

**“The Cost of Christ: Part 1”**  
**Luke 9:1-27**

Intro: This past summer, Australian wine producer, Penfolds, debuted their 2004 Block 42. The great thing about it is that it is budget friendly, coming in at \$168k a bottle! This wine, as you can see is enclosed a hand-blown sculpture by Australian glass artist, Nick Mount, and it made from the choicest Cabernet Sauvignon grapes from a single vineyard. It is believed that these vines are thought to be the oldest continual producing Cabernet vines in the world, and they are extremely rare. That is why only 12 bottles were made. Now, let’s just pretend, that we crash the New Year’s party of Donald Trump . . . too strong, it tastes too good, too perfect, let’s take an eye dropper... measuring cup...

Dilute (v): “To lessen the force, strength, purity, or brilliance of”

“Cheap grace is the deadly enemy of our Church. We are fighting today for costly grace. . . . Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate.”

Dietrich Bonhoeffer penned these words in 1937, but they have as much or more relevance for Christians 75 years later. Bonhoeffer’s concern was that the church had diluted the gospel one drop at a time.

**The Point: Assess the value of Christ, and embrace the cost of his cross.**

Trans: We are going to study the first 27 verses of Luke 9, and I want to draw out three encouragements related to assessing the value of Christ and embracing the cost of his cross. First...

**I. Depend in order to be filled with the provision of Christ (9:1-6; 10-17).**

- **Verses 1-2.** In chapters 7 & 8, we saw the power of Christ on display and his authority being exercised over nature, demons, disease, and death. Now we see Jesus passing this power and authority to his disciples for the same purposes.
- He sent them out, in the words of verse 2, “to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal.” Not surprisingly, their mission mirrored the mission of Jesus. His mission extends through them. [Mark tells us that Jesus sent them out “two by two.”]
- The fact that they are to carry out the mission of Christ is the most important piece for us to grasp, because that is still the case for those who embrace Jesus today. We are to be about his mission, but I want us to focus on how they were to go about this mission.
- **Verses 3-6.** They were to travel light. Nothing. Leave your navigational system, your Swiss Army backpack, leave your favorite snacks and home, and don’t drop by the ATM on your way out of town.
- Some missionaries have adopted this approach throughout church history: Hudson Taylor, founder of China Inland Mission and George Mueller, ran orphanages for children in England, without ever pursuing a dime of financial help.
- This may have been in part to the brevity of this assignment, but it also seems to be an exercise of trust. Jesus wants them to learn that they must trust in God to meet their needs, even when that comes through the generosity and hospitality of people. They need to learn depend on his provision. We all need to learn this because our natural bent is to rely not on God but ourselves. We tend to be self-reliant and self-sufficient, so Jesus puts them in a situation where they will have to depend on him.
- Does this mean that everyone should operate in mission this way? No. Luke 22 teaches this and reinforces our understanding of dependence.
- **“And he said to them, “When I sent you out with no moneybag or knapsack or sandals, did you lack anything?” They said, “Nothing.” He said to them, “But now let the one who has a moneybag take it, and likewise a knapsack. And let the one who has no sword sell his cloak and buy one.” (Luke 22:35-36)**

Trans: We see this again, in a different way in **verses 10-17. (Feeding of the 5,000)**

- The disciples see this need, and they tell Jesus, “Hey, tell them to go get something to eat,” and Jesus replies, “You give them something to eat.”
- The disciples let their rational powers take over and begin discussing their options... Go into the city and buy it, nope, not enough money. Send them into the city, that would be rude and take a lot of time. What should we do?
- Jesus is always the best option...
- 5,000! Men. The crowd, counting women and children, was probably closer to \_\_\_\_k.
- God not only provides, but he can provide in mind-bending ways.
- This miracle pictures the provision of Christ. It foreshadows the Lord’s Supper where Jesus would break bread with his disciples and the coming feast of God in his coming kingdom.
- This miracle also sets the stage for the pressing question of Luke. “Who is Jesus?” This question is raised for the first time in **vv. 7-9**

Trans: This brings us to our second encouragement.

