

- A. In our day of credit cards and the ability to finance most things, it is hard for some people to count the costs to see if they can afford the things they want.
- B. Back in **Lu 12:1**, “**many thousands of people had gathered together**” to listen to the words of Jesus or to seek healing from Him. In **v25** in our morning text, “**large crowds were going along with Him.**” They would not continue with Him.

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| Count the cost of being Christ’s disciple. | I. WHAT DISCIPLESHIP COULD COST YOU II. PARABLES ABOUT COUNTING COSTS |
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I. **WHAT DISCIPLESHIP COULD COST YOU** → **vv25-26**

- A. Jesus began by saying that discipleship could cost you the loss of your family.
1. We must keep in mind that the Christian faith or the Way was coming out of Judaism.
 - a. It came to pass that those who followed Christ were ostracized by their family and friends.
 - b. One’s father, mother, brothers, sisters, wife, and children could turn against a believer in Jesus. If they were to keep their good-standing in the local synagogue, they were compelled to reject the convert to Christianity. → **Mat 10:16-39**
 2. New converts out of the Hindu or Muslim religions face rejection and even persecution from family.
 3. Some who leave the Roman Catholic Church to join an evangelical congregation will be ostracized by family.
 4. The fifth commandment tells us to honor our parents. How can we honor and love our parents as we ought if we are following the words of Jesus when He said we are to “**hate**” them?
 - a. According to Dr. John MacArthur, “Hate in this context is a semitic way of expressing preference... when Genesis 29:31 records that Leah was unloved (the Hebrew word literally means ‘hated’) by Jacob, it does not mean that he despised or detested her, but that he loved Rachel more. . . To hate one’s family is to prefer God over them by disregarding what they desire if that conflicts with what God requires; it is to love God more and them less.”¹
 - b. When reading these challenging words of Jesus, we are to keep the persecution from **Mat 10** in mind. Loving and following Christ may cost you some of your closest family relationships
- B. Following Christ could cost your life. The persecution Jesus foretold involved some Christians being betrayed by family. Such betrayal led even to death.
1. That is why Jesus said that a true disciple must be willing to hate “**even his own life.**” A true believer must not be ashamed of confessing Christ, even if such a confession will result in death.
 2. A believer must love his faith in Christ more than his own life; otherwise, “**he cannot be My disciple.**”
 3. On the morning of May 27, 1974, the OPC’s first martyr, Anna Strikwerda, was taken captive and shot because she struggled with the march through the rugged Eritrean terrain.
- C. Following Jesus could cost you the loss of your possessions. → **v33**
1. Jesus prepared the first Christian converts by telling them, “**whenever they persecute you in one city, flee to the next**” (**Mat 10:23**).
 - a. When facing such persecution, one’s life was at risk. Such a man had to often “**give up all his own possessions**” (**v33**).
 - b. Often, whole families had to leave most of their goods behind.
 - c. Such sacrifices were common during the Reformation. That is why Martin Luther wrote in his hymn, “Let goods and kindred go, this mortal life also; the body they may kill: God’s truth abideth still;...”
 2. Dr. John MacArthur wrote, “Jesus is not advocating socialism, or getting rid of everything and living a life of poverty. His point is that those who would be His disciples must recognize that they are stewards of everything and owners of nothing.”²
- D. Whether the cost of discipleship will include your goods, your kindred, or your mortal life, Jesus said that a true disciple must be willing to suffer for His sake. → **v27**

¹ MacArthur, John. *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Luke 11-17*, p. 283-284

² *ibid.*, p. 285

II. PARABLES ABOUT COUNTING COSTS

A. Calculate the cost of discipleship like you would if you were to build a tower. →**vv28-30**

1. It would have been better for the man to calculate the cost ahead of time.
 - a. The money he spent to clear and level the land and put down a foundation was a total waste if he wasn't going to put a building on that foundation.
 - b. What began as an impressive project proved to be an object of ridicule by neighbors and travelers for years to come.
2. Such a man is short-sighted regarding his finances.

B. Calculate the cost of discipleship as if you were planning to go fight in battle with another army. →**vv31-32**

1. What may be implied is that the king has an opposing army approaching and he has no option but to set out his army in battle array.
 - a. His decision is to fight or not to fight was based upon his counting the number in his army compared to the opposing kingdom.
 - b. In this situation, a wise king would have compared the two armies and decided to send **“a delegation and asks for terms of peace” (v32)**.
2. The foolish thing would be not to count the cost and go to battle against the much larger force.

C. In both parables, Jesus warned against being short-sighted by not first carefully counting the costs. In like fashion you must count the cost of discipleship. Following Jesus may cost you the loss of your friends, your family, your job, your possessions, or even your life.

D. Next, Jesus warned against being a nominal Christian → **vv34-35**

1. If you profess Jesus as Lord and Savior and call yourself a Christian, that is wonderful news!
 - a. The problem is that you can be a Christian in name only and not in substance.
 - b. If you belong to Christ, you must be good salt that is good for taste and nutrition.
 - c. The professing Christian with a life void of true devotion and a changed life is useless for the kingdom. Such a one will be thrown out into the lake of fire.
2. The fig tree that did not bear any fruit was fertilized and given more time to bear fruit.
 - a. After being given more time, it was to be cut down if it didn't bear any fruit.
 - b. Why should it take up valuable space in the farmland?
3. God calls you to be good salt and a good, fruit-bearing tree. That is evidence of a true and lively faith rather than a useless, dead faith.
4. The gospel is not about fire insurance to save you from hell so that you can live any way that you want.
 - a. The cost of discipleship is being a slave of righteousness rather than a slave of sin.
 - b. The cost is to put sin to death so that you can live for Jesus.

E. Someone here may have counted the cost and may not be sure if following Jesus is worth it because the cost is too high. Later in **Lu 18:29f**, Jesus said following Him is absolutely worth it! He said, **“Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, ³⁰who will not receive many times as much at this time and in the age to come, eternal life.”**

Review, further application, and conclusion: