



STORIES OF LIFE!

The Gospel of Luke

A Costly Story!

Luke 14:25-35

Message #45 of 50 – S827

Sermon given on January 20, 2019



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

A Costly Story!

Luke 14:25-35

Opening Comments

- Turn to **Luke 14**
- We continue a study through the Gospel of Luke – **The Stories of Life**
- About ten years ago a friend blessed Kelly and me with an all-expenses-paid trip to Cabo San Lucas in a condo overlooking the ocean
- It was, to us, an extravagant expression of grace and love
- It was something we could never have done for ourselves
- In some ways, salvation is like that – an extravagant expression of grace and love that we couldn't have attained to on our own
- It is a free gift of God's grace attained by faith in Jesus Christ
- Speaking of free gifts – give away devotional
- I am so thankful that salvation is free – if salvation cost anything, the price would be too high for anyone to be saved
- That doesn't mean that living the Christian life is cheap
- In fact, to live a life that truly glorifies God, blesses others, and grows faith, it is going to cost something
- And sadly, it is a price that too many Christians are unwilling to pay
- And because they are unwilling to pay the cost, they are going to miss out on the abundant life that Jesus promised them
- Not only that, but the impact they could have had on this world is diminished to the point of insignificance
- I don't know about you, but I want to make a difference in this world for the sake of Jesus Christ
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **A Costly Story!**
- Let's begin with verse 25
- **Luke 14:25**

- Jesus is making His way to Jerusalem and His appointment on the cross to pay for the sins of the world
- ‘great multitudes’ = many thousands are following Him
- But Jesus knows their hearts – most are not sincere
- Jesus was not impressed with large numbers of people
- And so, He regularly said some things that sifted out the people who were not serious about the kingdom of God
- As a pastor, I don’t believe it is my responsibility to make you feel good about yourself
- It is my responsibility to teach you about the kingdom of God as it is revealed to us in the Word of God
- And to challenge you to live up to the high cost that was paid to get you into the kingdom of God **1 Peter 1:18-19**
 ...knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like silver or gold*, from your aimless conduct *received* by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.
- If you want to feel good about yourself, let Jesus live out of you
- As Jesus looked over the ‘great multitudes’ He knew that many, if not most of them wanted something easier than what He was about to say
- My guess is that could be true with someone here or watching or listening later
- I pray the Holy Spirit works in your heart to give you ‘ears to hear’ what God wants to say to you today
- In this message Jesus is going to give us four traits of someone who wants to live the good story that God wants to write about Jesus
- First trait – **Love Jesus above all!**
- **Luke 14:26**
- Jesus is not telling them to literally hate these most intimate of relationships
- That would contradict what He has taught elsewhere **Matthew 22:37-39**
 Jesus said to him, “ ‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’”
- What Jesus is saying is that your love for Jesus should overshadow all other affections

- One of the things I have learned in my life is that I will never learn to love Kelly as I should until I learn how to love Jesus more
- I can't really love my wife (or anyone else) until I really love Jesus!
- Until Jesus becomes everything in my heart, I won't love her as I should
- Love Jesus above all else
- Second trait – **Die to Self!**
- **Luke 14:27**
- We looked at this trait in chapter 9
- Some think some bad thing in their life is their cross, some illness or disability, or some bad relationship or financial set-back
- Those are not crosses – that is life in a fallen world
- To bear your cross is to deny yourself – to say no to your desires, preference, or wishes if they prevent you from loving Jesus or anyone else
- It is about putting yourself last – laying aside your rights
- Last week I said that humility is not about thinking yourself as small or insignificant, it is not thinking about yourself at all
- It takes humility to die to self – to deny yourself – to bear your cross
- This is where most Christians balk at Jesus' call to a deeper walk with Him – The reason some Christians don't love Jesus more is because they love themselves too much
- Jesus knew He was asking a lot, and so, He adds a couple of parables or similes to encourage them to count the cost
- **Luke 14:28-32**
- This is a radical thing that Jesus is saying
- It is one of my convictions that He would want all believers to be disciples, fully devoted followers, loving Him above all else, daily taking up their cross and following Him – Paul **Philippians 3:7-8**
But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. 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...
- But here he is telling them to think it over before you start down that path

- Commit to go all the way to the end, no matter what, or don't start at all
- There is nothing more tragic than a Christian who makes a commitment to Christ that they are actually unwilling to follow through on
- Jesus says it would be better not to start
- Count the cost before you commit to love Jesus above all else and die to self every day
- That brings us to the third trait – **Forsake everything!**
- **Luke 14:33**
- Just like a disciple has to love Jesus more than anyone else, He must love heaven more than anything on this earth **Matthew 6:19-21**
Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
- This does not mean that you have to get rid of everything, but that everything you have is subject to God and His will for your life and stuff.
- Treat your stuff as if it all belongs to God, and strive to use it for His glory, the blessing of others, and the growth of faith
- Detach all emotion and affection from the stuff of this world
- Your car is what you use to get around, your house is where you sleep, your money is a tool to accomplish God's will
- The tighter you grip the stuff of this life, the harder it is for you to live the life Jesus is calling you to live
- The fourth and final trait – **Be a witness!**
- **Luke 14:34-35**
- Salt is added to food to improve the flavor
- You are not here on this earth by accident – God has a purpose for your life – it is why you are here
- We were as fit for heaven the moment we were saved as we are right now.
- God could have taken us to be with Him the moment received Christ, like the robber on the cross next to Christ.

- But He didn't, He left us here to be His witnesses and to be disciples of His Son, so that others will see Jesus and be saved through the testimony of our lives.
- What flavor are you adding to the world around you?
- This is kind of a hard statement Jesus is making – If you aren't being a witness for Me (Jesus), then what is your life good for?
- Don't be a bland Christian – add the flavor of Christ to the world
- Turn to **1 Corinthians 3**
- This is not a salvation issue, you don't have to love Jesus above all for God to love you
- You don't have to bear your cross for God to forgive your sins
- You don't have to forsake everything to inherit eternal life
- You don't have to be a witness of Jesus to this world to go to heaven
- In fact, all you must do is believe in Jesus
- The Bible teaches that salvation is an act of God's grace through faith in Jesus
- If you do that, you are going to heaven
- Paul tells us what it will be like when we get there
- **1 Corinthians 3:9-14**
- There is a reward awaiting those who have chosen to walk the harder way as a disciple of Christ
- For those Christians who take the easy way
- **1 Corinthians 3:15**
- Listen – we can live this life enjoying the temporary, vaporous pleasures of this world and end up in heaven smelling like we barely escaped hell
- Or we can walk the harder, narrow path of following Jesus in this temporary life and experience the eternal, infinite pleasures of heaven
- The more I get to know Jesus and what He did for me, the more I want to walk that narrow path
- The world can keep its meaningless pleasures, I'm holding out for something infinitely more gratifying and pleasurable
- In this text Jesus is sorting what who is serious about following Him from the ones who aren't
- Four traits of a serious Christ-follower

- Love Jesus above all else!
- Die to self!
- Forsake everything!
- Be a witness of Jesus!
- Let's all get serious about following Jesus!
- After all, He got serious about saving us!
- **Pray!**