

The Cost of Discipleship Luke 14:25-30

Longer passages are not quoted in the study sheet, but they can be read in the accompanying transcript.

Just because something is _____ doesn't mean it's _____. Grace is free, but the cost of discipleship is another matter. To find the difference between authentic Christianity and some watered-down forms of Christianity, _____ the Bible. To know what God desires from you, study _____ day. God's Word provides everything that we need to have _____ life with God. We _____ God's Word!

Many today want a convenient Christianity that asks _____ of them. They go to _____ sometimes, read their _____ occasionally, and _____ when it's convenient. They _____ token amounts to the Lord but never really learn to sacrifice. They want God to commit fully to them, but they don't want to make a commitment that _____ very much. They want a Christianity that allows them to believe whatever they like and live however they want.

They want a Christianity that _____ embarrasses them in front of their non-Christian friends. They don't want a strict morality or to talk about _____. They don't want to be _____ anything that's different from the popular opinions of the day. Sadly, there are plenty of _____ willing to give them a watered-down faith and a gospel that asks nothing. While salvation is a free gift, being a disciple of Christ _____ the denial of self and bearing a cross.

The word disciple describes a student who strives to _____ his teacher. A disciple of Jesus wants to become just _____ Him in every way. The essence of discipleship isn't a self-help plan for losing weight, or getting rich, or finding happiness. Discipleship is about putting God's kingdom and His righteousness _____ in our lives. It's about Christ _____ in us through humble service and pure lives. It's about commitment to the one _____ way of salvation.

It was 37 years ago that Mack Lyon began this program on one station in Ada, Oklahoma. Today we go throughout the United States and in many other countries. Thanks for being loyal viewers of this program as we begin our 38th year.

Our scripture reading today comes from the Gospel According to Luke 14:25-30.

Have you considered how valuable your _____ is? Your most valuable possession is your soul. It's the one thing that you will _____ have. When you die, you won't take anything into _____ with you, except your soul. You can't take your possessions, your money, your house, or your car. You can _____ take your soul. Because of this, we must take, all of us, _____ to think about our souls.

Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal _____ in Christ Jesus our Lord." Your salvation was a _____ from God; it's free. God invites you to take _____ of eternal life freely. The Bible says, "The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come.' And let the one who _____ say, 'Come.' And let the one who is _____ come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without _____" (Revelation 22:17). Just because something is free doesn't _____ it's cheap.

When Jackie and I married, the preacher, Dewayne Thomas, asked, “Who gives this woman to this man in marriage?” Her father and mother gave her to me to be my wife. She was indeed a gift of God, and the human I love the most. She’s a gift, and I treasure her. But she’s not cheap. The Lord gave Jackie and me our four precious daughters. Psalm 127:3 says, “children are a gift of the LORD”; but some say it will cost as much as \$300,000 to raise a child through college. Just because something is free doesn’t mean it’s cheap.

God had to pay a _____ for your soul to be saved. He sacrificed His own Son to _____ for your sins. First John 4:9-10 says, “In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might _____ through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our _____.” That big word “propitiation” means that Jesus had to die on a cross as an atoning sacrifice so that you could be _____ of your sins and reconciled to God.

I can’t imagine the anguish the Father felt in sacrificing His Son Jesus to such a _____ death. As a loving parent, I cannot see my children _____ without having anguish in my own heart. I hurt when they hurt. I’m just an imperfect man, but _____ is perfect in love and holiness. If I suffer over my children’s pain, think how much more so does our Father in heaven.

The Father sacrificed His Son, and the Son also _____ the ultimate price to save your soul and mine. First Peter 2:24 says, “He himself bore our _____ in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his _____ you have been healed.” Jesus bore our sins personally in his body. Sin against Christ is personal, and His loving sacrifice for you is personal. Sin is not merely breaking a law; it’s breaking God’s law and breaking God’s _____.

Jesus gave His _____ to a crown of thorns. He gave His _____ to a horrible, life-threatening scourging. They spit on Him and mocked Him. He gave His hands and His feet to _____, and they suspended His body between heaven and earth. In crucifixion, every _____ the Lord Jesus took demanded great energy and was excruciatingly _____. He had to pull Himself up by the pierced hands and feet to draw a breath. He hung on the cross for _____ long hours until at last his heart could take no more. Jesus sacrificed _____ for your soul. My friend, your soul’s salvation is not _____!

We shouldn’t think that Jesus merely endured physical _____ on the cross. The true punishment of the cross came in His _____ the sins of the whole world. He bore real _____ to heal us. Isaiah 53 reminds us that the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all; He received the stroke that was actually _____ us. When the Father saw the _____ of the Son’s soul, His only Son who was a guilt offering, He was satisfied and He justified the transgressors, that’s you and me. Second Corinthians 5:21 says the Father “made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might _____ the righteousness of God in Him.” For this great gift of salvation and reconciliation, we owe everything to Him.

Peter said that you were redeemed “not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a _____ without blemish or spot” (1 Peter 1:18-19). We should never take our salvation for _____. We thank God every day for the Lord’s _____ for our sins. His death not only atoned for our sins, it also gave us _____ life. It opened the door for us to live with God in glory as His _____. According to Ephesians 1:3 we have every

spiritual _____ in the heavenly places in Christ. God has given us an indescribable gift!

