

Foothills Christian Assembly Sermon February 9, 2020
Luke 14: 25 – 35 “Forsaking All – Part 4: The Disciple’s Singular Flavor”

25 Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them, 26 "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. 27 And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. 28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it-- 29 lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, 30 saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.' 31 Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? 32 Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace. 33 So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple. 34 "Salt is good; but if the salt has lost its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? 35 It is neither fit for the land nor for the dunghill, but men throw it out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

1 Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him. 2 And the Pharisees and scribes complained, saying, "This Man receives sinners and eats with them." 3 So He spoke this parable to them, saying: 4 "What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? 5 And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. 6 And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!' 7 I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance. 8 "Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? 9 And when she has found it, she calls her friends and neighbors together, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I lost!' 10 Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

I. Introduction

- a. Sproul “Jesus [is] ... talking about the need for Christians to have the kind of commitment and devotion that lasts over the long haul. The authentic discipleship that Jesus is looking for, is a reckless abandonment in personal commitment that some would regard as fanaticism. The difference, however, between Christian discipleship and fanaticism is at the point of sobriety. Jesus calls people to a sober commitment that is based upon a clear perception of what lies ahead. He asks people to consider strongly what it means to be a Christian. It means taking up your cross for the long haul. He did it for us, and he requires it from us.”¹
- b. Why would you do this, forsake all to follow Jesus? Why would you choose the path that will set you at odds with the whole world and require you to sacrifice all the world’s loves and joys? Why would you agree to a path of grief, pain and sorrow like Jesus walked? Even unto death? Because He is worthy.

¹ Sproul, R. C. (1999). [*A Walk with God: An Exposition of Luke*](#) (pp. 298–299). Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications.

- i. Phil 3: 7-11 “But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. 8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for **the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord**, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, **that I may gain Christ** 9 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; 10 **that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings**, being conformed to His death, 11 if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.”
 - ii. Forsaking all is the response of the mind, heart, will and soul brought to the sight of Christ Himself, even available to us this side of the veil of Jordan. We reckon soberly He is THE TREASURE. Our affections ever lift to His tenderness and glory. Our wills ever bend to His perfect designs and commands. The excellence of knowing and gaining Christ, of walking in His power and fellowship each moment, brightens our eyes to see that all this world has to offer (good and bad) lies in shadow compared to Him.
 - II. Today’s Message: Forsaking All – Part 3: Counting the Costs
 - a. The Setting – v25 – speaking to the great multitudes
 - b. The costs of discipleship
 - i. Will you leave your family to follow Jesus? V26
 - ii. Will you endure all persecution to follow Jesus? V27
 - 1. Count the costs example: building a tower v28-30
 - 2. Count the costs example: warfare v31-32
 - iii. **Will you endure loss of everything to follow Jesus? V33 - today**
 - 1. **Saltiness: Loss of usefulness for those who love family, safety and possessions more than Jesus. V34,35**
 - c. Questions to know, love and obey Jesus
 - III. Willing to endure the loss of everything to follow Jesus? V33
 - a. v33 “So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.”
 - b. Jesus has already mentioned specific examples of areas we must forsake in order to be His disciple:
 - i. "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. 27 And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.”
 - c. Now, Jesus summarizes this teaching by going on to include not only family, life, reputation, wealth and comfort, but anything else at all that this world may have to offer us, whether good or bad.
 - i. Calvin “This clause shows what is meant by the *calculation of expenses*, with which Christ enjoins his followers to begin: it is to lead them to consider that they must *forsake all*. In vain do persons who are delighted with an easy, indolent life, and with exemption from the *cross*, undertake a profession of Christianity. ***Those persons are said to forsake all who***

prefer Christ so greatly, both to their own life, and to all the wishes of the flesh, that nothing deters them from the right course.²

