



SERIES: November – December – Walking with Jesus

SPEAKER: NAT CRAWFORD

Tuesday, 12/21/2021

Scripture: John 8:31-36

TITLE: Counting the Cost

A few years ago, I was in Las Vegas. On a section of town just off of the strip were unfinished buildings. These looked like they were going to be impressive hotels, convention centers, and of course, casinos. But after slowing down, I observed that these structures were abandoned. The work began but eventually was stopped. I asked some locals about these structures. I was told that the cost was far greater than anticipated, so now they were abandoned with no plans of finishing.

You know, many people don't count the cost of being a Christian. Either they aren't given a full picture of Jesus' Gospel, they don't believe the message, or they get carried away by the problems and prosperity of the world.

Jesus warned us about not counting the cost of being His disciple. This is what Jesus said in Luke 14:25-30 (CSB).

Now, great crowds were traveling with him. So he turned and said to them, "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, and even his own life—he cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.

"For which of you, wanting to build a tower, doesn't first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, after he has laid the foundation and cannot finish it, all the onlookers will begin to ridicule him, saying, 'This man started to build and wasn't able to finish.'"

These are some challenging words for Jesus. We've spent nearly 6 weeks walking with Jesus to know Him better. Here Jesus is coming off of teaching about the great future banquet. But to participate, you must be part of God's family. But that should be easy, right? I mean, the Bible says salvation comes by grace through faith. Yes, it does. All we have to do is believe in our hearts and confess with our mouths. Yes, you do.

But salvation, though immediate and fixed, it is a careful process in the making. Jesus is discussing the cost of discipleship. There is no difference between saving faith and faithful discipleship. Some want to cheapen salvation and grace by making it an unprocessed, emotional, or mental transaction. Jesus rejects such an experience.

Jesus says to be His disciple, a follower, a true believer one must hate their family and even their own life. Now, let's be honest, that's really hard to hear. I mean, I thought we were to love God and love others. Yes, we are. One commentator said this, "Being Jesus' disciple entails primary allegiance to Jesus. No one and no thing can usurp his supreme position."¹

Not only are we called to put Christ above our human relationships, but we are also called to put Him above our earthly possessions. This is the true cost of our truly free salvation. As Jim Elliott said, "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose."

So here's my challenge for you today: Prioritize.

Chances are there are things that are pulling you away from walking with Jesus. Maybe it's technology, streaming apps, or social media. Maybe it's politics. Maybe it's your job or your hobby. It's time to remember the cost and get things back in order.

Maybe it's not a what but a who. Yes, we are called to love others. We are called to love our wives and respect our husbands. Yes, we are called to nurture and train up our kids. But if we're not careful, they become little gods in our lives. Jesus said, whoever does not bear his own cross, cannot be my disciple. So put aside the things that consume your attention and follow Jesus fully.

Jesus is worth it all. The question is do we believe it?

¹ Stein, R. H. (1992). [*Luke*](#) (Vol. 24, p. 396). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.