

## Count the Cost

**“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?”**                      **Luke 14:28**

If you plan to follow or are following Jesus, you better make sure you are ready to pay the price. Throughout the gospels, Christ let all would-be disciples know that following him requires a willingness to sacrifice...all things...even one's life. In these last days, once again, our willingness, as disciples of Christ, to sacrifice is being put to the test. What areas are we called to sacrifice? Are you ready? Will you pass the test?

We, as human beings, do not like to be uncomfortable. We love our “creature comforts” and we love to stay within our comfort zone. However, following Christ will require that you be willing to sacrifice your sense of comfort in order to do God's will. Consider the words that Christ shared with the scribe who wanted to follow him in Matthew 8:19-20. Our unwillingness to be uncomfortable or inconvenienced often hinders us from doing the things that matter most to God like showing love, serving and sharing the gospel with others. As a Christian, how often has your comfort (or pleasing your flesh) meant more to you than doing God's will?

Another area where people tend to struggle when it comes to sacrificing is in our relationships with others. All of us want to be loved and accepted by others...especially those who are closest to us. However, in Luke 14:26, Christ says if we are not willing to put our devotion to him above our devotion to other human beings, we cannot be his disciple. That's pretty serious. Christ wants us to understand that following him will cost us some relationships and popularity. In Matthew 10:22, Christ warns his disciples that they will even be hated by people because of their devotion to him. If pleasing everybody or having everyone like you is the most important thing to you, then you will definitely struggle with following Jesus. Remember, Christ was hated so much that they crucified him. Are you really ready for that type of sacrifice?

In these last days, as iniquity abounds and the love of many waxes cold, followers of Christ and those who are considering following him need to sit down and make sure we are ready for the challenge we will face as we follow Christ and do God's will. Count the cost. While the sacrifice won't be easy, we have the presence, power and promises of God to rely upon. He has promised to never leave us or forsake us. Just consider the words that Christ spoke to Peter in Matthew 19:27-29. Paul reminds all disciples, in Galatians 6:9, that we will reap the fruit of our labor if we do not give up. If you wonder if sacrificing for God is worth it, remember the words of Jesus in Matthew 16:24-26.