



HOW TO BE A FULLY COMMITTED DISCIPLE OF JESUS CHRIST

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





How to Be a Fully Committed Disciple of Jesus Christ

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How to Be a Fully Committed Disciple of Jesus Christ

SERMON REFERENCE: Luke 14:25-35

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #2434

It costs to serve Jesus Christ; we must be prepared to pay the price. Many will try to water down the Gospel in an attempt to gain more followers, but Jesus is not looking for easy followers; He wants fully committed disciples.

Jesus wants disciples who will worship at any cost.

Luke 14:27 says, “And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.”

Jesus must come before personal relationships and reputations. His disciples must prioritize Him over their families and loved ones, and even before themselves. He must come before personal realization. The decision to follow Jesus was the last independent decision any Christian ever made; our lives now belong to Jesus.

Second, Jesus wants disciples who will work at any cost.

“For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it...” (Luke 14:28).

Jesus calls us to build our lives according to His blueprints, spiritually conceived through prayer. We cannot look for a cheap, easy, lazy way to build our lives for Christ. We must count the cost, and steadfastly work to completion.

Third, fully committed disciples will war at any cost.

Adrian Rogers says, “When I follow the Lord Jesus Christ, I follow Him into battle.” There is no such thing as neutrality in this spiritual warfare. Though we are outnumbered, we cannot be cowards or compromisers. Nor can we be cautious; we must go into the battle with all of our hearts and souls.

Finally, Jesus wants disciples who will witness at any cost.

“Salt is good; but if the salt has lost its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land nor for the dunghill, but men throw it out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear” (Luke 14:34-35)!

Salt preserves, flavors, and heals; likewise, we are called to preserve truth and to have a zest about our lives that heals this sick world. But salt also burns and penetrates; it is an irritant that permeates everything it touches. We cannot fear our nature to irritate this corrupt world and permeate Jesus Christ into everything we touch.

Life Application

Are you a fully committed disciple of Jesus Christ? Are you willing to pay the cost of worship, work, war, and witness?



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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) The word “disciple” means “learner.”
- b) To be a disciple of Jesus is to let Jesus teach you.
 - i) Matthew 11:28
 - ii) Matthew 16:24
- c) A disciple is someone who learns from his teacher or master and then becomes like his master.
- d) Salvation is free, but discipleship costs.
 - i) Are you willing to pay the price?
 - ii) It pays to serve Jesus.
 - iii) It also costs to serve Jesus.
- e) Luke 14:25-26
 - i) The crowds were following Jesus.
 - ii) He was at the zenith of His ministry and popularity.
 - (1) Rather than build upon this, He thins out the crowd.
 - iii) He didn’t do a miracle to get more followers.
 - iv) He didn’t water down His teaching with user-friendly evangelism.
 - v) Instead, He talked to them about something that seems almost shocking.
 - (1) Luke 14:26
- f) With the Lord Jesus, there is no fine print in the contract.
 - i) There is no bait and switch.
- g) The Lord Jesus is not looking for easy followers.
 - i) We should never water down the Gospel in an attempt to gain more followers.
 - ii) When we follow Jesus, He is not inviting us to share in His popularity but in His unpopularity.
- h) The bitterness of poor quality lingers long after the sweetness of cheap price has been forgotten.
 - i) If we buy something on sale and it turns out to be no good, it doesn’t matter that we got it for a cheap price.
 - (1) We just remember that we don’t like it.
 - ii) If we work hard for something, we earn it, we pay a price for it, and it’s something that we value and treasure, then we will soon forget the price because we believe it was worth it.
- i) There is no cheap discipleship.
 - i) It costs to serve Jesus, but it is worth it.
 - ii) There are some who aren’t willing to pay the price.
- j) Today’s message will share four things about true discipleship.

2) DISCIPLES MUST WORSHIP AT ANY COST (LUKE 14:26-27)

- a) Luke 14:26-27
- b) Jesus must come before personal relationships.



