesus Christ, to those that don't believe, it becomes a stumbling stone to the Jews, to the Greeks, it was just sheer foolishness. Our Lord says it's got to mean more to you than those in this world that have never, never entered in to all that is entailed in accepting me, identifying with me, and my death upon the cross.

If you're not willing to bear the cross and come after me, walk in the pathway that I walked in. They persecuted me without a cause. Jesus Christ wasn't a very popular person in this world.

Everything that represented organized religion of that day was opposed to Jesus Christ. Did everything that it could to discredit Him. They were mockers, they were scoffers.

It wasn't very popular. And you don't hear anyone, not anyone, as He takes that course to the cross, bearing His cross, all of the things that were a part of His life, having been abandoned by His own. You don't hear anyone saying, this is an unjust act.

There was no one there to defend because He had submitted Himself into the hands of God, the one that knew that this was His appointed hour in this life in which He would fulfill so perfectly the will of God. Whosoever doth not bear His cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. How much do we know about cross-bearing? And I trust that we'll never even interpret bearing the cross with some sickness that we have, something that distresses us.

This is my cross. No, the cross interpreted in the light of what we have before us is the cross of Jesus Christ and all that was entailed in His suffering and His rejection by the world in which we're living in today. Have you made any judgment at this point in time? You're a believer in our Jesus Christ.

Are you a disciple? Can you say, yes, I'm a true disciple of Jesus Christ? I want to learn and know more of Him. I want to know His will and His way. Remember, He said, if you abide in my words, if you'll just abide in my word, if you'll not only learn of me but you'll obey what I say, then you are my disciple.

You know, after He had said all of these things, you know what people did? They began to disappear. One went this way, another went that way, and after a while He could only look up, and behold, the ministry of the words of the living God had accomplished what it so often does in the course of this life. It becomes a separator.

It is a way of winnowing out that which lacks sincerity of heart and purpose. I prayed to God this morning that not one of us, in hearing these things, if heads were bowed and we were told, if you don't agree with this, you have no intentions of obeying this, leave. And then when we raised our heads, there would only be a handful left in this room.

I trust that everyone would still be here. I trust that every one of us will be able to say this morning, I will make a renewed commitment to the cause of Christ. My love and devotion for Him, it is first and foremost in my life.

By comparison of all the love that is a part of my life, loyalty, devotion to whatever cause I might have in my life, Christ is first. Christ is first. And I will indeed deny self whenever I sense that self is asserting itself and wants to be seen and heard, it must be brought in subjection.

To my Lord, He must have first place. Let this be a reminder. If you'll come back this evening, we'll look perfect.

John 15 has something to say about each of our lives being a channel of blessing in this world in which we live today. It's just a further expansion upon what it means to be a true disciple of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let's be more than just believers.

Let's present all to Him, and then excitedly wait to see what He will do in our lives, the power that He wants to bestow and exercise through us in bringing blessings to others. Our Father in heaven, we do bow in Thy presence, thanking Thee again for the wonderful person of Your Son, that gift that You've given to us, the unspeakable gifts of God, our Lord Jesus Christ. Grant, we pray Thee, that we shall look and look indeed with joy upon all that He's done for us, never forgetting that we are responsible before Thee to obey all that He asks us to do, and to indeed be true ambassadors for our blessed Lord while we dwell upon this earth.

Draw forth from each of our hearts this morning in the way of a challenge fresh dedication and loyalty and love for the person of our Savior. For this we ask in His holy name. Amen.

And now John will come and we'll sing perhaps the verse of a hymn. The clock on the wall is a little fast. It's not quite twelve yet.

As I was listening to Robert this morning, I thought of how sometimes your best insights into living and seeing are given by people that are blind, who can appreciate perhaps the spiritual guidance that God gives us more than the ones that can see everything. I'd like to have us close by singing a verse of a hymn that Fannie Crosby wrote, number 476. All the way my Savior leads me, what have I to ask beside? Can I doubt His tender mercy, who through life has been my guide? Heavenly peace, divinest comfort, hereby faith in Him to dwell, for I know what e'er befall me, Jesus doeth all things.

Well, let's just stand and sing the first verse, number 476.

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