

Master Teacher Outline

THE COST OF FOLLOWING CHRIST

(15–20 minutes)

Use this outline and the Biblical Commentary to prepare to share the truths of this passage with learners.

Introduction: We've boiled down what it means to follow Jesus to a simple A-B-C. Admit. Believe. Commit. For good measure, we often throw in a prayer of salvation just to make sure our bases are covered. However, when we consider the actual words of Jesus, Himself, we find that following Him actually requires a lot more of us.

1. Following Christ means being devoted to Him above anyone else (Luke 14:25–26).

Jesus was concerned with having true disciples as opposed to legions of fans and admirers. Jesus used drastic and dramatic language to show people the level of devotion it took to be His disciple compared to their commitment to other relationships in their lives.

Illustration: David relates other accounts from earlier in Luke. He summarizes what Jesus was saying to people by writing: "Become homeless. Let someone else bury your dad. Don't even say good-bye to your family" (p. 8). He closes the section by pointing out that Jesus "was simply and boldly making it clear from the start that if you follow him, you abandon everything . . . even your family" (p.10).

2. Following Christ means continually sacrificing who we were for who He is (Luke 14:27).

The cross was a symbol of death, and carrying one's cross meant going to one's death. Jesus knew that following Him might result in physical death but also wanted His audience to understand the self-sacrifice that discipleship certainly required.

Illustration: David contrasts a scene of a church-wide celebration on the multimillion-dollar church campus on his first Sunday pastoring the Church at Brook Hills in Birmingham, Alabama, with a recent trip he had taken to work with persecuted Christians in Asia. He points out, in the midst of our American culture, even "well-meaning, Bible-believing Christians" can settle for a "Christianity that revolves around catering to ourselves when the central message of Christianity is actually about abandoning ourselves" (p. 7).

3. Following Christ requires a cost that should be considered before we commit (Luke 14:28–32).

Jesus admonished His listeners to consider whether they were willing to fully follow Him to the end wherever He might lead them.

Jesus also called upon His audience to consider whether they were willing to follow Him in the face of great adversity from a hostile world.

Illustration: David acknowledges the cost of following Christ can certainly be high, but also shares a realization he had in India, that the cost of our not following Christ is high for those who do not know Him at all (pp. 14–15).

4. Following Christ requires radical abandonment of everything we previously sought in life for the freedom to fully pursue Him and His glory (Luke 14:33).

For any who still might not have understood, Jesus made it perfectly clear in order to be His disciple one must give up everything, all of his earthly pursuits and desires.

Being a disciple of Jesus was an all-or-nothing pursuit; there could be no casual observers.

Illustration: David imagines what it would be like if we actually literally lived the parable of the treasure in the field. He concludes that, in this picture, Jesus is someone worth losing everything for (pp. 17–18).

Conclusion: Most of us would rather imagine all the blessings we'll receive from following Christ than count the cost of what it will take to be His disciple. The reality is we have to give

up everything, including ourselves. The question we're left with is this—do we believe He is worth it?

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