

The Gospel of Luke

Lesson 29: Luke 14:1-35

Christ warned those who sought to follow Him, “Whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple” (Luke 14:27, NKJV). Whoever does not hate “his own life also, he cannot be My disciple” (14:26). “Whoever of you [who] does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple” (v.33).

Christ’s warning was not intended to push away the weak and the faint of heart (v. 21), but to separate those whose commitment was fleeting, their heart divided, those who sought Him as a means of self-promotion, from those who truly needed a Savior. While His invitation seemed cruel and demanding to some, it was worth any cost to those who understood the implications of rejecting it.

Although following Christ will always cost a man more than he can anticipate, he can be assured that if he is required to “come after [Him]” (v.27), his Savior will go before him.

Read Luke 14:1-6.

1. Who was protected and who was exploited by this man-made law? Whose interests did it promote?
2. Why did the lawyers and the Pharisees remain silent? If they agreed with Jesus, what were they admitting?

Continue reading: Luke 14, verses 7-14.

3. What did Jesus observe as the guests took their seats? (v.7)
4. What motivated their actions? How does this occur today?

5. Why mustn't one assume his place at the table? What is revealed about the one who does? (See also Proverbs 25:6-7.)

6. Describe the shame of being asked to give place to another.

7. What does false humility look like in this situation? Describe true humility according to Philippians 2:3-4.

8. Whom must you allow to raise you up? Why? (v.10) Read Psalm 75:4-7.

9. Consider Christ: Which seat did He deserve? Which did He choose? Which seat does He now occupy? Read Philippians 2:5-11 and Hebrews 12:2.

10. What was the host's error? (v.12) Do his motives resemble his guests'? Why or why not?

11. Think again on the man with dropsy (v.2), why was he among the guests?

12. What evidence will accompany a change of heart and motivation? (vv. 13-14)

Read verses 15-24 of Luke 14.

13. It appears that many initially accepted the invitation, but when banquet-day arrived they were of a different mind. What may have caused the people to waver in their excitement?

Similarly, why do many reject Christ's invitation today?

14. Thinking on the preceding verses (vv.12-14), could the absence of personal benefit have influenced the guest's decision to decline the invitation? Explain.

15. What three excuses were given? (vv.18-20)

16. The first guest justified his absence by his need to tend to material possessions. The second, excused himself based on his need to develop his industry (work). The third guest exempted himself from attendance based on his need to nurture a familial relationship.

Explain why each of these excuses are irrational. What happens in these areas when a man puts Christ first in his life?

Ultimately, the invited guests simply did not want to attend. Charles Spurgeon has said, “Excuses are curses, and when you have no excuses left, there will be hope for you.”

17. Although the chosen guests rejected the invitation, the banquet was not prepared in vain. Who then was invited? (v.21) (Think on Acts 13:46 and Romans 1:16.)

In verse 23, the servant was to *compel* (forcefully convince) the broken, the outcasts and wanderers that they were welcome inside the house. How are we to do the same?

18. What is revealed about God’s ultimate desire in verse 22?

19. Reread verse 24. What occurs when a man rejects Christ’s invitation in order to advance himself (possessions, work, relationships)?

Read Luke 14:25-35.

20. To those who were willing to hear, Christ explained that following Him involves more than accepting an invitation, it requires sacrifice. Why must you love Christ more than othersⁱ and more than yourself?

21. Define what it means to *bear one's cross* and *come after* Christ. (v.27)

“The general idea that these words of Jesus about *bearing the cross* refer to passive submission to all kinds of afflictions, like disappointments, pain, sickness and grief that come upon man in life, is totally wrong ... only a person who for the sake of His service surrenders all self-seeking and abandons all striving after his own interests can be His disciple.” (Geldenhuys)

22. Why must one count the cost before he begins to build and before he goes to war?

23. What is said of the one who abandons his commitment (vv.29-30) or surrenders to the enemy to avoid conflict (v.32)?

24. In verses 34-35, what happens to salt that loses its purpose and effectiveness? Why then, is it essential that one understands his commitment to follow Christ?

Finally, reread the last paragraph of the introduction.

ⁱ Consider the personal implications to the Jew who chose to follow Christ. Also, consider the potential influence of intimate familial relationships (Deuteronomy 13:6-8.)