

The title for today's message is: **The Cost Of Discipleship**

Jesus said: ***“Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.”***

Grace and peace to you from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Today, this Third Sunday after Pentecost, we will learn about three men, two who asked to follow Jesus, and one who Jesus asked to follow Him.

Yet, like so many people today, they had excuses for not leaving everything behind, and immediately follow Jesus.

For one man, he wasn't ready to accept the hardships of following Jesus and for the other two men they felt that they had other things to do first.

Now let's look at these three men and their excuses for a moment. Its clear that the first man, was guilty of impulsiveness.

Luke said: ***someone said to him,*** (meaning Jesus) ***“I will follow you wherever you go.”***

What a remarkable thing to say, right out of the blue, this man commits to following Jesus anywhere He goes.

But, the question is, did he truly understand what following Jesus actually meant? Well according to Jesus' response he didn't.

Jesus said: ***“Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.”***

Saying this, Jesus pointed out to the man that choosing to follow Him, wasn't going to be easy, that in fact, it would involve great sacrifice.

So its clear, this man hadn't thought it through, and because there's nothing more said about him, we can assume he didn't like what he heard and left.

What a great lesson here, Jesus was teaching the man and us that there are occasions when we need to stop and understand what's involved, before making a commitment.

This was exactly what the man failed to do. He made a commitment to Jesus, yet he didn't understand what would be involved.

So, how impulsive have you been, in your response to Jesus? When making a commitment to Jesus have you truly thought it through?

We all need to ask ourselves this question and often. After all; **It's The Cost Of Discipleship.**

Luke then tells us that Jesus said to another man: ***"Follow me."*** This man said yes, but the he said: ***"Lord, first let me go and bury my father."***

Sounds fare enough right, he just wanted to bury his father first. But there was a problem, his father probably wasn't dead yet. This could take years.

I say this because if the man's father was already dead, he would have already been involved in his fathers burial.

Here Jesus moves quickly to say that there's also a time to immediately move forward, especially when its God who is asking.

Look, failing to move forward, is to tempt disaster. For example, there's a true story about a man who immediately moved forward.

"Many years ago a young man went to work at a hardware store. He found all sorts of merchandise taking up space, that wasn't selling.

He asked the owner to allow him to put it all on a table close to the registers and price each item for 10 cents. He did so, and he had a successful sale.

Sometime later he did the same thing again, and had yet another successful sale. It went so well, he approached the owner with another suggestion.

He suggested that they open up a store specializing in items that cost only a nickel, or a dime. However the owner refused.

So, the young man went into business for himself, and became very, very successful. His name! -----F. W. Woolworth. True story!

His old employer was quoted saying, 'I have calculated that every word I used to turn young Woolworth down, cost me a million dollars.'

Look, Jesus wants all of us who choose to follow Him to consider the cost in doing so first. But He doesn't want us to waste our lives make up our minds.

The truth is, total obedience is necessary here every time God calls us to do something, yes, **It's The Cost Of Discipleship.**

Finally Luke said, Yet another man said to Jesus: ***"I will follow you, Lord, but let me first say farewell to those at my home."***

How considerate of him. Yet Jesus said; ***"No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."***

Jesus' words here are very clear, in the old days when plowing a field if you looked back while plowing, you would go off in a different direction. Not straight forward.

Look, its difficult to make a clean break when you stop to say farewell, the chance's are you will be talked out of going altogether.

Again like the others this man wasn't clear about what saying farewell first would or could mean.

Look, my friends, Jesus is talking about "Discipleship" here not an entourage. And believe me when I say; **It's The Cost Of Discipleship.**

Now I would like to close with yet another story, this one is about a young man who answered yes to God's invitation to follow Him.

It all began several years ago, when I was serving as deacon for Redeemer Ontario. On one particular Sunday I was asked to give the message.

And after the service, a young man, who, he and his family had recently become members, asked to talk to me.

We sat down over a cup of coffee and he told me who he was, and a little about himself.

Now, I wish I could share all the thrilling details, but I will say this, after we talked, my wife and I invited he and his wife to a spiritual renewal weekend.

Following their weekends, he and his wife told us how excited they were in the work the Holy Spirit was doing in their life's.

He said one Friday driving home from work he suddenly felt overpowered by what the Holy Spirit said to him. It was clear he said, it was a call from God.

He believed God was calling him into the ministry. And he said he had never been so certain about anything before. That's as real as it gets my friends.

He kept it to himself for some time, because he was frightened with the thought of changing careers. Literally going in a different direction in his life.

I mean he was setting pretty good, he has a wonderful wife and two great children, as well as a good job that he held at the time, for 14 years.

Yet within a year of our first talk, he enrolled in the Lay Ministry Program, and three years later, he was licensed to serve as a Deacon.

Now, over the course of the next few years, God opened more and more doors for him. He is now the Pastor of Redeemer.

That's right, God called him in a big way, and without hesitation he answered God's call, knowing that God would see him through it all.

The Lord calls all of us to follow Him in so many different ways. Whether into public ministry, or becoming one of His disciples or witnesses.

As we follow Him on this path of life, we realize that He has shown us His mercy, so that we too can show mercy to those in need of mercy.

And how are we going to do that? We'll do it just as Jesus says in Revelation chapter 2.

Jesus said: ***Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life. Even to the point of death.***

And were to do it without hesitation, but with steadfastly showing mercy because. **It's The Cost Of Discipleship. No, Its The Reward Of Discipleship.**

Let us pray; Heavenly Father thank you for all the blessings you have bestowed upon each one of us, using us to be servants, witness and examples of the love and faith You have in us. Continue to use us in any way you see a need. Prepare us Lord to move straight forward without delay in accepting Your call. In Jesus name, Amen.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all. Amen.