

BIBLE LIFE MESSAGES

# The Cost of Being a Disciple of Christ

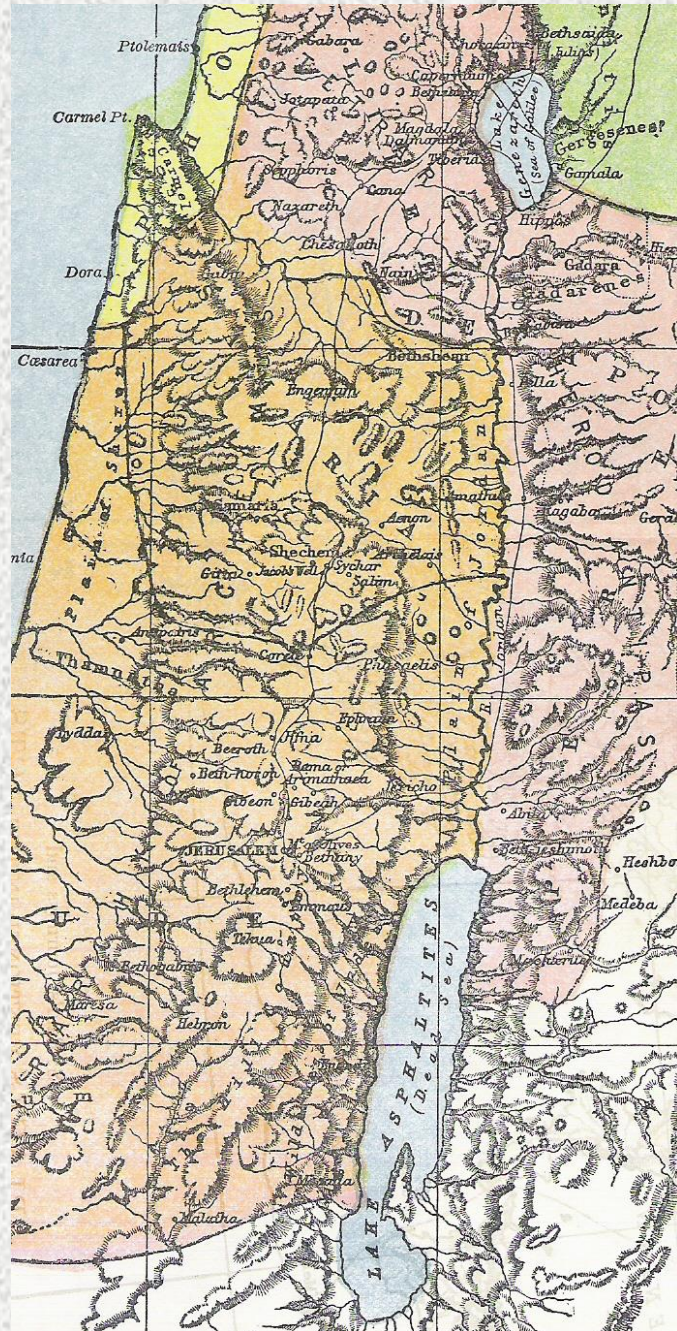
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Matthew 8:18-22

<sup>1</sup> Understanding our message today requires some background. <sup>2</sup> Luke, chapter 9, verses 51 through 56, reads, **As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem. And he sent messengers on ahead, who went into a Samaritan village to get things ready for him; but the people there did not welcome him, because he was heading for Jerusalem. When the disciples James and John saw this, they asked, “Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them?” But Jesus turned and rebuked them, and they went to another village.** <sup>3</sup>

The Lord wanted to go to the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem. <sup>4</sup> He planned to go through Samaria but was rejected there. <sup>5</sup> So He had to detour through the Jordan Valley.





