

Discipleship: A wall of expectation too high to scale [Luke 14: 25-35]

Pollster George Gallup contends that fewer than ten percent of Christians are deeply committed.

Last week Jesus offered us the free invitation of the gospel in the Parable of the Wedding Feast. - this week the Gospel topic is discipleship – the off – ramp for most people.

The paradox of scripture strikes the disciple again - how can justification be free but sanctification cost everything?

- From the Lutheran Confessions: *good works necessarily follow faith. For we do not make void the Law, says Paul, yea, we establish the Law*
- [Philippians 2:13] For it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure

At first blush our Gospel is abrupt and hard not exactly a church growth text!

Luke tells us great crowds are journeying with Jesus

- He is popular with the people at rock star status
- Jesus is not promising a free ride when he says: *follow me*

The first type of disciple is the inquirer – they hear the word and come to hear more

Jesus words about hating family jar our ears

- Luke preserves the Aramaic - the harsh Semitic expression *hate*
- Hate expresses the impossibility of serving two masters

The second entailment of discipleship: *Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.*

- The command to carry the cross is a sentence of death to the old way of life
- Galatians 6:14 ¹⁴ *But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.*

Jesus now illustrates his discipleship points in three parables – the first two use metaphors about building and war – count the cost

We also do not rush into war thinking we can win it on our own

- The things of peace – Repentance, faith, a wedding garment

The final aspect of discipleship renounces possessions

- Possessions and hypocrisy are our greatest threat to discipleship
- The threat of possessions is the seed that grows but gets choked by thorns

Jesus completes our teaching with an enigmatic saying about genuine salt

- Salt is critical in the ancient world
- Genuine disciples are the salt of the earth because Jesus is present through them

The one having ears to hear, let him hear

- Discipleship makes a difference in the way we live; in the way others live, and where we live after we die.
- Sue for peace with the righteousness of Christ
- The road to heaven leads through the cross of Calvary