- i) Luke 14:26
 - (1) This verse says that we are called upon to hate father, mother, spouse, children and brethren.
 - (2) But Jesus taught us to love.
 - (3) The Lord Jesus is not breaking the commandment that tells us to honor our parents.
 - (a) Exodus 20:12
 - (4) The Lord Jesus is not telling us to hate our families.
 - (5) When we love Jesus, we will love our father and mother more; we will love our families more.
 - (6) The word “hate” used in this verse is used in comparison.
 - (a) Matthew 6:24
 - (b) The word is used here to mean choice.
 - (7) This passage is saying that Jesus Christ must come before any other personal relationship.
- ii) When Jesus is number one in your life and others are second, then you can love others more than if they were number one.
- iii) We must love Jesus more than our personal relationships if we will be His disciples.
- c) Jesus must come before personal reputation.
 - i) Luke 14:26
 - (1) We are not to love ourselves more than we love the Lord Jesus.
 - ii) To be a disciple of Jesus Christ, you must take yourself off the throne and enthrone Jesus Christ.
 - iii) In many modern churches today, the theme is self-fulfillment and self-realization.
 - (1) Some churches have become a sort of cafeteria line where we just go by and pick up things that make us feel better about ourselves.
 - (2) A healthy self-image is good, but we must be willing to put Jesus first in spite of our own reputation, our own fulfillment, or what other people may think of us.
 - (a) The Lord Jesus said to pick up your cross.
 - (i) A cross is not a thing of beauty but, ultimately, of shame and reproach.
 - (ii) Mark 10:21
- d) Jesus must come before personal realization.
 - i) A cross is something that we willingly take up.
 - (1) We don't have to bear it.
 - ii) John 10:18
 - iii) One who follows Jesus is a worshipper who worships at any cost.
 - (1) Above the cost of personal relationships.
 - (2) Above the cost of personal reputation.
 - (3) Above the cost of personal realization.
 - iv) Dr. A.W. Tozer said that it means three things when a person takes up his cross and is crucified with Christ:
 - (1) He is facing only one way.
 - (2) He is not going back.
 - (3) He has no further plans of his own.
 - v) When you give your heart to Jesus and take up your cross, that is the last legitimate,



independent decision you will make.

- (1) From then on, your life belongs to Christ.
- (2) You're not your own; you're bought with a price.

3) DISCIPLES MUST WORK AT ANY COST (LUKE 14:28-30)

- a) In Bible times, they would put a tower in the middle of a vineyard to protect the vineyard.
 - i) The tower was there for fruitfulness.
 - ii) Our lives are to be like a tower.
- b) Jesus first speaks of a crucifixion and now of a construction.
 - i) He has called us to build.
 - ii) He has a plan for our lives, and our lives are to be constructed by His plan.
- c) The tower is to be spiritually conceived.
 - i) We lay our plans aside when God calls us.
- d) The tower is to be sacrificially constructed.
 - i) Luke 14:28
 - ii) If you want to be a disciple, then count the cost.
 - iii) There is no cheap way, easy way or lazy way.
- e) The tower is to be steadfastly completed.
 - i) Luke 14:28-30
 - ii) We are to count the cost so that we will be able to finish the tower.
 - iii) In America today, we have many half-built towers that are causing others to laugh and mock.
 - (1) Men who have said that they were called into the ministry are no longer in the ministry.
 - (2) Deacons who are no longer serving as deacons.
 - (3) Sunday school teachers who no longer teach.
 - (4) Tithers who no longer tithe.
 - (5) Bible students who no longer study the Bible.
 - (6) Prayer warriors who no longer pray.
 - (a) All of these are half-built towers.
 - iv) Luke 9:62

4) DISCIPLES MUST WAR AT ANY COST (LUKE 14:31-32)

- a) Jesus spoke of crucifixion, then construction, and now He speaks of a conflict.
- b) When we follow the Lord Jesus, we follow Him into battle.
 - i) There is a war, and we cannot be neutral.
 - ii) As far as the odds are concerned, we are outnumbered.
 - (1) We're the Master's minority.
 - (2) In these verses in Luke, the numbers are two to one.
 - (a) But the favor is still on our side.
 - (i) Romans 8:31
- c) We need warriors who are not cowards.
 - i) Luke 14:31-32
 - ii) We need to be willing to go into the battle.
 - iii) Many of us want to get out unscarred and uncriticized.
 - (1) Many will not witness for the Lord Jesus in their offices at work because they're afraid it may not be politically correct.



