

The title for today's message is: **What Can You Afford?**

Jesus Said: ***Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it?***

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

With the great influx of credit cards into our economy and society today, there is a question that seems to have become, almost extinct.

The current generation of young adults, and my generation for that matter, hardly ever seem to ask the question, "Can I afford it?".

The scenario more often than not seems to go like this. You go into a store like, Wal-Mart, or Best Buy.

You see that 60 inch television you always wanted on sale for only \$650. You think to yourself, "I have that much credit on my card."

So you slap down the "plastic", and its yours. Of course there are also the times in life when the question shouldn't be "Can I afford it".

But, "What can I afford?" This is certainly the question we should ask especially when its about life situations.

You know, the old car is rusting out, and the engine is dying. Here there's no question, you'll have to get a different car; you'll have to afford it, some how.

Yes, the question is a tuff one. And many times the circumstances of life dictate that you'll have to get an apartment, or even buy a house.

So again, it's not a matter of can I afford it, but what can I afford. This is a big issue in our lives today, and it requires an honest answer.

But its not the most important issue in our life. Jesus spoke about the most important issue in our lives right here in our text for today.

The most important issue is our relationship, that is our relationship with Jesus Christ as one of His disciples.

And being one of His disciples carries a big price tag. Here in our text Jesus asks: What Can You Afford?

Now, when Jesus turned to speak to the multitude following Him, He wanted them to ask themselves this question.

Can I afford, to be a disciple of Jesus? You see, there really is a huge cost involved in being a disciple, or simply a follower of Jesus Christ.

And He wants you and I to think about that cost before we jump into a relationship with Him as one of His disciples.

The cost is this: First, give Jesus everything! That's right were to give Him and only Him all glory and praise.

When success comes our way, in any form were to lovingly give all the credit to God, you know patting God on the back not our own back.

Second, give Jesus all your love. Another words, every thing you do in your life, should be an expression of God's love for you.

Were not to love anyone, or anything, more than Jesus. And the love you give to others, should also be an expression of God's love.

Third, give all your possessions? Yes, give them all up for Him! Look, the possessions you have can't be allowed to come between you, and God.

Therefore give them up! Jesus simply summed it all up by saying, that the cost of being one of His disciples, is to give up your entire life to Him.

And His question for those who express a desire to follow Him is this: "What can you afford? Can you afford to be one of His disciples?"

Those to whom Jesus put these questions too, were people who had been drawn to Him by the great blessings He brought upon them and others.

Were told that many people had come to Jesus with their problems, and Jesus alone solved their many problems.

The sick, and diseased had come for physical cures. The disabled had come for healing, and wholeness.

But now, Jesus asked them: how long would they stay and follow Him if He journeyed 2, 3, 5 days, or even a week, without performing a miracle.

And when He reached Jerusalem, and faced bitter opposition from the Pharisees and other religious leaders. Would they still follow him?

You, and I also need to answer the same questions, we too have been drawn to Jesus by the blessings He has brought upon us.

But, how long will we follow Him? What if in His wisdom He doesn't heal a loved one, will we still love and follow Him?

If in His love for you, He thinks it wise for you to carry a burden right now, will you still love and follow Him?

And if because you are a disciple you meet some opposition in your life, will you still love and follow Him?

And finally, as Jesus makes a total claim on your life, will you still love and follow Him? Knowing the cost of discipleship?

As I look into the "checkbook" of my life to see if I have the wealth of righteousness, which Jesus demands, I certainly come up short.

Now, be honest with yourselves, how many times have you questioned Jesus' love and devotion for you, you know, when things got tough?

How many times have you had gigantic blessings just dropped into your lap by Jesus only thing you thought to say was, "I deserved it."

How many times do you fail to give God some of your precious time to study His word, and to worship Him.

Or how many times have you not come to worship because you first have to treat yourselves to a little rest, and relaxation?

How many times have you greedily, and stingily hung onto all those blessings instead of returning them to Jesus with thanksgiving.

And how many times have you been unwilling to risk an earthly relationship by speaking the truth about Jesus to a stranger.

We're either afraid to mention sin to them, or we're embarrassed to admit that we believe in a Savior who forgave us of our sin and gave us eternal life.

Lets face it, you, and I don't have what we need to be disciples of Jesus. We simply can't afford it!

But the despair that comes from such an evaluation of our spiritual checkbooks, is exactly what Jesus wants us to experience.

You see, many of those traveling with Him in our text believed they were doing something for Jesus, by following Him.

Yet at the same time they seemed to be looking only for those temporary, earthly blessings, such as physical healing, and satisfaction.

But His blessings go far beyond our earthly ideas of what blessings are. Jesus' blessings are very special, because they're eternal.

And the cost of such a blessing of eternal life is unaffordable for any one of us here on earth. But it's not for Jesus!

You see, Jesus brings us to that despair, and hopelessness so that we'll listen when He says, "All you who are weary and burdened".

"Come to me, and I will give you rest". He's talking about all of us who are burdened with sin and guilt.

And Jesus then shows us that He also counted the cost of us being one of His disciples.

That's right, He "calculated" that one innocent life given to God would pay for the perfect life, that Adam managed to destroy.

So Jesus took on that life, lived it, and was punished. He gave it all up in love, and praise to His Father from a cross.

With that life, Jesus paid for ours. With that payment, Jesus made us His disciples. Could we, can we, afford such a payment?

NO! We don't have the spiritual resources to afford it. But Jesus does and He made the payment necessary so we can be one of His disciples.

So, now the question changes. No longer must we ask whether or not we can afford to be a disciple of Jesus.

Now we have to ask, Can we afford NOT to be a disciple of Jesus? Will see just how important it is that Jesus keeps asking us, and we keep asking ourselves the question: "What can I afford."

Can I afford to be a disciple of Jesus? Or Can I afford NOT to be a disciple of Jesus?

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.