

Sunday Morning
December 20, 2020

Well, here we are, I bet you weren't expecting me. Me neither, I found out I was preaching on Thursday night, so I had Friday and Saturday to prepare so please be forgiving and understanding.

For those of you that don't know I'm the student pastor here.

We are 12 days away from the new year, I don't know about you guys but I am ready to ring out 2020. Most of the time I looking forward to ringing in the new year but to be honest I can't wait to ring out this year amen!

There is a lot going on in our world today. But I know one thing God is unchanging and we can trust in his promises! And as we go into this New Year I want us to be reminded us of we it means to be a follower of Jesus is because we live in a culture where its seems a lot of people are "Christians" but it doesn't cost a lot to be a Christian. They say they stand for God but their lives to not resemble that of God. I was talking with some student leaders the other day, Matt Souders made a comment that he that he once heard about the church, and that comment was society is a report card of the church, how is the church doing? That struck me and as been rolling around in my head for ever sense. So how are we doing? Maybe it is because we the church as a whole doesn't know what it really means to follow Christ? But in order for that to happen we as individuals have to evaluate our own relationship with Christ.

So I have a few verses that have inspired my thoughts the last couple of weeks and I want to share them with you today.

Luke 14:28 - "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won't you first sit down and estimate the cost to see if you have enough money to complete it?"

Explain

Luke 14:31-33 - "Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Won't he first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? ³² If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for

terms of peace. ³³ In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples.

Explain

I believe that most who have made the decision to follow Christ is was done very flippantly not counting the cost and when they come to that place where they have to decide on going their way or the Bibles way they choose their own way, they lose their faith because they have never really sat down and realized that following Jesus is to cost them something.

So what is following Jesus going to cost? The answer is everything!

Over the next 40 minutes we are going to look at one the things that it will cost you be a true follower of Jesus, not the way the world says but the Biblical answer as to what a disciple of Jesus really looks like

You will have to surrender your will. This is the most difficult but if we can do this one the others will fall into place and such your time, your reputation, and my even your physical life.

So what is your will – well your will is an amazing gift from God. It is your freedom to chose. Your freedom to chose Him or you. God didn't want robots. See love is a choice. You cannot force someone to love you, it has to be a choice. God didn't want robots, He wanted sons and daughters.

He gave us the ability to love Him or reject Him.

If you are going to be a follower of Jesus, or a disciple of Jesus, you are going to have to submit, surrender, sacrifice your will.

I encourage you to take notes or get out your Bibles so you can write, circle, underline, or your Bible app and make sure you put some notes down. Take notes is hugely important. I believe that note takers are history makers.

If people didn't take notes we would not know our history!

I'm going to read the passage and then pray and then we are going to break this passage down. We are going to be in Genesis 22 also so go ahead and mark that but let's read Romans 12:1 right now.

That leads us to ***Romans 12:1 - I appeal to you therefore, brothers,^[a] by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.***

Underline or circle appeal – you may have a version that says urge, underline or circle that word. Paul is asking or encouraging or pleading with the reader, meaning he can not make you, he is you to do this on your own with your free will or choice.

Underline or circle present, this is the same word that is used in the Hebrew during the sacrificial system, they presented the sacrifice (explain a little).

And now look at the word living. Paul chose to use this word, he didn't have to. He could have just said present yourselves as a sacrifice. See they way they understood a sacrifice is dead, to be living sacrifice you have to willing walk up and submitted yourself. See the problem with a living sacrifice is that it can get up and walk off the table. You have to stay on the table.

But I think when Paul was writing this he was thinking of Abraham and Isaac. If you don't know the story you can find it in Genesis 15, God promises Abraham that he was going to make him into a great nation. He said look into the sky and count the stars and I will make you more numerous than the stars in the sky. Time passes and passes and nothing comes about. Age 99 still nothing. At age 100 God blesses them with a son named Isaac and Sarah and Abraham are thrilled seeing God's promise come true.

Then in ***Genesis 22:2 - He said, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you."***

Expain – that thing that you love so much, give it back to me.

Genesis 22:6-8 - And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son. And he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So they went both of them together. ⁷ And Isaac said to his father Abraham, "My father!" And

he said, "Here I am, my son." He said, "Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?"⁸ Abraham said, "God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son." So they went both of them together.

Isaac is starting to put some things together.

Genesis 22:9-14 - When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built the altar there and laid the wood in order and bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. ¹⁰ Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son. ¹¹ But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." ¹² He said, "Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me." ¹³ And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. ¹⁴ So Abraham called the name of that place, "The Lord will provide";^[a] as it is said to this day, "On the mount of the Lord it shall be provided."^[b]

Explain what I have always seen. Isaac as a little boy. So the real question that we have to ask it how old is Isaac?

You know what Jewish historians believe they believe he was around 30 years of age.

We know some stuff as to why we think that and explain.

So this wasn't a boy this was a young man.

When Paul wrote Romans 12 I believe he was thinking of Abraham and Isaac.

Paul calls us to walk up the mountain of faith and be a willing sacrifice.

I believe what God showed Abraham was a picture of the future of Jesus but Abraham didn't know it.

Isaac was saved by a ram but we are saved by the Lamb!

Will you sacrifice and give up your will to follow Him?

Will you chose to follow Him. I like to think of it like a shadow? - think of a job shadowing.

Can I still _____ and still follow Jesus?

If Jesus goes left I go right can I still follow them?

If we are going to follow Jesus, if he makes a left I make a left.

But we still ask can I make a right and follow you?

What do you think follow means?

Now know that there is a difference in making a mistake or stumbling, or making a wrong turn. That is why the word repent means to stop and turn around.

I have the choice to repent and turn around. When I am convicted of not following Jesus.

The problem is not making the wrong turn, the problem is continuing down the path in the completing other direction willing, and saying but I'm stilling following Jesus!

I'm going to go in a completely opposite direction and never repent but I'm stilling following you!

But He isn't going that way!

John 14:21 - Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him."

What are his commands? Go left, go right, stop, stay straight, wait. Theses are His commands. Are we following them?

1 John 3:6 - No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him.

You cannot be in close proximity of Jesus and be willing and continually walking in the other direction. You are going to get further away. And you cannot be in close proximity of Jesus and continue to sin and refuse to call sin sin.

1 John 3:24 - Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God,^[a] and God^[b] in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.

It's not a problem if mess up. It is not a problem if you make the wrong turn. But allow the Holy Spirit to convict you and when He does repent. Stop and get back to following Jesus,

And if we can get to the point we our desires are God's desires then the church begins to be the church and it again will impact society.

But it has to start with us as individuals we can not sit and wait for others to do it.

Pray.