

Is Jesus One of Many – or your One and Only?

Luke 14:25-35 NIV Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: (26) "If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters--yes, even their own life--such a person **cannot be my disciple**. (27) And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me **cannot be my disciple**. (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? (29) For if you lay the foundation and are not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule you, (30) saying, 'This person began to build and wasn't able to finish.' (31) "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**. (34) "Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? (35) It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure pile; it is thrown out. "Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear."

The author suggests that in some families and cultures, *"if you were to become a follower without your family's blessing, you [will be] thought of as hating your family. A decision to follow Christ would [be] interpreted as turning your back on your family and walking away from them."*

- Any examples or stories you can share?
- In choosing to become a fully committed follower of Jesus, what are some possible consequences regarding one's personal or extended family?
- This is why Jesus commanded all his followers/disciples to be baptized in water. It was not a private ceremony. Does Jesus leave room for us to customize our faith and choose not to be baptized in water?

(AMP) If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his [own] father and mother [in the sense of indifference to or relative disregard for them in comparison with his attitude toward God] and [likewise] his wife and children and brothers and sisters--[yes] and even his own life also--he cannot be My disciple.

What is the one major theme in these 10 verses:

In light of the theme, Jesus gives advice (grey highlights). Which we will study later. What, generally speaking, is that advice?

There are those who say this strong message was not given to the general public, but that it was directed to his apostles and those of a "higher" calling.

- What do you think?
- Who, ultimately, is being addressed here? (v.26)
- Does this scenario fit the "Not a Fan – but a Completely Committed Follower" theme?
- Why or Why not?

Make of list of those things that are required in order to be a disciple (a fully committed follower of Jesus)

v. 26 How does this requirement fly in the face of the two Great Commandments?

(CEV) You cannot be my disciple, unless you love me more than you love your father and mother, your wife and children, and your brothers and sisters. You cannot come with me unless you love me more than you love your own life.

(NLT) "If you want to be my disciple, you must hate everyone else by comparison – your father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters..."

The author says, *"When we compare our relationship with him to anyone else there should be no competition. Fans will try and make Jesus one of many. Some fans may even make Jesus the first of many. But when Jesus defines the relationship he makes it clear; he wants to be your one and only."*

Four Heart-Searching Questions: These are not rhetorical questions. How you answer them can help show you what is competing with Jesus for your affection.

1. For what do you sacrifice your money?

- The Bible says, **Matthew 6:21 NIV** *For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.* The reason Jesus talked more about money than any other subject is because it can easily become his chief competition.
- The path of money and the path of following Jesus will eventually go in different directions. **Matthew 6:24 NIV** *"No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."*

2. When you're hurt, where do you go for comfort?

- Parent, spouse, refrigerator? *"There is certainly nothing wrong with finding comfort from family and friends; that's part of God's design. But the question is, 'Do they take the place of Jesus'"*
- Story of a hurt child in a schoolyard.

3. What disappoints or frustrates you the most? What makes you moody?

- When we feel overwhelmed with disappointment...and it has the power to determine who we are and what kind of day we have, it very well may be evidence that something is more important than it should be.
- Story of boy on a fishing trip with his father.

4. What is it that really gets you excited?

- Over a football game; "Dad, I've never seen you so excited." Oops.

Jesus won't share you with another lover. We are the bride of Christ. When we share our affections, attention, and allegiance with anyone or anything else, it is like we're having an affair. We don't say to our spouse, "I don't mind you dating other people as long as I am leading the race in your heart." No, we want to be the one and only one in the race!

Jesus had defined the relationship. Now we must count the cost. (vss. 28-35).

- What examples does Jesus give about counting the cost? How does each example relate to following Jesus?
- What word/s describe the results of not counting the cost of being a fully committed follower of Jesus?