

Counting the Cost

Text: Luke 14:25-35

Key verse: Luke 14:28

I have always been interested in the parables and sayings of Jesus in the four Gospels. I have enjoyed through the years comparing the harmonies and the contrasts. A fascinating study is the parable in one Gospel that is not included in the others. An outstanding one to me is the *Parable of the Tower* told by Luke alone. Allow me to give you some food for thought as to why Luke was chosen to give this parable. In the early days of Jesus' ministry, he sent the disciples out two-by-two. Mark 6:7 reads, "And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits." As we search the Scriptures, we discover that Luke was often teamed with Demas. We perceive in Philemon, verse 24 and Colossians 4:14 that Demas and Luke were fellow laborers. The dates of these epistles are 64 AD. Two years later Paul is soon to die for the testimony of Jesus; it is now 66 AD and Paul says in II Timothy 4:10a, "For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world..." What happened? It appears that Demas had forsaken the plan of God for his life. It is estimated that Luke penned the Gospel of Luke in 66 AD or soon afterwards. The forsaking of his teammate was fresh. I can imagine, the Holy Spirit designates him to write, with tears in his eyes, Luke 14:28, "For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?" This goes hand-in-hand with what Jesus said in Luke 9:62, "And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

Our Lord was and still is very upfront with what discipleship is all about. He said the identical words, telling all potential followers what discipleship is all about in Matthew 16:24, Mark 8:34 and Luke 9:23: "... let him deny himself, and take up his cross..." Again, Luke adds one word, "daily." In other words, true discipleship is a daily experience. In our text our Lord is telling us that if we don't love Him supremely, even far above our own family and ourselves, we cannot be His disciple (Luke 14:26). Then He tells us that if we do not forsake all that we have, if we do not turn ownership of our entire life and all that we have in this life over to Him, we cannot be His disciple (Luke 14:33). The words "...and counteth the cost..." (Luke 14:28b) will be worth noting throughout the message. Let us consider:

1. THE OVERWHELMING INTERFERENCE

Luke 14:25-27

A. W. Tozer said, "The man with a cross no longer controls his destiny; he lost control when he picked up his cross. That cross immediately became to him an all-absorbing interest, an overwhelming interference. No matter what he may desire to do, there is but one thing he can do; that is, move on toward the place of crucifixion."

A. Disciples are not found in the crowd (Luke 14:25, "...great multitude."
Matthew 7:13,14; II Corinthians 6:17; John 6:66, 67).

B. The elimination of competition (Luke 14: 26: father, mother, wife, children,
siblings and self).
Luke 16:13

C. The essence of sanctification

Luke 14:27

Matthew 10:34-39

Trust God with your future (Luke 9:58).

Trust God with your finances (Luke 9:59, 60).

Trust God with your family (Luke 9:61).

2. THE ALL-SUFFICIENT SUFFICIENCY

Luke 14:28-31

II Corinthians 3:5: "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of
ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God."

Philippians 4:11: "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in
whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."

Proverbs 19:23: "The fear of the LORD tendeth to life: and he that hath it shall
abide satisfied; he shall not be visited with evil."

A. The goal is to finish (Luke 14:28).

John 17:4; II Timothy 4:7

B. The failure of not counting the cost (Luke 14:29).

C. The cost of not paying the price (Luke 14:30).

3. THE COMPLICATED CONFLICT

Luke 14:31-33

A. The ability to overcome all obstacles

Luke 14:31

I Samuel 14:6: "And Jonathan said to the young man that bare his armour,
Come, and let us go over unto the garrison of these uncircumcised: it may be
that the LORD will work for us: for there is no restraint to the LORD to save by
many or by few."

Zechariah 4:10a: "For who hath despised the day of small things?"

B. The ability to communicate

Luke 14:32

Romans 10:15; Ephesians 6:15; Is. 52:7: "How beautiful upon the mountains are
the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth

good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!"

C. The reality of the requirement

Luke 14:33

Mark 10:21,22: "Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions."

4. THE JEOPARDY OF OUR INFLUENCE

Luke 14:34, 35

A. The Bible speaks of the covenant of Salt (Numbers `8:19; II Chronicles 13:4, 5).

B. Salt was incredibly powerful as currency in the ancient world. Trade routes and even cities were formed from the commerce of salt. People were often paid with salt. This is why we still say, "He's worth his salt."

C. Salt is used as seasoning. It changes the flavor of food. It is used to make ice cream freeze. Salt changes everything.

D. Salt was used to disinfect wounds (I John 1:7).
Salt was used a preservative.

E. If salt loses its savour it becomes good for nothing ("...not fit for the land or dunghill).

-Pastor Pope-