

General Topics :: Cost of discipleship? Holiness?

Cost of discipleship? Holiness? - posted by rocklife (), on: 2005/1/19 21:15

In my 4 year walk with the Lord, in searching the Scriptures and asking the Holy Spirit of Truth to guide me, God is opening my eyes to see following Jesus is much harder than I was first told with the "peace and joy" Gospel I got at first. Jesus tells in the New Testament there is a cost, and Christians need to tell people there is a cost to following Him. He tells of a king going into battle must at first calculate if he is willing to do such a thing, evaluating things.

It has been 4 years, and only recently have I heard a preaching about the cost of discipleship. I follow Jesus with the little strength I have, and now I see He requires even more holiness and love than I thought, but I suspected.

What about this cost of discipleship? Can you tell me a bit about Jesus' cost? It is so hard on my flesh, and I love to follow Him, but it is hard. I have only heard a little about this, and I have seen it from the Bible and from Voice of the Martyrs ministry, but it seems Christian teachings don't even seem to ever explain to young believers that there is actually a cost. The church people in my neighborhood are so disgustingly worldly and materially wealthy I doubt their love of God.

Can anyone encourage me about this? I am willing to follow God, have others experienced and can explain the cost? Jesus from the Bible seems to want His followers to understand the cost. Is it simply hell or heaven?

What about holiness? What is this all about? Jesus says for us to be holy? What does this mean in reality?

What does following Jesus cost? What is giving up our lives and taking up the cross mean?

Re: Cost of discipleship? Holiness? - posted by Spitfire, on: 2005/1/19 21:48

Quote:

-----have others experienced and can explain the cost?

Hi Jina. I have definitely experienced this. This being, I never understood until about a year ago just what following Jesus is going to cost me. Now, the truth is beginning to sink in and, yes, it is hard. My favorite line is, "If it was easy, everybody would be doing it." Jesus said, "Only a few ever find it (the path to life)." I've been reminding and encouraging myself with this verse from 2Corinthians 4:17-18 TLB: *"These troubles and sufferings of ours are, after all, quite small and won't last very long. Yet this short time of distress will result in God's richest blessing upon us forever and ever! So we do not look at what we can see right now, the troubles all around us, but we look forward to the joys in heaven which we have not seen. The troubles will soon be over, but the joys to come will last forever."* In other words, it will all be worth it. When this life is over (which will seem like a simple puff of smoke in eternity), we will just be thinking we got a great deal! ;-) Come on. Let's go! Love, Dian.

Re: Cost of discipleship? Holiness? - posted by Gideons (), on: 2005/1/19 22:07

Yes, this is a tough question. It seems to me that we hardly focus at all on this. It's like buying a car and signing all the papers "Well you know how the government is and all these things are required." There's not too much substance in the fine details we're told and we go on our way.

Then a bit later, we get a phone call "Ahem Mr. Pugh what we are going to do about this situation." If we much more honest in presenting the gospel, we have less "conversions" but much less backsliding as well.

I praise God that he's waking you up. He's doing the same thing in my life.

Is there anything in my life that's more important in your life than Jesus Christ?

The cost is simply this, you can't be God anymore. If you're going to surrender to Christ, he owns your bank account, what you do with your free time, your job, your family, everything. I lay everything down on the altar (Romans 12:1,2). Unfortunately at times I've taken things off the altar and had to retrieve them and go back on the altar.

It means I don't have an agenda other than His. Nothing, nada. Jesus what is your heart, what do you want me to do?

It means that I'll simply submit to Jesus and do whatever He tells me to do and I won't do anything else.

Holiness is simply this yielded life to Christ that's washed in the blood of Jesus. As the Holy Spirit quickens my hearts and I repent and yield to Him, he begins to transform my heart. I can only be holy through the power of His blood and the power of the Holy Spirit.

What does that look like in daily life you ask? The blood and the Holy Spirit is slowly changing me and seemingly unveiling some hidden things I didn't know were there.

Here's an example. I'm at the grocery store and went through an automated checkout and the machine spit out an extra \$20. The old me would have simply said "Wow thank you Jesus" and stuck the money in my pocket. The "new" me simply gave the money back.

And I've been quickened to repent before my congregation and here on SI as well which initially was quite painful but as my need to have a reputation has diminished it's become much easier.

This verse sums it up quite nicely. Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Re: Cost, Discipleship, Holiness - posted by crsschk (), on: 2005/1/20 1:16

Been thinking on this as well. Especially in light of the other threads that are currently converging.

