Introduction

Having looked at what a disciple is and the importance of being one, this week we are looking deeper at what the ramifications are of living as a true disciple or follower of Jesus.

We will call this the cost of being a disciple, for just as something of high value demands a high price tag, so the disciple, increasingly more aware of the incalculable value of his redemption, and the payment his saviour made for his sin, he is willing to let go of many otherwise treasured lifestyles and attitudes and even willing to endure many difficulties associated with being a Christ follower.

Key Scriptures - **Matthew 10:37-39, Luke 9:23-26, Luke 9:57-62, Luke 14:26-35**

1 -He is worthy of your discipleship– **Ephesians 4:1, Ephesians 2:10, Phil 2:13**

* We don’t consider the cost of discipleship in any way as an exchange for our salvation or as though earning our salvation, instead we willingly seek to please Christ and live a life worthy of his calling, doing the good works he has planned for us to do.

2 - Many settle for less – cheap grace vs costly grace – **Romans 6:1-7, Galatians 2:20, 1 Corinthians 11:1,** **Luke 6:66-68**

a)-Having been identified as buried with Christ, we should now be living for Him.

* *“Costly grace confronts us as a gracious call to follow Jesus. It comes as a word of forgiveness to the broken spirit and to the contrite heart. Grace is costly because it compels a man to submit to the yoke of Christ and follow him.”* (The Cost of Discipleship, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Touchstone 2018, pg. 45)

b)-The Church needs Your Discipleship

* Living as a disciple is not an optional extra, Christ expects all his followers to actually follow him.
* Godly, biblical church growth results from every member of the body fully using his spiritual gift, in submission to the Holy Spirit and in cooperation with other believers. (Macarthur Bible commentary, pg.1695)

3- Counting the Cost - **Luke 9:57-62, Luke 14:27-35, Isaiah 50:7**

*“A discipleship without cost is no true discipleship”* The Foundations of Christian Living, Bob Gordon, Sovereign World, 1988, pg. 8)

* Sometimes we wrongly dismiss the plan of God because it will cause us to be less wealthy or comfortable.
* We are tempted to think that duty to family excuses us from seeking first the kingdom of God and following him, however in comparison to our devotion to Christ we should hate them (we should see hate here as a hyperbolic way of saying loving less).
* sometimes following Christ means we look like fools and live in a manner that is unacceptable to the religious or unbelievers.
* Sometimes in the course of following Jesus as his disciples we lose the joy we first had or we begin to let regrets and thoughts of what else we could be doing with our lives fill our mind, the grass is greener where you water it, set you face like flint and plough straight.

5- What is our cross? **Luke 14:27, Luke 9:23**

The cross we bear does not refer the ordinary problems in life that are common to every human, but instead refers to the self-denial, suffering or persecution related our followership and association to Christ and His Gospel message.

* *Self-denial is a common thread in Christ teaching to His disciples. The kind of self-denial He sought was not a reclusive asceticism, but a willingness to obey His commandments, serve one another, and suffer – perhaps even die – for his sake.* (John Macarthur Bible commentary, Thomas Nelson 2005, pg. 1295)
* *“To endure the cross is not a tragedy; it is the suffering which is the fruit of an exclusive allegiance to Jesus Christ. When it comes, it is not an accident, but a necessity. It is not the sort of suffering, which is inseparable from this mortal life, but the suffering which is an essential part of the specifically Christian life. It is not suffering per-se but suffering-and-rejection, and not rejection for any cause or conviction of our own, but rejection for the sake of Christ.”* (The Cost of Discipleship, Dietrich Bonhoeffer)

b) God has a personal discipleship programme for each one of us. He wants us to yield our lives over to this programme so that we will be transformed into the likeness of his son Jesus.

6- There is a reward for true discipleship **– (Mark 10:29-30, Colossians 3:24, Matthew 25:23, 1 Corinthians 9:24-27)**

True disciples will hear their masters voice saying: “Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!”

Discussion Questions

1. What does it mean to take up your cross? Matt 16:24-25
2. Should we count the cost of being a disciple of Jesus? Luke 14:25-35
3. What good is it if a man gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Matt 16: 26-27
4. How do we save our lives, according to Matt 16:24-25 & 1 John 5:12
5. Where will your heart be? Luke 12:32-34

**Memory verse:** *“Then he said to them all: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.”* – Luke 9:23