

COUNTING THE COST

PART 2 - MATTHEW 10:21-42

22: COUNTING THE COST - part 2 (Matthew 10:21-42)

Jesus expects His followers to pledge allegiance to Him above all others, including our families. While we can expect persecution in taking the message of Jesus to others, we can trust God's presence through it all & eternal rewards that will follow.

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teachingnotes

Followers of Jesus are commanded to carry the good news to others, but the Gospel message will not always be embraced.

Counting the Cost means Following Jesus & Facing Persecution to Get the Gospel to Others.

Catch the Context

Matthew 10:19-20 (NIV) But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, for it will not be you speaking, but **the Spirit of your Father speaking through you**.

This doesn't mean Christians shouldn't prepare to share their faith and just rely on God's help. Disciples of Jesus were trained by JESUS in how to minister and speak to others.

- ✓ We should prepare to share & pray for God's help.

Be Prepared to Share

1 Peter 3:15 (NIV) But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. **Always be prepared to give an answer** to everyone who asks you to **give the reason for the hope that you have**. But do this with gentleness and respect,

The SPIRIT won't leave you on your own; He speaks through believers who stand for Jesus!

- ✓ This is one of the greatest moments in life...*when God gives you insight & answers; when you KNOW that He is WITH you!*

✗ If you never share the Gospel,

1. You might not face persecution, but you also won't experience the privilege of being filled by God's Spirit.
2. You will never know the joy of helping others come to Jesus.
3. You are disobeying your King's command to take the Gospel to others.

Betrayed by Family, But Saved By God

Matthew 10:21-22 (NIV) Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. You will be hated by everyone **because of me**, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved.

*Can you imagine your own family standing against you because you stand up for the Gospel of Jesus? The first followers of Jesus were confronted by their own people & families wanting to see them dead. When **King Herod beheaded the apostle James**, the Jews approved, so Herod planned to do the same to the apostle Peter (Acts 12:1-3).*

Why such HATRED?

Followers of Jesus aren't hated because they're hateful (or at least they shouldn't be); **followers of Jesus are hated because people hate the Gospel message of Jesus**.

- The Gospel confronts & rips apart the "I'm a pretty good person" argument. The Gospel message is: "**You are a sinner in need of God's forgiveness OR you will face eternal punishment.**" This was *John the Baptist's message to King Herod*. It was *the message of Jesus and His disciples*. Sharing this message is guaranteed to make enemies.

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But, there is an eternal promise attached, **the one who stands firm to the end will be saved**. *Are we WILLING to give our lives to the end? This doesn't mean that all people will reject us and the Gospel message, because many will respond to the good news. But Jesus prepares His followers for the reality of tough times that were on the way.*

The Son of Man Comes - What Does *THAT* Mean?

Matthew 10:23 (NIV) When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another. Truly I tell you, you will not finish going through the towns of Israel before **the Son of Man comes**.

Who is YOU? This still seems to be intended for the apostles during their lifetimes. If the first followers of Jesus were able to avoid jail or martyrdom, they should **flee** - run away to a different **place**.

❓ *Is the phrase "the Son of Man comes" referring to the 2nd coming of Jesus?* Nope.

🕒 This 'coming' would have to happen in the 1st century while the apostles were still alive, before **THEY finished going through the towns of Israel**. Instead, before the apostles finish evangelizing/being run out of all the towns of Israel, "**the Son of Man comes**." So, this seems to be referencing Jesus' future "**coming**" judgment on Jerusalem (70 AD, when the Romans would destroy Jerusalem, kill many Jews, and take many captive. (more about this in [Matthew 24](#))

Those Who Mistreat Jesus Will Mistreat His Followers

Matthew 10:24-25 (NIV) The student is not above the teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is enough for students to be like their teachers, and servants like their masters. If the **head of the house** has been **called Beelzebul**, how much more the members of his household!

Beelzebul (Hebrew pun on the name of a Philistine god meaning "lord of the flies/dung") was a term for the devil.¹ Remember how the Pharisees earlier called Jesus "*the prince of demons*" ([Mt 9:34](#)).? If they thought Jesus was the devil, then **what will they think of His disciples?**

Fear God More Than Mankind

Matthew 10:26-28 (NIV) So **do not be afraid of them**, for there is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs. **Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul**. Rather, be **afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell**.

Disciples of Jesus are **NOT to be afraid** of mankind. The threat of persecution is not to keep disciples of Jesus silent, but we are to take what Jesus has said in secret and **proclaim** it to the world! Fear of people who can kill the body won't keep us silent. Instead, we are to be afraid of **the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell**.

*Who is THAT? It's **NOT** the devil*. He is NOT in control of hell. One day He will be bound there - forever ([Rev 20:10-11](#)). Rather, we should **be afraid** of the God of the universe, who will judge us. Yes, **GOD WILL SEND people to hell**.

On that day of judgment everything done in secret will be revealed before the God who sees & hears it all!

✗ We can shut up and be afraid of people who can only **kill the body but not the soul**.

✓ We can refuse to silence the Gospel message because **we have a healthy fear of God**, who can send both **soul and body in hell**.

› **We must count the cost**, and choose whether to fear God more than man and that means...**Following Jesus & Facing Persecution to Get the Gospel to Others**.

God's Eyes are on His Creation

Matthew 10:29-31 (NIV) Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So **don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows**.

God knows when a **sparrow falls to the ground**. 2 sparrows were only worth one **penny** (Gr **assurion**) - that's 1/16 of a daily wage - 1 sparrow was only worth 1/32 of a daily wage. If God is aware of the circumstances of such small birds with so little value, you don't need to be afraid of your circumstances, because...**YOU ARE SUPER VALUABLE** - made in His image!

Acknowledge or Disown Jesus?