- d) We need warriors who are not compromisers.
 - i) Luke 14:31-32
 - ii) Jesus makes the point that if we don't count the cost, then when the battle gets thick, we will send out an ambassador and try to make peace with the enemy.
 - (1) The enemy is the devil.
 - (2) We cannot negotiate with or appease the devil.
 - iii) In life, there is no substitute for victory over the devil.
 - iv) There is no compromise with sin.
- e) We need warriors who are not cautious.
 - i) When we go into battle, we must go in with all of our heart and soul.
 - ii) Luke 14:33
 - iii) Oftentimes, we'll tell the Lord that we'll give Him something.
 - (1) He doesn't want something.
 - iv) We'll often tell the Lord that we'll give Him prominence.
 - (1) He does not want prominence; He deserves and demands preeminence.
 - v) If there is any part of your life that Jesus does not have, then you cannot be His disciple.
- f) The Lord cannot use cowards, compromisers or cautious people.
 - i) We need to have a reckless, burning, blazing, emotional, passionate love for Jesus Christ.

5) DISCIPLES WITNESS AT ANY COST (LUKE 14:34-35)

- a) Jesus spoke of crucifixion, construction, conflict and now a commission.
 - i) We are the salt of the Earth, which means that we are to witness.
 - (1) Salt speaks of witness and testimony.
- b) It is salt that preserves.
 - i) Jesus called fishermen to follow Him and to be His disciples.
 - (1) They couldn't refrigerate their fish; they salted their fish down.
 - ii) This world needs the preserving salt of our Lord Jesus.
 - iii) The problem today is saltless saints.
 - (1) On our watch, families are unraveling, and standards are lower.
 - (2) Matthew 5:13
- c) It is salt that flavors.
 - i) Is there something about your life that's different?
 - ii) Is there zest about your life?
 - iii) Why would someone want to have your faith?
 - iv) Colossians 4:6
 - v) Salt seasons.
- d) It is salt that heals.
 - i) Salt is an antiseptic, and it heals.
 - ii) Our world is sick, and it needs salty saints.
 - iii) The salt of the saving Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ heals broken hearts, broken hopes and broken homes.
- e) It is salt that burns.
 - i) It stings when you rub salt into an open wound.



- ii) We are going to irritate some people.
 - (1) If there is no irritation, then we've lost our saltiness.
 - (2) No offense, no effect.
- iii) Not everyone will love us when we follow the Lord Jesus Christ.
- iv) Matthew 10:22-24
- f) It is salt that penetrates.
 - i) Salt permeates everything you put it in.
 - ii) A problem we have in our churches today is that we salt the salt.
 - (1) We go to church and hear sermons, and we salt one another.
 - iii) Jesus didn't say that we're the salt of the church, but the salt of the Earth.
 - (1) We are to live separate lives from sinners but not to be isolated from sinners.
- g) Christians need to get in our communities as genuine disciples of the Lord.
- h) Matthew 5:13
 - i) The reason why Christians are ridiculed and made fun of is because we have lost our saltiness.
 - ii) No wonder they walk on us; we are good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under the foot of men.

6) CONCLUSION

- a) Would you like to be a true disciple of Jesus Christ?
 - i) One who witnesses at any cost?
 - ii) One who works at any cost?
 - iii) One who wars at any cost?
 - iv) One who witnesses at any cost?
- b) Someone once said that in order to be happy, a person must have something to believe in, someone to love, and a cause to serve.
 - i) We find all of that in Jesus Christ.
- c) In order to be a fully committed disciple of Christ, you must first be saved.
 - i) Are you saved?
 - ii) Have you received the Lord Jesus as your personal Savior and Lord?
- d) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- e) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16



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I want to talk to you today about how to be a fully committed disciple of Jesus Christ, a fully committed disciple of Jesus Christ. What is discipleship? What does it mean to you to be a disciple? Are you a disciple? The word disciple means learner. The Latin word *discere* means to learn. Now, a disciple is a learner. You can be a disciple of anyone, but to be a disciple of Jesus is to let Jesus teach you. Okay? So far, so good. In Matthew 11:28, Jesus said, "Come unto Me," now listen, and then He said in Matthew 16:24, "Come after Me." That is, "Follow Me." A disciple is someone who learns from his teacher, his master, and then, this is very important, becomes like his master.

