

## Luke 14:26-33, "A Call to Follow"

↪ This isn't just anybody setting these standards; this is God in the flesh; the living Savior who will judge the living and the dead. Jesus isn't offering a makeover. He's calling for a takeover of our lives, and nothing short of that is discipleship. This is now the second time that we have come across Jesus' definition of discipleship in Luke, Luke 9:23. We saw that Jesus gets to define what a disciple is, and we do not. We like to flatter ourselves into thinking that we are followers of Jesus, but never bother to ask the question of do we meet Jesus' standards. We saw that to follow Jesus is not a means of self-fulfillment but of self-denial. Either you are following Jesus, or you are not, and Jesus decides what that looks like. As Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a pastor in Germany during WW2 said, "Salvation is free, but discipleship will cost you your life."

### 1. Following Jesus requires extreme measures.

✓ Hating your family, denying yourself, carrying your cross, giving up all your own possessions, what could be more extreme? Discipleship is not a makeover; it is a takeover.

### 2. Following Jesus requires that your priority in life is Christ, Luke 14:26.

- ✓ What does this mean? It seems contrary to what the Bible teaches because aren't we commanded to love everybody? Isn't it true that they will know that we belong to Jesus by our love? The bible teaches us to honor our parents, Exodus 20:12, love our wives Ephesians 5:25, love our children and even your enemies. What is He saying? He's not counter commanding us to hate the people that the Scriptures command us to love. What is this? It is what is called a Hebraism, a unique way in which the Jewish people of the first century used the words love and hate. Hate was used by them to convey two different types of relating to someone or something. 1) There was hate that was hate, "I hate him" or "I hate that," 1<sup>st</sup> John 3:15. 2) There was hate that referred to preference or rank, "I prefer this person over that person" "I choose this thing over that thing," Malachi 1:1-3.
- ✓ It wasn't some kind of emotional animosity, it was preference; it was rank. Two people are things cannot be ranked the same, Matthew 6:24. It's not and an emotional animosity towards either one, it's a preference. It's about preference, it's about loving more and loving less Matthew 10:37. Jesus will not permit you to love Him less! God claims priority in your life and if you do not give that to Him, you cannot be His disciple. What is the greatest commandment?, Mark 12:30-31. If you love someone of something more, are you keeping that commandment? How could it be possible for someone who prefers someone or something over God, who ranks someone or something over God to be Jesus's disciple? He's the sovereign of the universe and has to right to be adored and worshipped and served and obeyed. God claims the right to priority in your life, and if you don't give Him that you are not following Him despite what you or anyone else thinks! So, it's not at all that we hate our families in the classic sense of hate, but we do prefer and rank the Lord higher, that is discipleship. When what the Lord wants us to do comes into conflict with what our family, husband, wife, children want us to do, we choose the Lord.
- ✓ Jesus is also calling you to forsake and turn away from the one person you love most!, John 12:25. "I hate myself because Jesus told me to." No, but I do prefer Jesus over anything and everything that I would otherwise do with my life. Leave all of you out of this, be willing to lose your whole self, totally pushing Jesus forward and totally pushing yourself out of the picture. You don't just deny yourself, you deny your stuff, Luke 14:33. He may not ask for your things, but in your heart that have to be laid down, they cannot be more important than following Him. Jesus calls the shots, Jesus is priority, Jesus is first, that is what Jesus as Lord looks like. Instead of preferring Jesus, we prefer the "genie Jesus": He's here to fulfill our wishes, our dreams, help you with whatever you have decided to do with your life. Jesus won't let you treat Him like that, He won't let you add Him to your life. We renounce self-will and live to do God's will. We renounce self-exaltation and live to exalt God. We renounce self-seeking and live to seek God and His Kingdom. We renounce the self-centered life on every level and of every kind. This is discipleship. How did the gospel get to you? Disciples who denied and died to themselves so that their world could hear the truth. No matter who you are, somebody somewhere denied their own rights, agendas, lifestyles, plans, dreams, money, and died to their own ambitions and did whatever it took to get that message to you, Hebrews 11:36-38. Disciples make disciples, Christians don't make disciples. It's the surrendered life of a disciple that reaches the world, transforms lives, goes the extra mile, Christians didn't reach you, preach to you, hand you a tract, disciples did. Disciples were faithful to teach you, encourage you, hold you accountable, serve in ministry and set the example for you, not Christians.

**Disciples give up their incomes, their leisure time, rights and privileges to reach a lost world. They are the ones who quit lucrative jobs or settle for less than the best of this life so that others can profit through their sacrifice. Disciples make disciples. Discipleship is not Jesus' prominence in a life; it's His preeminence in our lives!, John 3:35. The proper response to Jesus is to give Him preeminence in our lives.**