**II. See in order to confess the Lordship of Christ. (9:7-9-18-22).**

- Herod heard all that was happening, and he was perplexed. People are getting healed. They say the dead are being raised, and this Jesus guy, he sounds like a true prophet. They say he speaks with an authority unlike any other teacher. What is going on here!? I thought I had taken care of the popular preachers and squelched signs of revolution when I beheaded John the Baptist. Some people are telling me that John has been raised from the dead. Others that Elijah or one of the prophets have risen. This is madness.
- He says in **verse 9** **“John I beheaded, but who is this about whom I hear such things?”** And he sought to see him.
- Who is this? This question surfaced in chapter 5, chapter 7, chapter 8, and we are about to find it on the lips of Jesus himself.
- Look at **verses 18-19**.
- Options: Who is Jesus?? Some say John the Baptist, Elijah, one of the prophets...
- And then Jesus makes it personal, “Who do you say that I am?” Listen, Jesus always makes it personal. It is not enough to deal with the person of Christ in an abstract manner. At some point, the question has to be placed in our lap
- Some people want just enough of Jesus to play it safe. If Jesus were alive today, I would follow him as a great example to emulate. He lived such a moral life, not to mention the fact that he was a pretty cool guy and out of the box thinker. He associated with those on the margins of society. I’m down with that. Or... I would follow him because he was incredibly wise, a great moral teacher. BUT... listen to what C. S. Lewis wrote in *Mere Christianity*
- **“A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic - on the level with a man who says he is a poached egg - or he would be the devil of hell. You must take your choice. Either this was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.” - C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity***
- Who do you say that Jesus is? Peter, speaking on behalf of the disciples, says, “The Christ of God.” A HUGE statement... probably “the Christological high point of the entire gospel.” (Stein) Peter provides the definitive answer that the crowds, the religious and even political leaders like Herod have asked. Jesus is the Messiah.
- What about you? Do you answer this question like Peter answered? “The Christ of God.”
- This is so huge because this is what makes Christmas Christmas. (Luke 1 & 2)
- Jesus is the Christ but he would reign in an unexpected way. **Verses 21-22**.
- The Christ would go to the cross. Jesus was born to die. He is a king who reigns through suffering, rejection, and death. . . and resurrection. He “must.” This is a necessity. Though there has never been a higher form of evil or injustice in the history of the world, the death of Christ “must not be seen as a mistake or a tragedy.” It was the plan and will of God. He voluntarily gave up his life, and in this moment we will see, not only the heights of injustice but also the heights of love!
- Put yourself in their shoes... Two years.. Walking, observing... Just confess Christ as Lord, and then he says, I’m going to die. (This is not the way it was supposed to be. They, even the disciples, were expecting an earthly reign. Hey, we are in with the Messiah. We will be the big men on campus. We’re going to reign with him....) No, no, no, I am a king who will reign through death and resurrection.
- If that was not shocking enough... he speaks in very plain terms concerning what this means for them.
- He moves us from the question to the confession, from the confession to Christ, from Christ to the cross, and now from the cross to the Christian in verse 23.

### III. Die in order to live the life of Christ (9:23-27).

- **Verse 23.** Straight talk from Jesus. “If anyone would come after me...” this is a choice and a choice for Christ is a choice to reject all other options. If you want to be in with Jesus, this is what it looks like.

#### 1) Deny yourself:

- Jesus does not mean we lose our personality, nor does he mean we should become ascetics who basically seek to deny themselves any form of material satisfaction.
- Jesus is teaching us that we must give up, sacrifice anything that stands in the way of a wholehearted commitment to him. This is a question of commitment. Who or what are we fundamentally committed to? Ourselves? Our own plans? Our own glory? Or are we committed to Christ? His will? His glory?
- It starts by saying no to our own desires, but as Robert Stein says, “This is much more radical than simply a denial of certain things. Instead a disciple is to be one who seeks to fulfill the will and teachings of Christ.”
- Here’s the issue: We are all born with a heart committed to self. We love ourselves. We don’t have to muster up the strength to look out for our own interests; we naturally, usually without even thinking about, fulfill our own cravings and desires.
- So Jesus says, “Deny yourself,” and then he turns up the level of commitment by saying...