Would you like to be a disciple of Jesus Christ? Now, before you answer, let me tell you, the answer is not as easy as you may think. Discipleship costs. Salvation is free, but discipleship costs. Are you willing to pay the price? You know we sing, "It pays to serve Jesus, it pays every day, it pays every step of the way." And it does, doesn't it? If I had a thousand lives, I'd give them all to Jesus. It pays over and over and over and over and over again. I'm always in debt to the Lord Jesus. But may I be honest and tell you, it costs to serve Jesus. It costs every day. It costs every step of the way. And today, we want an air-conditioned, upholstered, streamline faith. Many of us don't want to pay the price.

Notice here in Luke, by the way, turn to Luke chapter 14. Did I tell you to do that? Turn to Luke chapter 14. Get in the Gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Come to chapter 14 and then look in verses 25 through 27, "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.'" Now think about this, the crowds were following Jesus. Jesus had great multitudes. He was at the zenith of His ministry, His popularity, and all these people were clamoring after Him. Now what does He do? He thins out the crowd. He doesn't do some sensational miracle to get more followers. He doesn't water down His teaching with user-friendly evangelism. What He does is turns to them, and in the sternest terms possible He talks to them about something that seems almost shocking in verses 26 and 27, "If any man come after Me and hate not his father, and his mother, his wife, and his children, and his brethren, he can't be My disciple."

Well one thing you have to say about the Lord Jesus Christ, there's no fine print in the contract, Amen? He's not mislabeling it, there's no bait and switch. He's not looking for easy followers. I know that many times today in our churches we have watered down the Gospel in an attempt to gain more followers. Jesus never did that, nor will I, nor should we. When you follow Jesus, He's not inviting you to share in His popularity, but in His unpopularity. Are you willing to do that? Does that make sense to you? Well, I trust that it will.

Let me tell you four things that a true disciple of Jesus Christ is. Then I hope you'll say, "I want to pay the price because it's worth it." Now, listen, before you make up your mind, may I tell you this? The bitterness of poor quality lingers long after the sweetness of cheap price has been forgotten. That's true about anything. You buy something because it's on sale, and it's not any good, you don't want it. You don't



remember that you got it for cheap; you just remember you don't like it. You don't like it. The bitterness of poor quality lingers long after the sweetness of cheap price has been forgotten. Is that not true? But if you pay a price for something, you work for it, you earn it, you pay a price for it, and it is something that you value and you treasure, you soon forget the price because you say, "It was worth it." There's no cheap discipleship. It costs to serve Jesus. It costs every day. But friend, it is worth it.

Now I'm aware that there're some who won't pay the price. I believe there're some people who would give up following Jesus before they would give up getting a new refrigerator. That's how careless they are, how flippant they are. There're people that think they've done God a great favor when they come and sit in church on Sunday morning. They call that serving the Lord. Well I'm glad that you're here, but serving the Lord goes far beyond that.

Four things that discipleship means; and I want you to see them here in this passage of Scripture. **Jesus wants disciples that will worship at any cost.** Go back, if you will, to verses 26 and 27 of Luke 14. Jesus said, "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."

Again, there's no fine print here in the contract. **Jesus Christ must come before personal relationships.** You're called upon to hate father, mother, wife, children, and brethren. You say, "Now, wait a minute, Pastor. I thought Jesus taught us to love." Well He does teach us to love. As matter of fact, Jesus here in Ephesians 6:2 is not breaking the commandment that tells us, "To honor father and mother." Jesus is not telling us to hate our children. If you love Jesus, you're going to love your father and mother more. If you love Jesus, you're going to love your wife more. If you love Jesus, you're going to love your children more. The word hate here is used in the Bible sense in comparison, or as Jesus said in Matthew 6 verse 24, "No man can serve two masters. He will love one and hate the other." Now if you're working for Texaco, it doesn't mean that you hate Exxon. That's not what He's talking about, not in the sense, but He's just saying, "You can't serve two masters." You're going to work for one oil company, or you're going to work for the other. And so, He's using the word here to mean choice. What He is saying is that Jesus Christ must come before any other personal relationship.

