

Luke 14:25-35 ESV

Following Jesus:

▶ **Costly Now**

▶ **Blessings Forever**



Sunday, September 4 at 8:00 & 10:45 + NO SERVICE ON LABOR DAY

16th Sunday after Pentecost / 15th Sunday after Trinity – 2016

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: We all want to go to heaven, **and Jesus is THE ONLY WAY**, so He calls us to follow Him, *to be His disciples*. However, as it was costly for Jesus to *make the way* – †coming, †living, †suffering, †dying, *so it is also costly for us to follow Him!*

Earlier in Luke chapter 14, Jesus was in the home of a Pharisee; now, *as we pickup in verse 25*, Jesus is continuing His journey to Jerusalem – *and many are with Him!*

1. **Following Jesus – HUGE Costs:** ²⁵ **Now great crowds accompanied him** [*they were moving along with Him on the journey*], **and he turned and said to them,**
 - a. **Hatred:** ²⁶ **“If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple.”** // Since the two greatest commandments are ♠love God and ♠love neighbor ([Mark 12:30-31](#)), Jesus is **not** insisting that we *hate our family members, even ourselves*. Instead, He wants us to know that being His disciple means *our allegiance is to Him!*

Therefore, *whenever there is a conflict between family and Jesus or self and Jesus, we hate the former and love the latter, **thus we follow Jesus!***

- b. Cross bearing: ²⁷ **“Whoever does not bear [or carry] his own cross and come after me cannot [is not able to] be my disciple.”** // Disciples of Jesus
 ♦trust in Him, ♦follow Him, ♦learn from Him, and ♦imitate Him. As they **say what He said** and **do what He did**, the result will be *persecution*, or we could call it *the carrying of our cross*. That carrying will take various forms, but **all legitimate carrying will be a result of following Him**. In other words, ☹the cancer patient is **not** bearing her cross *as described here*, but ☹someone who is fired BECAUSE HE IS A FAITHFUL FOLLOWER OF JESUS *is bearing his cross*. So those who flee from persecution are also fleeing from Jesus☹; therefore, *anyone who does not bear his own cross and follow Jesus cannot be His disciple!*

- c. A summary: Even though *being Jesus’ disciple is very costly* it **will be worth it**; we will have blessings forever!

2. **Following Jesus – Huge Thing**: ²⁸ **“For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost [thus make a careful decision], whether he has enough to complete it? ²⁹ Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, ³⁰ saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish.’”** // Think about the Trump Tower in New York City; it took about ♦four

years and hundreds of millions of dollars to complete. The task was HUGE, but, *with careful planning and the grace of God*, it was completed! Jesus wants us to realize that following Him is a HUGE thing, but He also wants us to know that ***He will supply everything we need for the task!***



3. **Following Jesus – Huge Battle:** ³¹ “Or what king, going out to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and deliberate [with himself] whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? ³² And if not, while the other is yet a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace.” // Whenever we follow Jesus, *we are also going against the forces of evil*. Even though we are weak and they are strong, **Jesus does NOT want us to give in**; instead, *He calls us to engage in the battle with the full armor of God* (Eph. 6:10-17); “**Victory rests with the LORD**” (Prov. 21:31 NIV).
4. **Following Jesus – Undivided Trust:** ³³ “So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce [give up] all that he has cannot be my disciple.” // So Jesus is calling us to **give up all trust in self** and **value nothing above Him**. Lenski put it this way: “**When they come to Jesus absolutely empty of anything in and of themselves, then they can truly be his disciples; then he can fill them with his possessions, and with them the tower can and will be built, the battle can and will be won.**”¹

¹ R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Luke’s Gospel* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1946), 790.

5. **Following Jesus – Don't Stop:**

- a. ³⁴ “[**Therefore**] **Salt is good**, // What is the meaning of salt? In this context, disciples are salt; *it's good to be a disciple of Jesus!* In Matthew 5, Jesus said to His disciples, “**You are the salt of the earth**” (v. 13 ESV). Lenski put it this way: “**To be rid of all false loves (v. 26), heroically to bear the cross (v. 27), actually to build the tower and to triumph over the foes, and doing this by renouncing all the things of self as being utterly useless, yes, [that] is [good], spiritually excellent to a high degree**” (Ibid., 792).
- b. **...but if salt has lost its taste**, // What does that mean? It describes people who *love family over Jesus, refuse to bear the cross, and trust in self*.
- c. **...how shall its saltiness be restored?** // Repent!
- d. ³⁵ **It is of no use either for the soil or for the manure pile. It is thrown away.** // For those who *do not repent*, Peter wrote: “**For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first**” (2 Peter 2:20 ESV).

Conclusion: **He who has ears to hear, let him hear.** // Let us pray: Dear Jesus, we want to follow You, yet we struggle; so grant us strength and courage, and keep us focused on You and our eternal blessings! And all God's people said: **Amen!**