Here's a quote that jumped out at me recently;

“It is the snare of a selfish holiness with no God in it. Holiness is an individual protest that God may lift the life of the Church to the standard He made for it, not an individual pet based on my little convictions. What does holiness magnify? Jesus ever, Jesus only, Jesus all in all.”

~ Oswald Chambers

Quote:

-----If we much more honest in presenting the gospel, we have less "conversions" but much less backsliding as well.

Ed, was thinking very much along those same lines musing over the whole OSAS issue. That it isn't a very far drop when you are only two inches off the ground, but if you are standing on the precipice...

There is a line from a song "I can never go back to my old life..." would always bring the tears, it's so true even if the possibility exists that I could. A terrifying thought.

Maybe something that gets left out or forgotten sometimes in the 'cost' is that the 'rewards' are not all future. A word that I have been chewing on is 'co-operation'. Perhaps a Paris Reidhead equivalent to the 'Prime Product' and the "By- Product".

We still get in on the deal, but it's not necessarily our motivating factor, 'What's in it for me.'

God's thought.

That is all that matters. Even in the things we think we ought to do, that we can find some scriptural justification for, is it the right time? Time to speak or be silent? Guess there is a big difference between hearing and listening and it's something

ng I still have a long ways to go as the babbling often times here would attest.
Are we listening? To that still small voice. Am I?

Think SI is one giant disciple making venture amongst other things. So much to glean from, to muse on, to challenge our preconceived ideas, to help each other press on to the high calling in Christ Jesus. Straying here a bit, it's just coming out.

It is indeed hard and narrow and painful ... at times. All this renewing and de-programming of the ways of the world and our propensity's towards sin and selfishness, pride, rebellion, anger... With good reason Jesus said you must ***be born a gain***. Baby's come out crying, coming out of that comfort zone and if they knew what they were in for... I guess sometimes it can be looked at as if the cost is more than the reward, which couldn't be farther from the truth.

Phi 4:7 *And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

There is nothing, no cost too great that is not worth this 'reward'.

Psa 34:8 *O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.*

We know these words and if you have felt them, tasted them...

I have absolutely no idea where I am going with all this. It's been another mysterious day on God's planet and guess I am just leaking here, have to see what the morning brings.

Be encouraged brethren. It is all worth it, so worth it, to God be the glory forever.

Re: Cost of discipleship? Holiness? - posted by philologos (), on: 2005/1/20 3:52

Quote:

-----What about holiness? What is this all about? Jesus says for us to be holy? What does this mean in reality?

1. the short answer is, it is the life of God revealed in the life of the believer.
2. If you want a long answer... I am about half way through one on the Christian Perfection thread. Find the beginning of the thread and read through leisurely!

Your current experience was captured many years ago by an English songwriter who wrote...

"I see that You are asking for
much more than I first bargained for,
I seem to stand, once more,
at the beginning of it all.."
Graham Kendrick

Re: - posted by Spitfire, on: 2005/1/20 5:54

Quote:

-----Been thinking on this as well. Especially in light of the other threads that are currently converging.

I'm glad someone else thinks this way. I'm not sure where to post this, because I see no sense in beginning a new thread on what I'm about to share. It really is about a "cost" that I'm paying right now, so this is as good a place as any.

My 26 year old daughter is getting her master's degree at Lee University in guidance counseling. It is an hour's drive from our home, so she usually calls me when she starts home to talk. Last night, she called and started telling me about a little test that she took in class. The class is in psychology. She said the test asked all sorts of questions, basically to determine if they are emotionally stable. She said to me, "You know, Mom, as I was taking this test, I became really concerned for you." I said, "Oh yeah? How so?" She said, "I realized if you had to answer these questions honestly to a profess

ional, you would sound like you need to be committed." She said, "I'm worried about you." You see, I share everything with my daughter. She knows the difficulty of sorting out the truth. She has seen me in deep distress. She knows how I'm struggling to find all my hope in God alone. She sees how I have no other hope left. I guess it does make us look kind of crazy to the world. I suppose, by their definition, we are crazy. Isn't this what's wrong with everybody? Wouldn't we be able to empty the insane asylums if we could teach everyone to surrender to Christ? I often have thoughts of wishing there were some pill I could take that would "fix" me. Been there, done that, left in a huff. You know what I found, the so called "professionals" need fixing too. Who's going to fix them? After that little chat we had on the phone, I felt really sad, even though I know that I am now on the right track. I felt sad, because, hardly anyone in this world understands. They just think you are a nut. Oh well...just another cost of discipleship. Love, Dian.

