

Building and Battling

Luke 14:25-33

The mystery here is that the traditional view of the two parables contradicts everything else Jesus said on discipleship

What?

We regard our lives as lost, and follow regardless of cost

The traditional view—

In order to thin the crowd, Jesus named His severe terms

They needed to sit down and “count the cost,” like the tower builder, or there would be shame before the Lord

The second parable pictures someone at war with God

The outcome is defeat, so the point is surrendering to God

In the traditional view these two parables together say:

“Consider that the cost of following Me is great, but the cost of rejecting Me is greater; so count the cost carefully”

Neither experience, nor Scripture ever indicate that followers of Jesus should “count the cost”

Connection with Jesus—

Luke 9:24, ESV—For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it

Jesus spells out what the cost is, and says “Choose”

Matthew 9:9, ESV—As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, “Follow me.” And he rose and followed him

There was no logical consideration, no hesitating

In our text, Jesus says, “Leave family, bear your cross, renounce everything, or you can’t be My disciple”

Can anyone say, “I can do without that, and that?” No!

The Big Question—So what do the parables mean?

In other parables, powerful figures represent the Lord

So in the first parable, the tower-builder is Jesus building His kingdom—there is no option of failure and shame

In the second parable, the king is Jesus, warring against evil and unrighteousness—there is no option of failure or truce

So it is Jesus who is counting the cost

The cost to Jesus was the people who left Him

Even greater was the cost to Jesus of His own life

Verse 33 should be translated “therefore,” not “likewise”

Jesus was explaining that His terms of discipleship are severe, because the cause is all or nothing

There can be no failure, no terms with the enemy

So this requires committed followers with genuine faith

So What?

In believing in Jesus, the terms are difficult

But Jesus will place His powerful Spirit in you to enable you

So the message is, say goodbye to life as you know it; but say hello to life you can’t imagine

Specifically, Jesus says “Say goodbye to family, your life agenda, and everything you own”

The last word—Paul

Philippians 3:8, ESV—Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ

Now What?

Pray and hold out your possessions and family on open palms, offering them to the Lord

Pray for opportunities to serve sacrificially