

# CONSECRATION

Week 5 | January 28th - February 2nd

## The Cost of Discipleship



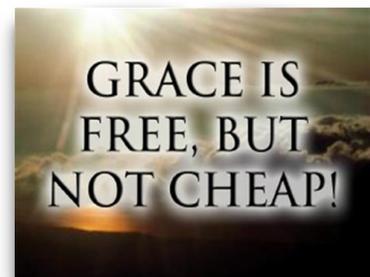
I want to talk from Luke 14:25-35. As we are concluding our consecration for this year on Friday, February 2nd, I want to thank you for hanging in there with us. While our corporate consecration is ending, our discipleship is not. George Gallup, the famous pollster, concluded that fewer than 10% of evangelical Christians could be called deeply committed. Most of those who are professed Christians do not know basic teachings and do not act differently because of their Christian experience.

George Barna, of the Barna Research Institute, found that almost half of evangelicals read their Bible only once a week, or not at all. We need to understand that God has provided everything at His expense and He invites sinners to come to His great dinner. You cannot bring or do anything to deserve an invitation. God provides it all by His free grace.

Salvation is both absolutely free and it costs you your very life. You receive it freely at no expense to you, but once you receive it, you have then committed everything you are and have to Jesus Christ. You may protest that that is a contradiction. How can something be both free and cost at the same time? Jesus freely offered the Water of Life to everyone that thirsts. We need to understand that when we receive His free offer, we are no longer our own. We have been bought with a price. So, to truly follow Jesus, we must consider the cost and not begin to follow Him superficially, only to turn back later when things get tough. This is exactly what Jesus warns us about in our text.

Verse 25 at the beginning of our text is critical for interpreting what follows. Great multitudes were going along with Him. I think that every pastor would love to have that congregation. Every minister desires to have more followers. Pastors with large congregations get their books published and are invited to speak all over the world because they are “successful”. We measure success by numbers, but Jesus was different. Large crowds did not fool Him. He knew that many were following Him for selfish reasons. It was the exciting thing to do (for a while). Maybe you or someone you know would be healed, but Jesus was not a false recruiter. He wanted to weed out those who followed Him for wrong reasons, because when the battle heated up, He knew that they would fall away and cause damage to His cause. So, He turned to the great multitude and laid out some demands for discipleship.

There are many who say salvation is God’s free gift, but discipleship is costly. They would also say, ‘while every believer ought to pursue discipleship, it is not linked to saving faith’. In other words, there are some who are truly saved, but never commit themselves to being disciples. They say it is possible to receive



## Prayer Objectives

- Pray for church growth.
- Pray for honor and respect for God regarding the tithe and offerings to the local church.
- Pray for submission to spiritual leaders.
- Pray for believers expression of love towards each other.
- Always pray for the souls of the lost. We believe that the Lord wants to save them.
- Petition God for our church's breakthrough into the future.
- Pray for sensitivity to God's Word and His movement.
- Ask God to give us a burden to see our area reached for Jesus and for God's people to experience a mighty spiritual revival.
- Pray for excitement about Jesus Christ, what He is doing in our lives and in the life of the church.
- Pray for the restoration of broken relationships that need to be restored.
- Pray for the reaching of lives and strengthening of families through the Husband and Wife Retreat and Singles' Summit.
- Pray for the success of the FTCC Mass Choir's Created for Worship CD. I believe it is an avenue for evangelism. It can reach people that we cannot reach in the pulpit or the pew.

Jesus as Savior, but not follow Him as Lord. I am not sure that such teaching is in the New Testament, but I can tell you that there are many scriptures to refute such teachings. I am convinced that to believe in Jesus as Savior necessarily entails following Him as Lord.

***Salvation is not just a decision that a man makes, but it is the mighty power of God raising a dead soul to eternal life.***

In Philippians 1:6 (KJV), the Apostle Paul said this: "being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform *it* until the day of Jesus Christ". The new life God imparts inevitably results in a new way of life in accordance with it's nature. The seed of the Word will bear fruit until eternal life.

While believers must grow as disciples, and while we never perfectly arrive in this life, Philippians 3:12 (KJV) says, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus."

***If a person claims to be a believer, but he is not seeking to grow in Jesus Christ, he is fooling himself.***

In the words of the Apostle Paul in Titus 1:16 (KJV), "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny Him, being abominable, and disobedient and unto every good work reprobate." To follow Christ truly, we must consider the costs. We must put Him above everything else in our life.

As we conclude this year's consecration, we will go without meat including seafood, fish, and all poultry (chicken, turkey, quail, duck, etc.). Thank you so much to all who have been meeting me in prayer. I hope that you have gained much doing this time of corporate prayer and consecration. Please let's finish this out together. Weigh the costs and dive in. It is worth it! I look forward to seeing you on Monday (at 7 PM) and Friday (at 7:30 PM) for corporate prayer.

***Pastor Earl & Denise Goings***