**Journeying through the valley along the Jordan River would eventually take Him down to an elevation of about 1400 feet below sea level close to Jericho and the Dead Sea. From there He would have to climb to**



**Jerusalem, about 2500 feet above sea level. That's quite a detour!**

**If Lord Jesus Himself was rejected, would you, His disciple, be treated the same way? Being a disciple of Christ comes with a cost. <sup>6</sup> What's the price of being a disciple of Christ? Our scripture passage today tells us. <sup>7</sup>**

**Matthew, chapter 8, verses 18 through 22, says, When Jesus saw the crowd around him, he gave orders to cross to the other side of the lake. Then a teacher of the law came to him and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head." Another disciple said to him, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." But Jesus told him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead." <sup>8</sup>**

**The first cost is . . .**

## I. Discipleship Demands Ministry - v19-20

Discipleship demands ministry. <sup>9</sup>

In verse 19, **this cost was demanded of a scribe.** <sup>1</sup> <sup>10</sup>

The Feast of Tabernacles celebrated the giving of the Law of Moses at Mount Sinai. <sup>11</sup> A scribe was a professional copier of the Law. He knew the law in minute detail. He would be called upon to be an informal judge. He was called “Rabbi”, “Doctor” or “Lawyer”. He was always given a place of honor at social events. <sup>12</sup>

**He wanted to be a disciple.** <sup>2</sup> <sup>13</sup>

Whenever a scribe called you “Teacher”, it was an honor because the scribe was considered the most apt teacher. <sup>14</sup>

Whenever anyone said to a rabbi, **I will follow you**, it meant “I want to be a disciple”. It was also very

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<sup>1</sup> v19 - Then a teacher of the law came to him and said, “Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go.”

<sup>2</sup> v19 - “Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go.”

obvious that he was willing to make a sacrifice to do this because he said, **Wherever you go.** <sup>15</sup>

But **he was not aware of the price.** He wanted to be a disciple, not an apostle. <sup>16</sup>

The name “disciple” <sup>3</sup> means “student.” <sup>17</sup> The term “apostle” <sup>4</sup> means “one who is sent out with a message”. The Lord was training His disciples to be apostles after His death and resurrection. <sup>18</sup> So, a call to discipleship is also a call to ministry! This is why Jesus discouraged this man. <sup>19</sup>

The job of a pastor is to make each of you into ministers! Most church members simply want to be disciples, students, learners. So, you attend worship and Bible studies. <sup>20</sup>

The purpose of worship and Bible study is to prepare you to be ministers. Ephesians, chapter 4, verses 11 through 13, explain, **It was he who gave some to be**

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<sup>3</sup> μαθητής.

<sup>4</sup> απόστολος.



apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. But, as soldiers of the cross, how many of you have spent twenty years in basic training but have never gotten out into the battlefield! Discipleship demands ministry! <sup>21</sup>

The second cost is . . .

## II. Discipleship Demands

### Absolute Loyalty - v21-22

Discipleship demands absolute loyalty. <sup>22</sup>

In verse 21, **this cost was demanded of “another” disciple.** <sup>23</sup>

In the original language there are two words for “another”. The word used here <sup>5</sup> means “another” of a different kind in contrast to the other word <sup>6</sup> meaning “another” of the same kind. <sup>24</sup>

So, what are the differences here? The scribe called Jesus “teacher”; this man called Him “Lord”! <sup>25</sup> In verse 22, Whereas the scribe invited himself to be a disciple, this man was invited by the Lord to be one! <sup>26</sup>

**He wanted to be a disciple.** <sup>27</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> ἕτερος.

<sup>6</sup> ἄλλος.



**But he wanted to fulfill his obligations first, so he could be free to follow the Lord. What an admirable guy!**

**It was the obligation of the first-born son to bury his parents. <sup>28</sup> The rabbis even said it was more important than Bible study and prayer! <sup>29</sup>**

**But he was not aware of the price.** It would take several days to bury someone, mourn for them properly and then go through the ceremonial purification process. If Jesus intended to send out the 70 to “preach the kingdom”, <sup>7</sup> and this man was to be one of them, Jesus needed his service now! <sup>30</sup> The Lord’s answer to him in Luke, chapter 9, verse 60, was, **Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God.** <sup>31</sup>

**The Lord isn’t against you fulfilling your duties, but loyalty to God takes priority over all earthly obligations!**

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<sup>7</sup> Luke 10:1-24.

**Is it possible to get your mind off the earthly and onto the spiritual?**

**When tragedy strikes; do you blame God? Read the Book of Job! <sup>32</sup>**

**Heaven is worth more than anything that happens to you in this life! Matthew, chapter 16, verse 26, *What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul?***

**You may say, “But I keep the Ten Commandments!” If you’re too busy to serve God, you just broke the first two! You just made another god out of whatever you were too busy doing to give God complete loyalty! <sup>33</sup>**

**It’s when you orient everything in your life around obeying God that you are paying the price of discipleship!**