

Recently in the news, the California High-Speed Rail project was supposed to connect Los Angeles to San Francisco with trains over 200 mph. It was approved in 2008, supposed to cost \$33 billion and be finished by 2020. Today, the cost is over \$100 billion, years behind schedule, and only small sections in the middle of farmland are built. It has become famous for this: **They had the vision, they had the money, they started — but they didn't count the real cost to finish** that's a great example of our text - Jesus says to be my disciple you have to count the cost. Starting something is far-less important than finishing something

Counting the Cost of Discipleship

I. The Desire of Discipleship

A. Jesus Connects building a tower to discipleship: Following Jesus

Luke 14:27 *Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.*

1. Being a disciple begins with the earnest desire to follow Jesus
 - a) Where men can be at this morning - something in you want to do the will of God / not sure what that is
 - b) Men will feel stirred / inspired / challenged to do something more for God
2. Starting the tower

Mark 1:17–18 *And Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men." 18 And immediately they left their nets and followed him.*

- a) Beginning something is not uncommon - starting a project / having good intentions / having a desire
 - (1) Some men describe their initial calling as being a strong feeling / God speaking to them in some way / impression that God was calling them to something more
 - b) Many ways Serious mens class is designed to help you understand and accomplish that calling by going from desiring to doing something greater for God to actually doing it
3. Biblical background - Jesus is addressing people who were following him

Luke 14:25 *Now great crowds accompanied him, and he turned and said to them,*

- a) People come to Jesus from different backgrounds/ walks of life
- b) The will of God is unique for every man - my calling is not the same as your

B. Following Jesus has to be **more** than simply **desire: Why desire alone is not enough**

1. Desires can change

- a) When desire is the only motivation for following Jesus - problem life has a way of **changing our desires**
- b) Seasons of life / passing of time / personal failures / financial circumstances— these all have the ability to change our desire

2. Feelings fade

- a) Word **Desire** - has the idea of a longing or craving or wish that something would happen
- b) Hoping something good will happen/ wishing God will use your life in some way
- c) Life has a way of presenting other things that replace that desire for God with other things

3. Desires come with expectations - what I want to see in ministry and in my life and calling

- a) Sometimes men want the title, microphone, the admiration of their peers

II. Counting the Cost

A. Jesus show us a common problem: People who don't count the cost - starting something but not finishing it

Luke 14:28 *For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it?*

1. Each man must develop the ability to think ahead in life
 - a) PG to be a disciple you have to be a thinker
 - b) *Do the decisions I am making today get me closer or take me further away from the will of God*
2. The Result: unable to finish what you started
 - a) There is no ministry that is an upward climb / win upon win with no end in sight
 - b) This is the Reality - men can start well but fail to finish well
3. Jesus is clear - Doing the will of God requires you to leave certain things
 - a) Let go of things that will pull you away from your calling

1 Corinthians 13:11 *When I was a child, I spoke and thought and reasoned as a child. But when I grew up, I put away childish things.*

(1) *I just need to decompress / I need to take a break / gotta some things worked out*

Average age of gamers today is 36 year olds - not 15 year olds... many men spend hours a day "decompressing"

Over 100 million men today are "gamers" 1 of every 3

B. Counting the Cost: 3 Areas of life where we must count the cost

1. Cost of Relationships

- a) Beginning of in v. 25 Jesus lays out the cost of being a disciple

Luke 14:26 *"If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple.*

(1) *Man Jesus that's harsh* — Jesus is speaking about who has ultimate priority over your life

- b) In being a disciple you have to put Jesus above every other relationship in life - even yourself

2. Cost of Comfort/ Money

- a) No accident - Jesus connects our money to discipleship - *"not having enough"*

(1) *Materials, money to finish the tower, manpower, time etc..*

- b) Men can disqualify themselves from ministry because they are bad stewards with the resources God has given them / debt / no financial dominion - living paycheck to paycheck - living on credit

(1) IF you can't manage your own finances - how could you be trusted with other peoples money

3. Cost of future Dreams

- a) Counting the cost means we are looking ahead and thinking about what we are building in our lives

- b) Thinking it through/ understanding the weight / realizing that being a disciple will effect every area of your life

Luke 9:62 *Jesus said, "Anyone who begins to plow a field but keeps looking back is of no use in the kingdom of God."*

III. Being Able to Finish

- A. Jesus gives us a warning so that we can avoid pain

1. Jesus desire for every man is that you will do what He has called you to do

- a) If accomplishing what Jesus called us to do was impossible He would not ask you to do it

2 Corinthians 4:7 *We have this treasure from God, but we are like clay jars that hold the treasure. This shows that the great power is from God, not from us.*

2. Jesus calling and purpose for your life is a life long pursuit

- a) May look different for every man - but this is hope - what every God has for you is greater than anything else you could be pursuing yourself

- B. Ask God to give you a future perspective

1. Jesus says: sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it?

- a) Men have to sit down and count the cost of what God has called them to do

- b) You are accountable for the purpose God has called you to.

2. Identify the "Not enough" in your life

- a) *God on my own I am not enough - I do not have the ability on my own to accomplish all that you have for me*

Philippians 4:13 *I can do all things through him who strengthens me.*

- b) You can pray - *"Jesus I need you to make up the difference where I lack"*

3. Identify what areas of your life you are currently building

- a) Are you building areas of your life that will get you closer to the will of God or take you future away

PS. Campbell - *Don't fill your life with things that mean nothing to God or eternity*

- C. Make decisions today that will impact your future

1. Is the tower of your calling still unfinished?

- a) Areas that are left un-surrendered? / issues of rejection that keep you from moving forward?

(1) Areas not surrendered / old sin patters/ fear/rejection/disappointment /offense / distractions?

(2) Don't despair if your tower is unfinished - there is hope!

2. Jesus says at the beginning of our text - Which of you?

- a) Reality is we can all point to areas of our calling and ministry that is still yet to be finished

- b) God help me to count the cost and identify those areas where I need you to help me

3. Your calling effects other people

- a) Our text - people take notice of whats not finished

- b) This is whats at stake when we fail to count the cost / when we don't finish what God has called us to do - other lives are at risk for eternity

4. Following Jesus and His will is a life long pursuit that Jesus will help you accomplish

Philippians 2:13 *For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.*