- d. This final cost also more specifically brings to mind our material possessions. While implied in the first two costs (family alienation, cross-bearing), this summary statement highlights the call to forsake material possessions.
 - i. Bock “Discipleship is more than “hating” family or bearing a cross: one must also distance oneself from materialistic attachment to the world. ...The disciple is to renounce possessions ... A disciple’s attachments are potentially the most destructive thing for discipleship. ...The will to renounce all possessions and to ally oneself totally to Jesus is the essence of discipleship. Jesus is first. He is the one object of focus. Persevering with Jesus means being attached to him, not to possessions.”³
 - ii. The rich young ruler failed at this point. Matthew 19
 - 1. “Now behold, one came and said to Him, "Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" 17 So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments." 18 He said to Him, "Which ones?" Jesus said, "'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,' 19 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' " 20 The young man said to Him, "All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?" 21 Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." 22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.”
 - iii. Do you own your possessions, or do they own you?
- e. Must we go and sell everything right now in order to obey this call to forsake everything? Some have taught that self-imposed poverty is the required application of these texts. Yet, while self-imposed poverty is acceptable as a way to live out this text, even that path does not guarantee the essence of what this text is commanding.
 - i. Calvin “It would be absurd to insist on a literal interpretation of the phrase, as if no man were a disciple of Christ, till he threw into the sea all that he possessed, divorced his wife, and bade farewell to his children. Such idle dreams led foolish people to adopt a monastic life, as if those who intend to come to Christ must leave off humanity. Yet no man truly forsakes all that he possesses ***till he is prepared at every instant to leave***

² Calvin, J., & Pringle, W. (2010). [*Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists Matthew, Mark, and Luke*](#) (Vol. 1, p. 475). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

³ Bock, D. L. (1996). [*Luke: 9:51–24:53*](#) (Vol. 2, pp. 1289–1290). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

all, gives himself free and unconstrained to the Lord, and, rising above every hinderance, pursues his calling. Thus the true self-denial which the Lord demands from his followers does not consist so much in outward conduct as in the affections; so that every one must employ the time which is passing over him without allowing the objects which he directs by his hand to hold a place in his heart."⁴

- ii. Sproul "No-one can be a disciple of Christ who does not give up all his possessions. Now obviously Jesus is not speaking literally here, although some have understood it that way. Jesus rather is talking about abandoning one's dependence on the things of this world and resolutely placing one's future in the hands of Christ."⁵
- f. In order to rest confidently in the arm of Christ, we must have open hands toward all He gives to us in this life. As we grip onto Christ, we must let loose this world. We enslave ourselves by our own gripping fists that shackle us down.
 - i. The Monkey Trap

IV. The Disciple's Singular Flavor v34,35

- a. 34 "Salt is good; but if the salt has lost its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? 35 It is neither fit for the land nor for the dunghill, but men throw it out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"
- b. "Salt is Good" 34a
 - i. The foundation truth of this illustration from Jesus is that we are to be like salt in its goodness. How is salt good?
 - ii. Sproul "References to salt in Jesus' teaching are fairly numerous. Salt not only adds taste and pungency to food, but primarily it was used as a preservative to keep food from spoiling. But the salt of antiquity was inferior to the salt today. It was capable of losing its saltiness and its power of preservation, thus becoming useless, not even fit for the soil or the manure heap. These are strange references to us, but they point to additional uses for salt in the ancient world. Sometimes salt was added to dung piles to increase the value of the manure pile as fertilizer."⁶
 - iii. Salt is good because it adds flavor to food, increasing our eating enjoyment.
 - iv. Salt is good because it can be used preserve food, keeping it from spoiling.
 - v. Salt is good because, in the proper amount, it can be used to help improve the fertilization capacity of a manure pile.
 - vi. In addition, sufficient salting can be used to destroy soil.

⁴ Calvin, J., & Pringle, W. (2010). [*Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists Matthew, Mark, and Luke*](#) (Vol. 1, p. 475). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

⁵ Sproul, R. C. (1999). [*A Walk with God: An Exposition of Luke*](#) (p. 298). Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications.

⁶ Sproul, R. C. (1999). [*A Walk with God: An Exposition of Luke*](#) (p. 298). Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications.