#### 2) Take up your cross daily

- **Bonhoeffer said, “When Christ calls a man, he bid him come and die.”**
- The cost of Christ is the cross of Christ. Have you died to yourself and your old way of life?
- **“I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” (Galatians 2:20)**

- We generally get excited about the benefits Jesus brings through his death, but not so excited about the call for us to completely identify with him and die to ourselves. It's great that he would die for us. Will we die for him? Would you consider that this morning? I'm asking that in the strongest sense of the question. Would you die for him?
- Now, let me ask you a difficult, follow up question: What is more radical than martyrdom? Dying every day.
- Are you dying daily? This is an every day thing...
- **"I die every day!" (1 Cor. 15:31)**
- Die to what? Die to our desires: some sinful and some that are even good, so that we can have God's best. Die to my agenda: God, what do you want from me today? Die to comfort. God, I don't have to have the nicest things in life. I would rather give than receive Die to your dreams: God, my life is in your hands.
- This is what some have called "cruciform," or cross-shaped living. It's where our lives reflect the cross in all we do.
- And here's the great news: it's always an exchange, for in dying to ourselves we receive more and more and more and more of Jesus. That's why he doesn't stop with deny yourself and die to yourself, but he says:

### 3) Follow me:

- We give up ourselves for Christ. We die so that we might follow Christ and live for God.
- Jesus is after our ultimate allegiance. I love what Paul says in Phil 1:21: "To live is Christ." This is a complete identification with Christ. Now, Jesus defines and drives everything about me. When he moves, I move. Where he goes, I go. What he wants, I want. What he hates, I hate. What he loves, I love. What breaks his heart, breaks my heart. What brings him joy, brings me joy.
- Discipleship is a journey of following Jesus that begins now and continues for all eternity, but I want you to think about this: Our faith is good as the one we are putting our faith in and our following ... (and this is a picture of faith!)
- [Pic: If I invited some of you over to my newly established School of Home Improvements, you might want to first consider my credentials. You might want to know a little bit about me and my skills. Do I have the gifts to get the job done? If so, can I communicate those gifts and skills and get the job done in an exemplary manner....]

Jesus moves to a variety of motivations I want each of us to carefully consider this morning.

-- V. 24 "For" – chiasm... wordplay that creates a paradox. Save, lose, lose save.

- To save your life now is to fail to deny oneself... which lead to you losing your life and facing judgment and eternal separation from God.
- BUT to lose one's life now (which is to deny self, take up your cross and follow Jesus) leads to receiving eternal life.
- It's a question of worth. Jesus is presenting a deal before us: your life for eternal life.
- This is why Lewis says in a clever and pithy way: "Die before you die. There's no chance after."
- Be free from the *fear* of death by receiving the life Christ gives.

--V. 25 "For" Here Jesus addresses the motivations of our will. What are we driven by? What do we desire? What do we value the most?

- Jesus uses the terminology of the marketplace. He speaks of profit and loss. Jesus is saying, you can be loaded with assets that the world would esteem, but here's the irony: You can have it all and have nothing at all. You can gain the world and have absolutely nothing to show for it, but costly grace is so much different.
- **"Costly grace is the treasure hidden in the field; for the sake of it a man will gladly go and sell all that he has. It is the pearl of great price to buy which the merchant will sell all his goods. It is the kingly rule of Christ, for whose sake of one will pluck out the eye, which causes him to stumble; it is the call of Jesus Christ at which the disciple leaves his nets and follows him. Costly grace is the gospel. which must be sought again and again, the gift which must be asked for, the door at which a man must knock. Such grace is costly because it calls us to follow, and it is grace because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ. It is costly because it costs a man his life, and it is grace because it gives a man the only true life." – Bonhoeffer**
- While we do not wish to water down the cost of discipleship, neither do we want to water down the immense benefits and rewards that come to all who follow Christ.
- Do you know this true life? Only Christ can satisfy the deepest longings of our hearts. Only Jesus can set us free for the life we were always intended to have. He alone can give meaning and fulfillment in our relationships, in our marriages, and in our jobs. To have Jesus, to follow Jesus is to have it all.

-- V. 26 "For"

- We will either be ashamed of Christ or we will acknowledge him in all our ways. If we are ashamed of him in this life, he will be ashamed of us when we stand before him one day.
- The gospel frees us from our shame and draws us to the glory of Christ that will we have forever.

With these three statements Jesus appeals to our rationality, will, and affections. He shows us how robust and full the life he offers us truly is. Christ frees us from fear, frees us from shame, satisfies us our deepest longings, and ....

### Conclusion:

What are the first words of Christ to Peter and the disciples: "Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men." (Mark 1:17) What about his last words to Peter in John 21: "do you love me? Feed my sheep. Do you love me? Tend my lambs. Do you love me? Follow me. This is the invitation. It will cost you your life. The cost of Christ is the cross of Christ. BUT it is a gracious invitation because in gaining Christ we gain it all!

I'm in... - Connection Card...