

## COUNTING THE COST

### The preparation for being a Christian

**God accepts everyone, but there are requirements** - Acts 10:34-36 - 34 Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism 35 but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right.

**Christ breaks down the wisdom in the decision** - Luke 14:28-32 - 28 "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. **Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost** to see if he has enough money to complete it? 29 For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, 30 saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.' 31 "Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. **Will he not first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand?** 32 If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace.

**Simply put...be prepared to give up everything** - Luke 14:33 **In the same way**, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.

**Our family and our lives can no longer be "the purpose"** - Luke 14:26-27 - 26 "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters — yes, even his own life — he CANNOT BE MY DISCIPLE. 27 And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.

**Though not making the decision to follow Christ is disastrous, it is even more dangerous not to treat the calling as sacred** - 2 Peter 2:20-21 - 20 If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. 21 **IT WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER FOR THEM NOT TO HAVE KNOWN THE WAY OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, THAN TO HAVE KNOWN IT AND THEN TO TURN THEIR BACKS ON THE SACRED COMMAND THAT WAS PASSED ON TO THEM.**

**What this means is we must be ready to...**

**Make sure our fleshly desires no longer have the say** —Rom 8:12-14 - 12 Therefore, brothers, ***we have an obligation*** — but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it. 13 For ***if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die***; but if ***BY THE SPIRIT you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live***, 14 because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

**If this is not given up, the outcome is tragic** - Gal 5:19-21 - 19 The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that ***those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God***.

**Change our relationship with the world** - James 4:4 You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.

**Readjust our value system** - Matt 6:19-21 - 19 "**Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth**, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But **store up for yourselves treasures in heaven**, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

**Do nothing for self or based on self, and put others ahead of self** - Phil 2:3-4 - 3 **Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit**, but **in humility** consider others better than yourselves. 4 Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

**Realize, as we give up everything, we gain so much more**

**We suffer to reject sin** - 1 Peter 4:1-2 - Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin. 2 **As a result**, he does not live the rest of his earthly life for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God.

**We live to rid ourselves of "corrupt-self" and allow ourselves to be changed by Holy God to be like God** - Eph 4:22-24 - 22 You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; 23 to be made new in the attitude of your minds; 24 and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

**The cost does not compare to what we receive** - Rom 8:18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

**Be warned, choosing not to stay in Christ will have dire eternal implications** - John 15:5-7 - 5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man REMAINS in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does NOT REMAIN in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, **thrown into the fire and burned**