- vii. Henry “Good Christians are *the salt of the earth*, ...and this *salt is good* and of great use; by their instructions and examples they season all they converse with, to keep them from putrefying, and to quicken them, and make them savoury.”⁷
- viii. Mt 5:23 “You are the salt of the earth.”
 - 1. The followers of Jesus Christ bring flavor, preservation and fertilization to this world. Similarly, the followers of Jesus Christ are the salt that God uses to destroy the foul fields of the flesh, the devil and this world’s system.
- c. “But, if salt has lost its flavor” 34b
 - i. Henry “Degenerate Christians, who, rather than part with what they have in the world, will throw up their profession, and then of course become carnal, and worldly, and wholly destitute of a Christian spirit, are like *salt that has lost its savour*, like that which the chemists call the *caput mortuum*, that has all its salts drawn from it, that is the most useless worthless thing in the world; it has no manner of virtue or good property in it.”⁸
 - ii. Such Christians are bland, bringing nothing of flavor to this world, actually taking on the flavor of this world. Also, they cannot stop the tide of rot from this world of death, instead they begin to decay and stink with sin. They bring no health or strength to this world, instead being nourished by the lies of the world. They bring no victory to this world, instead their souls are salted unto barrenness and the foul weeds of man’s marshes.
 - iii. “how shall it be seasoned?” 34b
 - 1. Salt without flavor is a waste.
 - a. Henry “It can never be recovered: *Wherewith shall it be seasoned?* You cannot salt it. This intimates that it is extremely difficult, and next to impossible, to recover an apostate, Heb. 6:4–6.”⁹
 - b. Our Lord speaks a deep warning to this crowd. Will we hear Him today?
 - iv. “It is neither fit for the land nor for the dunghill” 35a
 - 1. It is of no use whatsoever.
 - a. Henry “It is of no use. It is *not fit*, as dung is, *for the land*, to manure that, nor will it be the better if it be laid in the dunghill to rot; there is nothing to be got out of it. A professor of religion whose mind and manners are

⁷ Henry, M. (1994). [*Matthew Henry’s commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume*](#) (p. 1876). Peabody: Hendrickson.

⁸ Henry, M. (1994). [*Matthew Henry’s commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume*](#) (p. 1876). Peabody: Hendrickson.

⁹ Henry, M. (1994). [*Matthew Henry’s commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume*](#) (p. 1876). Peabody: Hendrickson.

depraved is the most *insipid* animal that can be. If he speaks of the things of God, of which he has had some knowledge, it is so *awkwardly* that none are the better for it: it is a *parable in the mouth of a fool*.¹⁰

- i. How sad when such a one, still considering themselves with some savor and influence, try to speak as a Christian while living as a wordling.
 - b. Poole “as some things will spoil dunghills, so debauched professors do but make wicked men worse, by prejudicing and hardening them against the ways and truths of God. ... for if you apostatize from your profession, you will be the worst of men, neither fit for the church nor for the world (for you will make that the worse); indeed fit for nothing but for the fire of hell.”¹¹
 2. Salt without flavor is like the landowner, counting the cost of building the tower, who determines the cost is too high, and instead of patiently waiting and acquiring what is needed over time for the project, he scorns work as vain, turns his back on his land and family, and flies off into a life of reckless selfishness, focusing only on the now, only on himself, forsaking all for immediate pleasure.
 3. Salt without flavor is like the king who, weighing whether to fight or surrender to the superior foe, despairs and flees into profligacy, leaving his kingdom to the foe while saving his own neck.
- v. “Men throw it out” 35a
 1. Henry “as that which they will have no more to do with. Such scandalous professors ought to be cast out of the church, not only because they have forfeited all the honours and privileges of their church-membership, but because there is danger that others will be infected by them.”¹²
 2. This is a very dangerous situation for the soul. Will you weigh yourself today in light of these words?
 3. Bock “The conclusion pictures the removal of salt that is of no value. It is not suitable ... for anything ... It cannot even be used for secondary functions such as fertilizer or as a preservative with manure to slow fermentation ... Salt used for fertilizer wilted

¹⁰ Henry, M. (1994). [*Matthew Henry's commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume*](#) (p. 1876). Peabody: Hendrickson.

¹¹ Poole, M. (1853). [*Annotations upon the Holy Bible*](#) (Vol. 3, p. 244). New York: Robert Carter and Brothers.

¹² Henry, M. (1994). [*Matthew Henry's commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume*](#) (p. 1876). Peabody: Hendrickson.

weeds and improved the soil at a deeper level, but useless salt was discarded. So, too, the “saltless” disciple is no longer used by God. This remark could allude to final judgment ... or it could refer to the judgment of physical death that befalls some in the community (1 Cor. 11:30). The ambiguity may well be intentional. Failure to pursue discipleship can indicate that faith is not really present, even though it was thought to be, or spiritual rebellion. In either case, the situation displeases God. It is better to obey and not be subject to this threat.”¹³

d. “He who has ears to hear, let him hear!” v35b

i. Christ ends this warning section with a cry to carefully heed His Word.

Stop, consider, examine yourself. Do you have ears to hear this warning?

V. Questions to know, love and obey Jesus

¹³ Bock, D. L. (1996). [Luke: 9:51–24:53](#) (Vol. 2, p. 1292). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.