Joyce knows that she's number two in my life, not number one. She doesn't mind being number two because she knows that I love her more making her number two than I ever could making her number one. My children know that I love them with all of my heart, but they know they're not number one. You see, what our Lord is saying is, that if you're going to be a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, if you're going to be His disciple, He must be number one in your life. Is Jesus Christ number one in your life?

Joyce and I have put a child on a shiny airplane to fly overseas with our grandchild and his lovely wife to go to be missionaries in Spain. I know that David loves us. I know that Kelly loves her parents; I know that. And my own personal flesh would be to have my children and my grandchildren here with me. But I know that my children love Jesus Christ more than they love me. That doesn't bother me. That thrills me to know that. Do you love Jesus Christ more than personal relationships? You must if you would be His disciple.

And not only personal relationships, but **personal reputation.** "And his own life also." Now you're not even to love you more than you love the Lord Jesus Christ. To be a disciple of Jesus Christ, you have to



take yourself off the throne and enthrone Jesus Christ. In many modern churches today the theme is what? Fulfill yourself; self-realization. Self-fulfillment, and our churches have become sort of a cafeteria line, where we just go by and pick up things that are going to make us feel better about ourselves. Now I hope that you have a good self-image, a healthy self-image, but if it comes between Adrian and Jesus, I must say no to Adrian and yes to Jesus Christ. Are you willing to do that? Are you willing to say, "Lord Jesus, I put You first in spite of my own reputation, my own fulfillment, what people think of me?"

You see, a cross; Jesus is going to talk a little bit about picking up a cross. Now, many people have a cross, a gold ornament, around their neck, and there's nothing wrong with that, that I can see. But friend, a cross is not a thing of beauty. A cross is a thing ultimately of shame and reproach. That's what it meant in Jesus' day when He said, "Pick up your cross."

When I was in college, I took a course in criminology, and we visited our penitentiary there in Florida; Rayford Penitentiary. And I went into the room there where they had the electric chair. I sat down in the electric chair. I checked the switch and everything to see no one was standing over there. But I sat down in the electric chair. Got up and looked at it, tried to image what it would be like to sit in that chair knowing that someone behind that panel is ready to pull the switch. And that chair was hideous, it was ugly. Can you image somebody with an electric chair on a chain around their neck, a little miniature electric chair? Well, the cross, we have made it sort of a piece of jewelry, but when a person comes to Jesus Christ, he is a worshiper who will worship at any cost, personal relationships, personal reputation. To take up your cross is a mark of shame.

Personal realization. Now, somebody says, "Well, my sickness is my cross." Not unless you got it by serving Jesus. You say, "My mother-in-law is my cross." She may be cross, but she's not your cross. A cross is something that you willingly take up. You don't have to bear it. In John 10:18, Jesus said, "No man taketh My life from Me. I lay it down of Myself." To follow Jesus is a worshiper who worships at any cost, above the cost of personal relationships, above the cost of personal reputation, above the cost of personal realization.

Somebody asked Dr. Tozer, "What's it mean to take up your cross? What does it mean to be crucified with Christ?" He said, "Three things. Number one; a man who's crucified is facing only one way. Number two; a man who is crucified is not going back. He has said goodbye; he's not going back. And number three; he has no further plans of his own." Take up your cross, facing one way, not going back, no further plans of his own. Can you say it, "I'm crucified with Christ?" We say it glibly. Do you mean it? That's what it means to be a disciple. Still want to be a disciple? "Take up your cross." that's what the Lord Jesus Christ said.

My precious friend, when you gave your heart to Jesus Christ and said, "I will take up my cross," that's the last legitimate, independent decision you ever make. There, from now on, your life belongs to Jesus Christ. You're not your own. You are bought with a price. Now, what a disciple is, number one, is a worshiper who worships at any cost. Got it? Okay.

