

Holiness

*ITS NATURE, HINDRANCES, DIFFICULTIES, AND
ROOTS*

by J. C. Ryle

Chapter 5 – The Cost

Review

Introduction:

2 Corinthians 7:1 Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Chapter 1 – Sin

Jeremiah 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

Chapter 2 – Sanctification:

1 John 3:9 Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

Review

Chapter 3 – Holiness

Titus 2:14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

Chapter 4 – The Fight

Ephesians 6:11–13 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.

"Which of you, intending to build a house, sitteth not down first and counteth the cost?" - Luke xiv. 28.

- I. The Cost of being a Christian
- II. The Importance of Counting the Cost
- III. Some Hints – Count and Compare
- IV. Application

I. The Cost of being a Christian

“It is what a man must be ready to give up.... It is the amount of sacrifice a man must submit to if he intends to serve Christ.”

The Outward Christian

A man has only got to attend a place of worship twice on Sunday, and to be tolerably moral during the week, and he has gone as far as thousands around him ever go in religion.

The Real Christian

There are enemies to be overcome, battles to be fought, sacrifices to be made, an Egypt to be forsaken, a wilderness to be passed through, a cross to be carried, a race to be run

I. The Cost of being a Christian

1. Self-Righteousness

We must be willing to give up all trust in our own morality, respectability, praying, Bible-reading, church-going, and sacrament-receiving, and to trust in nothing but Jesus Christ.

2. Sins

Our sins are often as dear to us as our children: we love them, hug them, cleave to them, and delight in them. To part with them is as hard as cutting off a right hand or plucking out a right eye. But it must be done. The parting must come.

(Example: Moses)

I. The Cost of being a Christian

3. Love of Ease

We must daily watch and stand on our guard, like a soldier on enemy's ground. We must take heed to our behavior every hour of the day, in every company, and in every place, in public as well as in private, among strangers as well as at home. We must be careful over our time, our tongue, our temper, our thoughts, our imagination, our motives, our conduct in every relation of life.

(Example: Rome)

4. Favor of the World

We must count it no strange thing to be mocked, ridiculed, slandered, persecuted, and even hated... to find our opinions and practices in religion despised and held up to scorn... to be thought by many a fool.

I. The Cost of being a Christian

A cheap Christianity, without a cross, will prove in the end a useless Christianity, without a crown.

II. The Importance of Counting the Cost

Example of those who did not

Ryle: But there is one class of persons to whom especially I wish to address myself in handling this part of my subject... They are not ignorant of religion: they know the outlines of it pretty well.... Too often they have picked up their knowledge second hand, from being in religious families, or from being trained in religious ways...but without any solid work of grace in their hearts.

II. The Importance of Counting the Cost

Example of those who did not

1. The first generation of Israelites in the wilderness
2. Some of the hearers of Jesus
3. King Herod
4. Demas
5. Hearers of famous evangelical preachers
6. Some under the influence of evangelical revivals
7. Some children of religious parents

II. The Importance of Counting the Cost

Example of those who did not

Be ashamed to use the vulgar arts of a recruiting sergeant...
Do not present only one side of Christianity. Entreat men to repent and come to Christ; but bid them at the same time to "count the cost."

III. Some Hints – Count and Compare

1. Profit and Loss
2. Praise and Blame
3. Friends and Enemies
4. Life now and Life to come
5. The pleasure of sin and the happiness in God's service
6. The trouble of true Christianity and the trouble of the grave
7. The number that turn to Christ and the number that turn away from Christ

III. Some Hints – Count and Compare

Filled with that faith we shall neither add to the cross nor subtract from the crown. Our conclusions will be all correct. Our sum total will be without error.

IV. Application

1. Does your religion cost you anything?
2. Consider the cost God paid to save your soul.
3. If you have counted the cost then persevere to the end.

IV. Application

In heaven, "we shall marvel that we made so much of our cross and thought so little of our crown. Let us take courage. We are not far from home. It may cost much to be a true Christian and a consistent believer; but it pays."