



## Hard Sayings Part 4

July 30, 2023

The Gospel of Saint Luke 14:25-33, <sup>25</sup> Now great crowds accompanied him, and he turned and said to them, <sup>26</sup> “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.

<sup>27</sup> Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. <sup>28</sup> For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it?

<sup>29</sup> Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, <sup>30</sup> saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish.’ <sup>31</sup> Or what king, going out to encounter another king in

war, will not sit down first and deliberate whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand?

<sup>32</sup> And if not, while the other is yet a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. <sup>33</sup> So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.” May the Lord add His Blessing to the Reading and the Hearing of His Word today, in Jesus Name! Amen!

### 1) Have You Counted The Cost of Discipleship?

- a) Note the words of Christ found in our opening passage of text,  
“<sup>25</sup> Now great crowds accompanied him, and he turned and said to them, <sup>26</sup> “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.”
- b) Church family, Salvation is Free but Discipleship comes at a great price! As I shared a few Sundays ago, if we were to take an even closer look at this text, I would dare to state that perhaps the principle is more pragmatic than emotional.
- c) Simply put, who holds more sway over you? Your relationships with other versus your relationship with Christ. Does Christ and His Teachings have more influence over you than your family or friends?

- d) Are you willing to sacrifice Biblical integrity for the sake of perpetuating a relationship with someone else? Again, I'd rather have Jesus than a relationship that demands of me to sacrifice my relationship with Christ for the sake of someone else...
- e) Are you willing, if necessary, to relinquish all for the sake of being His Disciple? Friends, being a disciple of Christ is hard! It will demand of you more than you ever thought or perceived. To further develop this point, notice with me the following conversation recorded in Saint Luke's Gospel in chapter 9 beginning at verse 57.
- f) The Gospel of Saint Luke 9:57-62, <sup>57</sup> "As they were going along the road, someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go."  
<sup>58</sup> And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." <sup>59</sup> To another he said, "Follow me." But he said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." <sup>60</sup> And Jesus said to him, "Leave the dead to bury their own dead. But as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God." <sup>61</sup> Yet another said, "I will follow you, Lord, but let me first say farewell to those at my home." <sup>62</sup> Jesus said to him, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."

- g) Talk about Hard Sayings of Jesus, these records of statements seem almost cruel at surface level. To one, He says that there is not place of rest; to another he refuses their request to bury their own father. And to another He states that going home to tell loved one's goodbye was not acceptable and that to follow Him forward was to prohibit oneself from looking back! Wow!
- h) This is why I asked all of us the first opening question, have you counted the Cost of Discipleship? Again, Salvation is free but discipleship will cost you thus have you counted the cost? Point #2...

## 2) Have you Considered The Price of Building Your Faith?

- a) Observe the words of Christ found in our opening passage of text beginning in verse 28, “<sup>28</sup> For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it? <sup>29</sup> Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, <sup>30</sup> saying, “This man began to build and was not able to finish.”
- b) My first challenge is simply this; have we counted the cost of being a true Biblical Disciple but my second challenge to us all, including myself, is have we considered the price of Building our Faith?

- c) Could this parable of such being a warning as much as it is an admonishment; perhaps Christ is challenging us to make sure that we are committed but we commit! <sup>29</sup> Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, <sup>30</sup> saying, “This man began to build and was not able to finish.”
- d) Church, it is time that we finish what we started! Let’s finish what we began and refuse to be found guilty of being counted amongst the ranks of those that did not finish! Sadly, in tandem with this text is a familiar passage of text found in Saint Matthew’s Gospel that gives us a bit more insight into importance of the Seed, the Soil and the Harvest!
- e) The Gospel of Saint Matthew 13:1-9, “That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. <sup>2</sup> And great crowds gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat down. And the whole crowd stood on the beach. <sup>3</sup> And he told them many things in parables, saying: “A sower went out to sow. <sup>4</sup> And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them. <sup>5</sup> Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil, <sup>6</sup> but when the sun rose they were scorched. And since they had no root, they withered away. <sup>7</sup> Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. <sup>8</sup> Other seeds fell on good soil and

produced grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. <sup>9</sup> He who has ears, let him hear.”

- f) A sad reality that I have had to come to embrace is the fact that not every person will receive the Seed of the Word and be fruitful; not every person that I have ever preached has or will make it Heaven no matter how much I desire for them to do so. For the longest time, I struggled but then I gleaned an insight; the harvest is in the seed but the outcome is the duty of the soil.
- g) There are soils of the path, soils amongst the rocks, soils with thorns and good soil for a bountiful harvest! And my only responsibility is the sow the seed; I have no control over the soil of your life. You must tend to your own garden, get the thorns out and dig up the rocks.
- h) Colossians 2:6-7, “<sup>6</sup>Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him,<sup>7</sup> rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.”
- i) Again, my question for us all is have you considered the price of building your Faith because it is going to require of us to tend to the soil of our lives, remove the thorns and stones, and allow the seed of the Word of God to root us IN Christ and not the idea of Christ. Are you rooted in Him?
- j) And lastly, Point #3...

### 3) Have You Contemplated The Burden of the Warfare You Will face?

a) Jesus stated in our opening passage of text the following, <sup>31</sup> “Or what king, going out to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and deliberate whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? <sup>32</sup> And if not, while the other is yet a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. <sup>33</sup> So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.”

b) Church, there is a cost of discipleship, there is a price to build our faith and there is a warfare that we must be willing to face or we won't survive the path before us! The Apostle Paul knew well the warfare of Discipleship and spoke directly to the matter.

c) The Apostle Paul's Letter to the Church at Ephesus -  
Ephesians 6:10-20, <sup>10</sup> “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. <sup>11</sup> Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. <sup>12</sup> For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. <sup>13</sup> Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. <sup>14</sup> Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the

breastplate of righteousness,<sup>15</sup> and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace.<sup>16</sup> In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one;<sup>17</sup> and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, ...”

- d) In this passage of text, our enemy is defined, our armor is defined, and our instruction is defined. And in closing today, I want to focus us in on our instruction to stand. <sup>18</sup>“Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.”<sup>14</sup> Stand therefore,”.
- e) I recently reached out to a brother whom I had spoken with about this very topic a few months ago dealing with the instruction to Stand therefore found in this passage of text. I reached out to him to ask him again about the insight he had on this passage of text and this is what he shared with me...
- f) *“As we look at the following verses, our thoughts are that God will provide a way of escape, a way out to be removed from the situation. A way out but look past the last comma, you can't bear something if you are running away. If we look at Ephesians 6, we see we are to arm ourselves for battle. If you look close at these words it is not a position of offense but defense, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand*



*therefore.” He went on to state that, “If we are running away from what is before us then how can we see the work of the Lord. Having done all therefore Stand! All of my life, I was taught that God will not allow anything to come before me that I could not face because he would provide a way out. If every time there is a way out, I am learning to run from my battles. I had to learn that God was teaching me to lean on Him, He was my way of escape and by running, I could not see because my back was turned away. The whole armor of God protects the front as you stand. Every translation word the Scriptures differently but the main theme is “therefore stand!”” He closed with this... “It is very hard to really know that He is God if we are busy running away from our problems. He is our all in all and it still puzzles me that we are willing to trust God for all eternity but have trouble trusting Him for today.” - Mr. Gary Follis*

Church family, there's a price to be paid, there's a cost to be considered and there's a warfare to account for, but friends it is worth it; in the end it is worth it all! We can trust Him with our Today and we can trust Him with our Eternity!