Now, let's look, number two; disciples not only must worship at any cost, but **they must work at any cost.** Take your Bibles now and begin reading in Luke 14 verse 28 and 29, Jesus goes on to explain, "For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he hath sufficient to finish it? Lest happily, after he hath laid the foundation, he's not able to finish it; and all that behold it begin to mock him, saying, 'This man began to build, and was not able to finish.'"



Now why does He mention a tower? Well back in these days they had vineyards, and in the middle of the vineyard they would put a tower. And the tower was there to protect the vineyard and, therefore, it was there for fruitfulness. And God says, "Our lives are to be like a tower." Now, you see, He speaks first of all of a crucifixion, and now He speaks of a **construction**, because it's not all negative; it's all so positive. Our Lord has called us to build. Our Lord has a plan for my life, for your life, and my life is to be constructed by His plan. The tower is to be **spiritually conceived**. Again, I don't have any right to say, "Lord, what do You want me to do with my life?"

When I started out as a kid, I thought I wanted to be a lawyer or an architect, but I laid those plans aside because God called me to be a minister. God called me to preach. I want my tower to be spiritually conceived.

And then I want it to be **sacrificially constructed**. Jesus said, "If you're going to build a tower, count the cost." You want to be a disciple? Count the cost. If you're looking for a cheap way, an easy way, a lazy way, forget it. That's what most people want.

But not only spiritually conceived, sacrificially constructed, but **steadfastly completed**. He says, "Count the cost so you'll be able to finish the tower."

Do you know the problem in America today? We have so many half-built towers that are causing people to laugh and mock. Men who've said they were called into the ministry; they're no longer in the ministry. Deacons who are no longer serving as deacons. Sunday school teachers who once had a class of boys, and you don't teach that class of boys any more. Well, why don't you teach that class of boys? "Well, if you knew that class of boys, you'd know why I don't teach them anymore. I've never seen such bad boys." Well who do you think needs a Sunday school teacher except bad boys? That's why God is there. Some who used to tithe, you don't tithe. Some who used to be Bible students, you've stopped studying the Bible. Some who used to be prayer-warriors; do you know what you are? You're a half-built tower. You have not finished the task. Jesus said in Luke 6 verse 62, "No man putting his hand to the plow and looketh back is fit for the kingdom of God." Now what we need, what a disciple is, is a worshiper who will worship at any cost. What a disciple is, is a worker who will build at any cost. He will not back away. He will not stop.

Disciples worship at any cost. Disciples work at any cost. And now, **disciples war at any cost**. Look if you will now in Luke 14 verses 31 and 32, and He says this, "And what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be 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 ambassage and desireth conditions of peace."

Now notice what our Lord is doing. First of all, He speaks of a crucifixion. Then He speaks of a construction. And now He speaks of **a conflict**, a war. You see, when I follow the Lord Jesus Christ, I follow Jesus into battle. There's a war, and it is a fight to the death, and you're on one side or the other. You cannot be neutral. And so far as the odds are concerned, we're outnumbered. We're the Master's minority. In the parable that Jesus gives, or the question that Jesus gives, it's ten thousand against twenty thousand. That's two to one, except the favor is still on our side because Romans 8:31 says, "If God be for us, who can be against us." But what we need are warriors who are not cowards. Are you willing, truly, to go into the battle?



Many of us want to get out unscarred, uncriticized. Many businessmen will not stand up against gambling because they're afraid it'll hurt their business. Many will not witness for the Lord Jesus Christ in their offices because they're afraid it may not be politically correct. That is, they'll crucify Jesus on a cross of gold. They're cowards. We need warriors, disciples, who're not cowards and disciples who are not compromisers.

Our Lord says, "If you don't count the cost when the battle gets thick, what you're going to do is to send out an ambassador to try and make peace with the enemy." Who is the enemy? He's the devil. Do you think that you can negotiate with the devil? Do you think you can appease him, or buy him off, or you can come to some sort of a standoff with the devil? Forget it. General Douglas MacArthur said, "In war, there is no substitute for victory." That is so true, ladies and gentlemen. In this life there is no substitute for victory over the devil. Now if you try to have a peace treaty with the devil, he's going to beat you. Either you get him or he'll get you, but there's no such thing as neutrality.

