



The main job Jesus left us to do was to make disciples. There is a difference between a believer and a disciple. There is no such thing as an instant disciple. Disciples are made, not born. In Luke 14, Jesus was getting closer and closer to the cross. People who wanted to see a miracle or get a free meal from Him were mobbing Him. The crowd is about to become much smaller because He started setting forth the cost of discipleship, and it's not a popular message. It requires total commitment.

A hog and a hen sharing the same barnyard heard about a church's program to feed the hungry. The hog and the hen discussed how they could help. The hen said, "I've got it! We'll provide bacon and eggs for the church to feed the hungry." The hog thought about the suggestion and said, "There's only one thing wrong with your bacon and eggs idea. For you, it only requires a contribution, but from me, it will mean total commitment!" That's the cost of discipleship.

People choose to follow Jesus on several different levels of intimacy. It's like a set of concentric circles. On the outside you have the CROWD. The mob following Jesus knew who He was, but they would soon be gone. Today, the people in the Philippines who express an interest in Jesus represent the crowd, but they seldom ever worship with other believers. It's like the crowd of people who showed up every Anniversary. Where are they today?

A deeper level of commitment is the CONGREGATION. These are people who attend church on a fairly regular basis. These are people who attend church on a fairly regular basis. In other words, they "congregate" with other people to worship, but are not an active member of any local church. They call themselves church-shoppers, but they are more like church-hoppers. They are like a butterfly flitting from one church to another, never really committing themselves to serve Jesus. A deeper level of commitment is the CHURCH.

Marks of a Radical Disciple

FAMILY: MAKE GOD YOUR PRIORITY

Luke 14:26 - "If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own life—such a person cannot be my disciple.

The first image Jesus uses is a family. Are you surprised Jesus said that to be a disciple you must hate your family? To be a disciple, you must love Jesus more than you love anyone else—even family members. If you truly follow the Lord, you won't have to look for people to ridicule you and oppose you, they will find you—and they may be your family members. In Matthew 10:22 said, "You will be hated by everyone because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved (NIV)." Matthew 10:37 - "Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me (NIV)."

When God calls you, you have to make some difficult decisions, and sometimes your family will not jump up and down and rejoice over your choices. That's the first mark of a true disciple.

CROSS: LIVE LIKE YOU'RE DEAD

Luke 14:27 - "And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple (NIV)."

Real disciple is someone who carries his cross. Many Christians are just as confused today about what it means to carry a cross. The true message of the cross is DEATH. Today, the cross has become a piece of jewelry or lucky charm. In Jesus' time, it was a horrible, agonizing torture mode of execution. Galatians 6:14 - "May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world." (NIV)

These verses mean that there is nothing the world has to offer you that interests you. It's as if the world is dead to you and you are dead to the world. In many ways, a dead man is set free. You won't get offended. You won't be bitter. You won't get tempted. You won't be greedy. You won't be arrogant.

TOWER: COMMIT TO FINISH WELL

Luke 14:29-30 - "29 For if you lay the foundation and are not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule you, 30 saying, 'This person began to build and wasn't able to finish.'" (NIV)

Jesus presents the image of a man who plans on building a tower. Before he begins the construction, he must "count the cost" to see if he has enough resources to finish the job. Now this is the cost of discipleship, not the cost of salvation. Before you embark on the Christian life, you have to stop and ask, "Do I have enough to finish?" Living a Christ-like life is not easy. But it's the greatest decision I ever made. Good thing that God is the builder who finishes the job called salvation. In Philippians 1:6 Paul said, "being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus (NIV)."

Are you going to barely drag yourself across the finish line? Or are you going to summon God's strength so you can sprint across the finish line? Remember: A real disciple finishes strong.

WAR: SURRENDER TO THE STRONGER KING

Luke 14:31-33 - "31 Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Won't he first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? 32 If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. 33 In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples." (NIV)

In this image, Jesus describes two kings. One is outnumbered, so he wisely approaches the stronger king and makes peace before the battle ever begins. You and I are one of the kings and God is the other. Guess which one we are? Because we can never win against God, we must surrender to Him. In Jesus' time, a surrendering king could be made into a slave of the opposing king, so it required great humility to bow down and ask for terms of peace. It takes humility today to surrender to Jesus. This is my point: You cannot be a disciple unless you are willing to give up control of your life to Jesus. As long as you think you are strong enough to save yourself, you won't surrender to Jesus.

SALT: STAY PURE TO PRESERVE GOODNESS

Luke 14:34-35 - "34 "Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? 35 It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure pile; it is thrown out." (NIV)

We live in a nation suffering from moral decay at an alarming rate. Our society is getting more rotten by the day. Like salt, we must come in contact with our corrupting culture to slow down the process of decay. As salt, our job is to preserve the goodness that still exists in our culture. Salt irritates, but in addition to being a preservative, it is also an antiseptic—and our society needs a good cleaning! We must be salt in our corrupted world. If we don't speak up against evil, our nation will become even more perverse than it is now.



1. In the given marks of discipleship above, what area do you struggle the most?
2. What is stopping you from surrendering to Christ completely?
- 4.) Do you make the gospel impact your place of influence (school, work, family, etc.)?