Re: Cost of discipleship? Holiness? - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2005/1/20 9:25

Quote:
-----Can anyone encourage me about this? I am willing to follow God, have others experienced and can explain the cost? Jesus from the Bible seems to want His followers to understand the cost. Is it simply hell or heaven?

The cost is everything, it is your life surrendered on the altar for Jesus to consume with His flame. But what is the cost really? You give him your sin and he gives you eternal life, you give Him your cares and burdens and he gives you love, joy, and peace. There really is no cost, we hold things precious that are really of no value in view of eternal matters.

If the prospect of holiness unto the Lord seems daunting to you you are in good company. If you've ever read the Sermon on the Mount you will be challenged to your core by that call to holiness. Jesus speaks through that sermon of an inward purity and to top it off he says, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect", yikes! How can I be all those things in that sermon? Jesus gives the answer towards the end of the sermon;

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?(Matthew 7:7-11)

God Himself will provide all that is necessary to be holy in and through the Holy Spirit if we will just ask, seek, and knock. He is so good! Just lay it all down on the altar everyday, and ask, seek, and knock, he will give you very good gifts.

In Christ,

Ron

Re: Cost of discipleship? Holiness? - posted by Jimm (), on: 2005/1/20 9:47

Rocklife

You know it's funny you should say this. For me one thing that has been thrown at me several times recently is this verses:

1 Corinthians 15:19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of **all men** most miserable.

And...

1 Corinthians 15:30 **And why stand we in jeopardy every hour?** 31 I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily. 32 If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, **what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not?** let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die. 33 Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners. 34 Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.

These are two important questions which Paul answers by the resurrection. What are your thoughts of the rewards of the resurrection in Christ?

There is a great cost of suffering in Christ but as Paul says in Romans 8:18 For I reckon that the **sufferings** of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the **glory** which shall be revealed in us.

It is not that we close our eyes to the sufferings but we should have esteem the reward of Christ as being greater than the treasures and comfort of the world.

James

Re: Sanity and Psychology - posted by crsschk (), on: 2005/1/20 10:13

Quote:

----- I suppose, by their definition, we are crazy. Isn't this what's wrong with everybody? Wouldn't we be able to empty the insane asylums if we could teach everyone to surrender to Christ?

Couldn't but help draw from the other thread;
(https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id4278&forum35) The Love of God song , and Ron's reply, showing how the song came together;

"Since the lines (3rd stanza from the Jewish poem) had been found penciled on the wall of a patient's room in an insane asylum after he had been carried to his grave, the general opinion was that this inmate had written the epic in moments of sanity."