I've oft told the story of a bear hunter went out one time to hunt a bear. He found a bear, got him in the sights, started to squeeze the trigger, but the bear said, "Hold it, hold it, hold it, hold it. Don't pull that trigger. Let's go out here in the middle of the road. You put the gun down and let's talk. Let's reason this thing out. Why are you hunting? You want a fur coat, isn't that right?" The hunter said, "That's right." He said, "Why am I out here in the woods? I want a good meal. Can you understand that?" The hunter said, "Yes." The bear said, "Let's talk it over." They did, and when it was finished, the bear had a good meal and the man had a fur coat. That's the way the devil is. He says, "Now, let's just see if we can't compromise here a little bit with sin."

What our Lord wants is disciples who are **not cowards**, ten thousand against twenty thousand. What our Lord wants is disciples who are **not compromisers**, sending out ambassadors to sit down with the devil. And what He wants is disciples who are **not cautious**. Listen, when you go into battle, you have to go in with all of your heart and soul. Look in Luke 14 verses 33, "Likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, cannot be my disciple." You say, "Well, Lord, I'll give You something." He doesn't want something. You say, "Lord, I'll give You prominence." He doesn't want prominence. He deserves and demands preeminence, "All that he has."

Let me ask you a question, it's a rhetorical question, so don't answer it out loud. Does Jesus Christ have everything that you have? Is there any part of your life that is out of bounds to the Lord Jesus Christ? Is there anything that you would say, "Now, Lord Jesus, take Your hands off of that?" If there is, you cannot be His disciple. Didn't I tell you that discipleship costs? It costs to serve Jesus. It costs every day. It costs every step of the way.

You see, there must be worshipers who worship at any cost; "Take up your cross." There must be workers who work at any cost; "Take up your tools." There must be warriors who war at any cost; "Take up your sword." He cannot use cowards. He cannot use compromisers. He cannot use cautious people. We need a reckless, burning, blazing, emotional, passionate love for Jesus Christ. We do. I want to be that kind of disciple.

And then last of all, look if you will now, **disciples must witness at any cost**. Luke 14 beginning in verse 34 and verse 35, "Salt is good; but if the salt has lost its savor," that is, its tang, its zest, "wherewith 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.” Our Lord knew that some people would not listen to this. Some people have no ears for what I’m preaching this morning. They’re saying, “I didn’t come to hear a message like that. I came to be made to feel good, to be petted, to be praised, to be flattered, but not to be challenged.”

But notice what our Lord does. Our Lord speaks, first of all, about a crucifixion, then a construction, then a conflict, and now **a commission**. We’re like salt; we are the salt of the earth. And that means we’re to witness. That’s what salt does. Salt speaks of witness and testimony. Now, think about what salt does. **Salt preserves**. Jesus called fishermen to follow Him; to be His disciples. They didn’t refrigerate their fish. They couldn’t. They salted their fish down. It is salt that preserved. May I tell you that America needs the preserving salt of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? Folks, the problem in America is not the drug dealer, not the pornographer, not Hollywood, not the liberal theologian; the problem is saltless saints, people who will not be disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.

America is in a moral meltdown. Sodomy has gone from a sin to a sickness to a socially accepted practice to a virtue. Here in America; at our watch, families are unraveling; standards are lower. The entertainment industry has reached the bottom of the garbage pail. It’s like a sewer has broken on America. And we need something to decontaminate our land. Do you know what it is? It is salt. Jesus said, “You are the salt of the earth.”

It is salt that preserves. **It is salt that flavors**. Is there something about your life that’s different? They asked a little boy, “What is salt?” He said, “Salt tastes bad when you don’t have it.” That’s what it is. “Makes the potatoes taste bad when it ain’t there.” Is there zest about your life? Can your neighbors see something different about you, or are you just bland and tasteless and flabby and placid and just a person with no zest in your life? Why would anybody want to have my faith? Why would anybody want to be like me if he cannot see a change in me? Paul said in Colossians 4 verse 6, “Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt.” Salt seasons.

Salt heals. Salt is an antiseptic and it heals. And our world is sick. I’ve seen the salt of the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ heal broken hearts and broken hopes and broken homes. Our world needs salty saints.

