

## I Am Resolved To Be More Faithful Lk. 14:25-33

*Thesis: To encourage each of us to be more faithful to Christ.*

### Introduction:

- A. No matter what our position in life is, we can all be more faithful to Christ.
  - 1. For some, this means making a commitment to follow Him.
  - 2. For others, it means that we continue following Him by improving on the things that we are weak in.
  
- B. In this text, Jesus teaches us the importance of following Him.

### I. If we are going to live be faithful to Christ, we must be willing to deny ourselves (14:25-27, 33).

#### A. To understand what Jesus means by this statement, we need to understand the Greek definition of the term "hate."

- 1. "Hate" means to "love less" (Strong's).
- 2. Jesus is not saying that we must despise our families, but rather He is saying that we must love God more than we love them.
  - a. Jesus even says that we have to love ourselves less than we love God.
  - b. **Mt. 22:35-40** - Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, {36} "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" {37} Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' {38} "This is the first and great commandment. {39} "And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' {40} "On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

#### B. Jesus says that we must bear our cross and follow Him (14:27).

- 1. Part of bearing our cross is denying ourselves.
  - a. To deny ourselves means that we make the proper sacrifices.
  - b. **Lk. 9:23-25** - Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. {24} "For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. {25} "For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost?"
- 2. The apostles give us a good example of denying ourselves when they immediately left everything when they were called by Jesus.
  - a. Peter, Andrew, James and John - **Luke 5:11** - So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him.
  - b. Matthew - **Luke 5:27-28** - After these things He went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax office. And He said

to him, “Follow Me.” {28} So he left all, rose up, and followed Him.

- c. Paul also gives us a great example of someone who denied himself in order to follow Christ.
  - 1) **Phil. 3:3-11** - For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, {4} though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: {5} circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; {6} concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. {7} But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. {8} Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ {9} and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; {10} that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, {11} if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.
  - 2) Paul did not count his physical accomplishments as great; but rather his spiritual accomplishments.

**C. Jesus goes to an extreme to show us how important it is to deny ourselves.**

1. **Mk. 9:42-48** - “But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea. {43} If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched—{44} where ‘Their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.’ {45} And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame, rather than having two feet, to be cast into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched—{46} where ‘Their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.’ {47} And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire—{48} where ‘Their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.’”
2. Jesus is not teaching us about self-mutilation, but rather He is talking about the importance of denying ourselves to follow after Him.

**\*The point is this: if we are going to be faithful to Christ, we must first be willing to deny ourselves.**

II. If we are going to be faithful to Christ, we must count the cost (14:28-32).

A. Jesus gives us two illustrations to demonstrate to us that we need to “count the cost.”

1. One who intends to build a tower (14:28-30).
2. A king who is going to war (14:31-32).

B. When we are trying to decide if we are going to follow Christ, we must “count the cost.”

1. When people make their New Year’s resolutions, most say that they want to be more faithful to Christ.
  - a. This is a goal that each of us should have.
  - b. The problem is that some will not consider the cost of their service to God.
  - c. When things begin to get difficult, they lose their faith.
2. It is no secret that following after Christ can be difficult.
  - a. Lk. 9:57-62 – Jesus tells us the cost of being a disciple of His.
  - b. We must count the cost in order to determine if we will be faithful or not.
3. We must decide if the rewards outweigh the work.
  - a. We must decide which is greater, our home in heaven or the pleasures of this world.
  - b. Moses is one of the best examples of this in the Bible.
    - 1) Heb. 11:24-26 - By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, {25} choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, {26} esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward.
    - 2) Moses was willing to give up everything so that he could be faithful to God.

C. After we count the cost, we must prepare ourselves.

1. I Cor. 9:27 - But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.
2. Paul disciplined his body like an athlete or a boxer would discipline their body.
3. We prepare ourselves by studying the word of God and applying His word to our lives.
4. It was once said, “Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people.”
5. As we prepare and plan, we must always plan according to the Lord’s will.
  - a. Js. 4:13-15 - Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit”; {14} whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. {15} Instead you ought to say, “If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that.”

- b. **I Jn. 5:14-15** - Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. {15} And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.

**III. If we are going to be faithful to Christ, we cannot be ashamed of Him (Lk. 9:26).**

**A. If we are ashamed of Christ, He will be ashamed of us.**

- 1. The timing of this passage is extremely important.
  - a. Christ will be ashamed of us when He comes in the glory of His Father.
  - b. This is the end of the world.
  - c. It is the time when Christ will return to take the faithful to live eternally with Him in heaven.
- 2. If Christ is ashamed of us, we will not be able to enter the kingdom of heaven.
  - a. **Mt. 10:32-33** - Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. {33} But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.
  - b. If we are not ashamed of Christ, we will work to fulfill His will.

**B. Because our ultimate goal is a home in heaven, we cannot be ashamed of Christ and His words.**

**Conclusion:**

- A. To be faithful to Christ, we must be willing to deny ourselves.
- B. To be faithful to Christ, we must count the cost.
- C. To be faithful to Christ, we must not be ashamed of Him and His words.