Could we with ink the ocean fill,
And were the skies of parchment made,
Were every stalk on earth a quill,
And every man a scribe by trade,
To write the love of God above,
Would drain the ocean dry.
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,
Though stretched from sky to sky.

~~~~~

Wondering out loud, who was more sane?  
Does an 'insane' man write such words as were weaved into that song?

*And he defending himself with these things, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, you rave! Your many letters turn you to insanity. But he said, Not to insanity, most noble Festus, but I speak words of truth and sanity.*  
Act 26:24,25 (MKJV)

*He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God. Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?*

*Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me.*  
Joh 8:47-49

One definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results. It is quite ironic that under the guise of being 'emotionally stable' the world outside of Christ **is** insane.

*For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Mar 8:36*

That's insanity.

Living a life of things and stuff and denying the fact that a death sentence is hanging over you...  
Worse yet, that a life raft is there for the taking and yet "I can swim to shore"...That's insanity.

Sorry, off on a tangent again. Can't throw the baby out with the bath water. Sure there is some gains and help for the ma lady's that plague the race. But for mere men to try and explain spiritual things by way of 'general opinion'...

*Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth; combining spiritual things with spiritual words.*

*Now the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually judged.*

*But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, and he himself is judged of no man.*

*For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he should instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.*

1Co 2:13-16

Press on sister, in my prayers.

**Re: - posted by rookie (), on: 2005/1/20 11:06**

I too have been learning about the costs of discipleship. For the past three years, the theme in my life seems to be, counting the costs. The Lord gave me a Scripture about two years ago which I have shared in the past at SI.

Is 35:

8 A highway shall be there, and a road,  
And it shall be called the Highway of Holiness.  
The unclean shall not pass over it,  
But it shall be for others.  
Whoever walks the road, although a fool,  
Shall not go astray.

This has been His promise to me. Jesus said: Mat 11:

28 Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.Â"

The walk we walk with Him teaches us day by day to be like our Lord. He says to us: "learn from Me." I have found that if I look to Him day by day, the mountain before us never is too great to climb. If I follow Him day by day, He will lead us up the mountain. "Whoever walks the road, although a fool, shall not go astray."

In Christ  
Jeff

**Re: - posted by Spitfire, on: 2005/1/20 11:12**

Quote:

-----yikes! How can I be all those things in that sermon? Jesus gives the answer towards the end of the sermon;  
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I'm so glad you reminded me of this today, Ron. I know I will find an open space of life soon. God will download his life to me in due season if I faint not. Ok. I shall press on...Love, Dian.



**Re: - posted by ZekeO (), on: 2005/1/20 11:14**

To over simplify the matter, whatever Jesus tells you to do, do it. Keith Daniels preach on the Holy Spirit was quiet freeing for me personally. The man is a firebrand but his wisdom on how and when to rebuke sin was confirmationary. I think similar lines of application should be taken with ourselves.

**Re: Pastor Gideons, on: 2005/1/20 18:36**

Hello everyone,

Pastor Gideons, of all the responses I've read here so far, yours I like the most.

I hold fast to a great quote by AW Tozer. He once said, "God crucifies without pity, those whom He wishes to raise without measure". Selah.

Holiness always involves death, death to our desires and agendas. It also involves obedience. Jesus was obedient unto all things, even death on the cross. It's impossible to be His disciple and not be willing to obey Him. John 14 has some awesome scriptures about keeping His commandments. I especially like vs 21 where Jesus tells us that if we keep His commandments, we will be loved by the Father. Being loved by the Father is as good as it gets. He also says that He Himself will manifest Himself to us. If you have ever experienced the manifest presence of Jesus in any way, shape, or form you know you will never be the same. Nobody has to teach you how to worship, it is humble, deep, spiritual submission to the King of Glory. It comes through heart that because of His presence is very repentant.

Finally, Holiness comes from being led by the Holy Spirit. Where did Jesus get His instructions to obey? From being alone with the Father. In fact, He says that He did not speak or do unless He first heard from the Father. Oh that we should be so blessed. How silent we would be for some time to come. But if we persisted in fellowship with God, waiting at His feet in silent awe, He would begin to tell us what He wanted us to do. Obedience to these instructions will be right in the center of holiness and purity.

Just my thoughts, I appreciate all of yours.

**Re: Cost of discipleship? Holiness? - posted by rocklife (), on: 2005/1/20 20:10**

I've just listened to Oswald Smith the Spirit filled Life featured here. Thanks for some insights, all of these are encouraging me to press on, God wants more holiness from me, and the cost of giving up sin is worth it. I am actually putting to death my lifelong ambition of painting and art. After I gave up college 2 years ago at God's leading and much prayer, I see now He is calling me to give up all career ambitions of the flesh, which is new and exciting, but death too. I still have a problem with sometimes getting too wrapped up in celebrity gossip, things like Entertainment Tonight. Please pray I can give this up once and for all also, for strength to resist and strength to obey and put only good things before my eyes (as much as possible in this sinful world.)

Thank you for the encouragements, I am thankful God is teaching me to press into Holiness, where He is and which He is.

**Re: rocklife, on: 2005/1/22 18:19**

God bless you today. Tozer said that God crucifies without pity, those whom He wishes to raise without measure.

You are about to enter the abundant life that was promised by Jesus Himself. But let me caution you about this. It is only possible by faith. Paul said without faith it is impossible to please God. He also said that anything not of faith is sin. But faith in and of itself is of no value. Faith must have an object.

The object of faith for the Christian is Jesus Christ and him crucified. (the cross) In 1 Cor 1:18 Paul wrote that the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to those of us who are saved, it is the power of God. The power of God beloved, to lead an overcoming life. The blessing of God to enter into holy and Christlike living. The power of God to put our flesh and its carnal desires to death. The power of God to enter into the Holy of Holies as if we had never sinned at all. Our only access to God is through the shed blood of Jesus. His only access to us is the same way. To try to enter in any other way is death.

You will never accomplish the desire of your heart that is there because of Him, in your own ability. Forget self, religious agenda, and self acclamation. Let God have His way in your life. It is the High Way. Blessing will be upon you, blessings will overtake you. You will never have to worry about opportunity again. God's opportunity will overtake you as well. He will open doors that no man can close.

Sir, it is impossible to be like Jesus without setting your heart to walk in obedience. Jesus was obedient in all things. If you go to John 14, you will see that Jesus said that obedience was the badge of our love. He also promised in vs 21 that if we kept His commandments, we would be loved by the Father, and He Himself would manifest Himself to us. Ohalleluia. That sir is a place of achievement that money and fame cannot buy. It's reserved for those who are willing to go to the cross....and die.

Shalom and selah.