I’ll tell you something else, though. **Salt burns**; it stings. You rub the salt into an open wound and a person will say, “Ouch! That burns, that stings.” We’re going to irritate some people. No irritation then it’s lost its saltiness. Friend, no offense; no effect. We need to stop trying to win popularity contests. Not everybody’s going to love you if you follow the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus said over there in Matthew chapter 10 verse 22 that the disciple is not better than his master; “If they’ve hated Me, they will hate you.” If you are salty, you’re going to be an irritant.

Salt penetrates. You can take just a pinch of salt and put it in a jug of water and the whole jug will become salty. Salt penetrates. It just permeates everything that you put it in.

May I tell you what the problem is in America? We have Christians, just like you wonderful folks today, and these in the choir and these on the platform, and we come to church, and we hear sermons. And you know what we do? We salt the salt. We’re salting one another. You don’t salt salt. Jesus didn’t say, “You’re the salt of the church.” He said, “You’re the salt of the earth.” Now, should we live separate lives? Should we be separated? Yes. Separate from sinners, but not isolated from sinners. Do you know why they crucified Jesus? Because He’s a friend of sinners. That’s why they nailed Him up on the cross. Do you



know what this church needs to do? Friend, we need to get out of the saltshaker. We need to get out in our community as genuine disciples of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

You know, Jesus said in Matthew 5 verse 13, "If salt loses its saltiness," He said this in the Sermon on the Mount, "If salt loses its saltiness, it's good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under the foot of men." They got their salt in this day from the Dead Sea, and sometimes the salt lying out on the ground would get the rain, and the elements would fall on it, and the tang, the zest, the bite would leach out and poisonous chemicals would be left. You couldn't put it on the food; it was poisonous. If you put it in the fields, it would kill the crops. If you put it down the well, it would contaminate the water. But they found one good thing for that kind of salt, salt that was no longer salty. You know what they did with it? They put it on the roads. Why? Because it would pack down, it would absorb moisture, and the weeds would not grow in it. And so they put it on the roads. It was, "Good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under the foot of men."

Do you know why in modern sitcoms Christians now are being made fun of? Do you know why it's open season on Christians? Do you know why we're laughed at? Do you know why we're ridiculed? Do you know why we're overlooked? Do you know why we're lampooned? Do you know why sometimes we are persecuted? I'll tell you why; we've lost our saltiness. It's no wonder they walk on us. We're, "Good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under the foot of men."

Are you tired of that? Would you like to see it turned around? Would you like to see it different? Would you like to see the name of Jesus Christ lifted up? Would you like to be a true disciple of Jesus Christ, a disciple who witnesses at any cost, a disciple who works at any cost, a disciple who wars at any cost, a disciple who witnesses at any cost? I for one want to be that kind of a disciple. I don't know how many more days we have till Jesus comes, but I don't want to be just drawing my breath and drawing my salary, fighting to live while I live to fight. I want to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Somebody said, "In order for a person to be happy, they have to have something to believe in, someone to love, and a cause to serve." "Something to believe in, someone to love, and a cause to serve." That's Jesus. I believe Him. I love Him. I want to be a fully committed disciple of Jesus Christ.

Would you bow your heads in prayer? Heads are bowed and eyes are closed. If you're not certain that you're saved, would you like to be saved, would you? Would you like to know that you really do have life? Jesus said, "I've come that you might have life." Could I lead you in a prayer? We'll call this prayer the sinner's prayer. And you can pray and accept Christ as your personal Lord and Savior. You can do it right now. Would you pray this prayer? "Dear God, I know that You love me. Thank You for loving me. And I know that You want to save me. Jesus, You died to save me and You promised to save me if I would trust You. Jesus, I do trust You. I believe You're the Son of God. I believe you paid for my sin with Your blood on the cross. I believe that God raised You from the dead. And now I receive You as my Lord and Savior. Forgive my sin. Cleanse me. Come into my life. Take control of my life and begin today to make me the person You want me to be. And Jesus, give me the courage to make it public. Help me never to be ashamed of You. In Your name I pray, Amen."



2941 Kate Bond Road | Memphis TN 38183 | (901) 382-7900