

NO SECOND PLACE!



*you were
GREAT
but...someone
else was
BETTER.*

TEXT: Luke 14:25-33

THESIS: To show that there is no room in discipleship that places Christ in second place.

INTRO.: A. In this passage the Savior is speaking of discipleship and uses very graphic language. He basically teaches that those who claim to be His disciples or followers cannot allow anything else to take first place. A "disciple" is an *apprentice, a follower, a learner, a student*. Jesus states bluntly that **there are no genuine SECOND PLACE DISCIPLES**. In order to be a true disciple, a believer must be **"all in!"**

B. In Jesus' teaching here regarding discipleship, He uses very strong, maybe even blunt language. In fact, he reinforces all **three** of His illustrations with the words **"cannot be my disciple."** Jesus had gathered a great multitude of *followers*, but He knew many followed Him for *His miracles, healings, His spectacular ministry, etc.* Suddenly Jesus turned to the crowd and began a strong, clear and pointed message regarding what real followship demanded...

I. TRUE DISCIPLESHIP MUST BE ABOVE RELATIONSHIPS: vv.26, 27

A. A Seemingly Harsh Statement: **"cannot be my disciple"**

1. He speaks of HATING those we naturally love most: *parents, spouses, siblings...*
2. Is He really speaking of cutting all human ties with our closest loved ones?
3. Is He demanding that His followers become monastic, distant, and against all feeling for others, even in our homes and families?

ILLUS.: Catholic clergy (priests, nuns, monks, etc.) have indeed taken this statement and applied it literally. They separate themselves from society, including family and even make any such relationships taboo. In fact they even call them **"sacraments"** (*a religious ritual that imparts grace to the soul*).

One preacher described R/C priests like this: *"They call themselves 'fathers' and dress like 'mothers' – but in reality they are neither."*

B. A Comparative Statement:

1. Jesus is NOT saying to disregard those we love most or to actually "hate" them, but that He, NOT they, must take first place.

ILLUS.: My mother and I had a really strong and loving bond as I was growing up (not so much with dad who was an alcoholic, who later got born again and then things changed!). Then I got saved at age 22 and soon went into the U.S. Army and was shipped to Germany for two years, *she wept every day*. Then to top it off, when I came home and got married and decided to go to seminary for several years in N.Y. State, the separation was very hard on her. I never stopped loving her nor she me, but I had to put Christ first.

2. Jesus is saying that if you really want to follow Him, be His apprentice, learn of Him and become intimate in friendship, He must take First place in our lives. **NO SECOND PLACE for the Savior!**

II. TRUE DISCIPLESHIP MUST BE ABOVE CIRCUMSTANCES: vv. 28-30

A. Another Comparative Statement:

B. Here He Speaks of Business and Money: **"cannot be my disciple"**

1. So often believers become so obsessed with making money and caring for their family, they neglect the Lord and His work.

- a. Whatever our life pursuit, we need to count the *real* cost, not the *obvious* cost.
- b. What is our priority? Do we only look for short range benefits and blessings?
- c. My first church, (while a student) couldn't afford to pay me – should I quit?

ILLUS.: We lived in a 31 foot trailer, had our first child, college expenses, working at IBM at night and going to school during the day. I had to think of my immediate family and sometimes I felt I missed out on the money and luxuries, family, and other relationships, events, that others enjoyed, and even opportunities to witness to loved ones, etc., because I had to move away to become a pastor always at financial loss (2 churches in NY, 1 in MD and one here for 31 years in Fairless Hills). But I had to follow (*be a true disciple*) of the Lord and His leading in the ministry He called me too FIRST – **NO SECOND PLACE for the Savior!**

III. TRUE DISCIPLESHIP MUST BE ABOVE HARDSHIPS: vv. 31-33

- A. A Final Comparative Statement: **"cannot be my disciple"**
- B. The Odds Are Against the Disciple: (*10 thousand vs. 20 thousand!*)

1. Arch Enemy #1 – Satan:

- a. He will throw every obstacle at the believer to discredit, demoralize and destroy him.
- b. *The world, the flesh and the devil* along with *the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life* will try to defeat you.
- c. Your *besetting sin* will overtake you.

2. Arch Enemy #2 – YOU:

- a. If you don't count the cost NOW you will be defeated LATER.
- b. Discouragement because of your failures will take you down, but remember that He that is in you is greater than he that is in the world.
- c. YOU can be a winner, not a loser, if you look at the long-range benefits: Heaven, rewards, fellowship with the saints of God forever, service to the King of Kings, and joy unspeakable and happiness forever...the benefits will outweigh the defeats or loss in this life!
- d. **NO SECOND PLACE FOR THE SAVIOR!**

CONCL.: Forget the blights and focus on the benefits!

After 65 years of preaching the Word and not allowing Satan to defeat me, I look back at all the Lord has blessed me with. I entered college with almost no money and left without owing anyone a dollar! Plus I built a good sized library, but I don't know where the money came from. I had a great marriage for just short of 60 years to Shirley who is in Heaven (who I miss every day!). I have a son in Heaven, Dean. I have 3 living children, 11 grandchildren, 15 great grandchildren. And I tried to teach both by the spoken word and the Word of God and by my example, that there is **NO SECOND PLACE FOR THE SAVIOR!**

What about YOU? A learner, a follower, an apprentice, a student of our Savior?

Are you a disciple?