Just because the gift of eternal life is _____ doesn't mean it's cheap for us either. God expects us to _____ this gift more highly than anything. **Read what Jesus said in Matthew 13:44-46.**

The kingdom of heaven is worth sacrificing everything that we _____ and everything that we _____. We should be willing to give up anything and everything so that we might have eternal life and enter the kingdom of _____. The Lord Jesus said, "So then, none of you can be My _____ who does not give up all his own possessions" (Luke 14:33). If I follow the Lord, I can't consider my possessions as more _____ than my Lord.

In fact, if a disciple must choose between loving his own _____ and loving the Lord, he should choose the Lord. The Lord said, "If anyone comes to Me, and does not _____ his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple" (Luke 14:26). The Lord isn't _____ hate here. He's comparing the love that we must have for God and the love that we must have for our families and ourselves. To be a true disciple, God must come _____.

To have eternal life and enter the kingdom of God, we must _____ disciples of the Lord. The Lord Jesus said, "A disciple is not above his _____, nor a slave above his _____. It is enough for the disciple that he become _____ his teacher, and the slave _____ his master" (Matthew 10:24-25). A disciple _____ his master as well as his master's teaching. His task is to become as much like his master as _____. We should become like Jesus in our thinking, in our practices, in our attitudes, and in our _____ to please and glorify the Father.

Some aren't content to _____ the Lord or do His will. In Luke 9:23-24, Jesus said, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must _____ himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My _____, he is the one who will save it." If you live on your own terms, fulfilling your desires, you'll lose out in the end. If you deny yourself and take up your cross daily, you'll find God saving your life and your soul forever.

The cross is necessary to be a disciple. The Lord Jesus said, "Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me _____ be My disciple" (Luke 14:27). Some people want the _____ of life but are unwilling to carry the cross and die to themselves. If you won't bear the cross, then you can't wear the crown. Some want God's _____, but not His ways. They want redemption but not _____. You can't hold onto the _____ and to the Lord at the same time.

Jesus encountered three prospective disciples. Jesus helped each of them to consider the _____. The first is found in Luke 9:57-58: "As they were going along the road, someone said to Him, 'I will follow You wherever You go.' And Jesus said to him, 'The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His _____.'" Jesus didn't promise this man health and wealth if he came along. The Lord will meet our physical and spiritual _____, but He's not in the millionaire-making business. We must _____ God for Himself. We don't follow Him for what we can get out of Him. You cannot serve God and _____ at the same time.

Second, Luke 9:59-60 records: "And He said to another, 'Follow Me.' But he said, 'Lord, permit me first to go and _____ my father.' But He said to him, 'Allow the dead to bury their own dead; but as for you, go and _____ everywhere the kingdom of God.'" Jesus wanted this man to follow Him, but he hesitated. He had a father in bad _____. He wouldn't commit to _____

until after his father had died and was buried. How Jesus responded may seem unfeeling at first. It probably _____ this man when He said “Allow the dead to bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim everywhere the kingdom of God.” Caring for parents in their final days is important, but answering the Lord’s call is even _____ important!

A third man said, “I will follow You, Lord; but first permit me to say good-bye to those at _____.’ But Jesus said to him, ‘No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is _____ for the kingdom of God’” (Luke 9:61-62). Discipleship is for a lifetime. There’s no salvation for the one who abandons his _____.

Why have we talked about all this? Because, while God’s grace is a gift, He expects those who receive the gift to place the highest _____ on it. The Lord Jesus said, “My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much _____, and so prove to be My disciples. Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My _____, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love” (John 15:8-10). Serving the Lord Jesus causes us to _____ in His love and to glorify the Father. The phrase, “abide in My love,” is intriguing. It suggests that if we fail or cease to keep the Lord’s commandments, then we’ll fail or cease to abide in His love.

The Father in Heaven and the Lord Jesus could live anywhere on earth that they _____ to live. They enjoy Heaven and the most beautiful places on earth. But think what the Lord says in John 14:23, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our _____ with him.” God, the Father, and Jesus, the Christ, choose to make their _____ with people who love them enough to keep their commandments. If someone looked at your life, would you _____ to be a disciple?

The Holy Spirit said, “And do not be conformed to this _____, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect” (Romans 12:2). To be disciples of our Lord Jesus, we must take the _____ of our minds off of the world and put it on the will of God. God’s will is good, because God is good. His will teaches us how to _____ morally, spiritually, and respectfully. God’s will is acceptable; it _____ us how to please God and how to be acceptable to others. God’s will is perfect or complete; it doesn’t lack anything that we need to _____ to have eternal life.

You’ll never regret choosing to be the Lord’s disciple. The Lord has the _____ of eternal life. There’s no other path. Jesus said, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one _____ to the Father but through Me” (John 14:6). Only Jesus has the way to heaven, the spiritual truth that we need, and the life that never ends. Serving Him is worth every _____ and demands our complete attention. We must be good _____ of His will, so we please Him always.

To become a Christian, that is a disciple, you must listen to and accept the _____; you must _____ in Jesus Christ; _____ of your sins; _____ Jesus Christ; and be _____ in His name. Baptism into Christ is an immersion in water. When you’re baptized, God _____ away your sins according to Acts 22:16. He also adds you to His _____ (Acts 2:47); He unites you with Christ and gives you _____ life (Romans 6:4-5); and He makes you His _____ (Galatians 3:26-27). I hope and pray that you’ll become a disciple of Jesus Christ today, and that you’ll live faithfully to Him for the rest of your life.