Matthew 10:32-33 (NIV) **Whoever acknowledges Me** before others, **I will also acknowledge before My Father in heaven**. But **whoever disowns Me** before others, **I will disown before My Father in heaven**.

We must **acknowledge** the Lord Jesus everyday in every way. We are NOT to be ashamed of our King nor His commands. The apostle Paul put it well when he wrote,

*"For **I am not ashamed of the gospel**, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile."* ([Rm 1:16](#) NIV)

Those ashamed of Jesus who **disown** Him before others will find themselves disowned as well.

❓ Do your friends and family recognize that you are NOT ashamed of Jesus - that He really is Lord over your life?

¹ Leon Morris, The Gospel according to Matthew, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press, 1992), 259-260.

Jesus Divides Families?

Matthew 10:34-36 (NIV) Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to turn “ ‘a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law— a man’s enemies will be the members of his own household.’ [Micah 7:6]

Jesus quotes from Micah 7:6 to prepare His followers for the reality that following Jesus will bring division (**sword**) between them and others.

- It is not God’s desire for families to be at war. We are commanded to honor our parents and children are commanded to lead and love their children. But, **our family is NEVER to have 1st place in our lives**. That priority position belongs to ONE - the ONE who gave His life for us.

Loving Jesus More

Matthew 10:37-39 (NIV) Anyone who loves their father or mother **more than Me** is not worthy of Me; anyone who loves their son or daughter **more than Me** is not worthy of Me. Whoever does not **take up their cross and follow Me** is not worthy of Me. Whoever finds their life will lose it, and **whoever loses their life for my sake will find it**.

Followers of Jesus are to pledge their allegiance to Him.

- We are to love Jesus more than we love our own family, friends, and country!
- We are to **take up the cross and follow Jesus**, a call to sacrifice, and dying to our selfish and sinful desires. It’s in losing our lives for Jesus’ sake that we find real life.

☀ **Daniel Dickard** “*Me-centered Christianity rejects not the cross where Jesus died, but the cross where you too must die—just as he died. The way of Jesus requires that we take up our cross daily & follow Him.*”

- ② How many who CLAIM to follow Jesus are actually COUNTING THE COST, choosing daily to **love Him above all others - INCLUDING OURSELVES?**

Counting the Cost means Following Jesus & Facing Persecution to Get the Gospel to Others.

Welcoming Jesus & Eternal Rewards

Matthew 10:40-42 (NIV) Anyone **who welcomes you welcomes me**, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. Whoever welcomes a prophet as a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward, and whoever welcomes a righteous person as a righteous person **will receive a righteous person’s reward**. And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is My disciple, truly I tell you, **that person will certainly not lose their reward.**”

☀ **Leon Morris** writes, “Jesus is not speaking of a small service rendered to a great person, but of a small service rendered to a small person.”²

The most simple act of service, done with the right motive, is seen & rewarded by the Lord Jesus! Those who serve the least significant followers of Jesus will be **rewarded** with forgiveness, eternal life, & His Presence forever!

Think of the day you breathe your last, or the day that Jesus returns...

- Will Jesus be ashamed of you because you’ve been ashamed of Him?
- Will Jesus claim you as HIS because you ARE?
- Will you be ashamed of your selfishness because your unwillingness to face persecution and get the gospel to others?
- OR...will all the sacrifices of your time, talents, treasure, and reputation...suddenly make sense?

›**Today is the day to wrestle with those questions and do something about it.**

heretoserveyou

Have questions and need some help? ...real soon...how about now? Please **call** or **text** us soon!

- * Contact **Jackie** (850-673-1582), **Christy** (850-673-9764), **Caleb** (864-315-8015), or another follower of Jesus soon!
- * Or call our **deacons & wives**: Alan & Christy Androski (850-464-1428), Steve & Debbie Bass (850-673-7952), Freddy & Joyce Howard (850-973-0047), Tim & Joni Hughey (850-464-1156), Mark & Dot Mancil (850-253-5405), Boss & Amelia Mulkey (850-464-6717), or Tom & Martha Waddail (850-973-0011).

discussion questions

Take some time to discuss these questions with your family, friends, or group.

1. **Read Matthew 10:21-22, 24-25.** According to Jesus, why are Christians so hated by some in our culture? What would you say to a Christian who is hated not because they follow Jesus, but because they are unkind and unloving?
2. **Read Matthew 10:26-28.** Why do people fear mankind more than God (and vice versa). What are some characteristics of people who fear mankind more than God and vice-versa? What would you say to the person who says, "God doesn't send people to hell. People send themselves."?
3. **Read Matthew 10:22, 29-33.** What is the encouragement for the Christian who is faithful to Jesus? What is the warning for those who are NOT faithful to Jesus?
4. **Read Matthew 10:34-37.** On a scale of 1-10, how much do you love your parents or children? How about your love for Jesus (1-10)? Why must we love Jesus more than our family? Why is that so difficult to do? How can loving Jesus more than our family impact our parents, children, and grandchildren in a positive way?
5. **Read Matthew 10:38-39.** What does it mean for a contemporary Christian to "take up their cross and follow Jesus" mean? What does it mean to lose your life for Jesus' sake and yet find life? Give examples of what that might look like.
6. The last 2 weeks our BIG TRUTH has been: Counting the Cost means Following Jesus & Facing Persecution to Get the Gospel to Others. What would Jesus say to the person who *claims Jesus* but isn't willing to follow Jesus nor share the Gospel with others?
7. **Read Matthew 10:40-42.** How does this passage encourage you to care for and serve those who carry the gospel (like the apostles did), but also to serve the "little ones" who seem insignificant to many others?
8. What challenged or encouraged you most from today's teaching? What does God want YOU to do with what we studied today?
9. Share prayer needs and pray for one another.