

# The Cost of Discipleship

**Key Verse:**  
***“Whoever does not  
bear his cross and  
come after Me  
cannot be My  
disciple.”***

***—Luke 14:27, New  
King James Version***

**Selected Scripture:**  
***Luke 14:25-33***

## **OUR KEY VERSE TELLS US**

what the cost of discipleship is. In brief, it costs everything that we have. This thought may initially overwhelm the natural mind. However, the spiritually minded will understand. (I Cor. 2:12-16) In order to successfully follow Jesus requires taking up our own cross, and bearing it “daily.”—Luke 9:23

In the setting of our Selected Scripture, Jesus’ ministry was achieving evident success, and great multitudes followed him. It would appeal to naturally minded people that the Master preach a smooth and flattering message. Why offend any of the multitude and risk losing potential disciples? Jesus words must have been shocking: “If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.” (Luke 14:26, *NKJV*) Here he was telling them about the cost of discipleship.

How is it possible that Jesus would preach hatred for parents, siblings, or children? The hatred that Jesus spoke of is not one of malice, avarice, or anger. Rather, it is a realization of the relative worth of the things most precious to us. In comparison to the gift of becoming God’s children, begotten of his Holy Spirit, all else pales in significance.

We acknowledge the precious value of earthly family, but death will eventually separate earthly ties. However, our adoption into God's family through Christ is eternal, and therefore priceless. All that we have in this world is nothing by comparison—all of its affections, friendships, honors, and wealth. "What will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?" "Whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it."—Mark 8:36,35, *NKJV*

The Apostle Paul comprehended this principle. After rehearsing his impressive resume of achievements he concluded, "What things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead."—Phil. 3:7-11, *NKJV*

The "fellowship" of Christ's sufferings is attained through cross bearing. Such cross bearing, as stated in our Key Verse, does not mean that we should literally carry a large cross with us in the course of daily life. Cross bearing is the pain, fatigue, reproach, and humiliation associated with letting our light shine daily. Our Lord Jesus experienced these things acutely as he walked through Jerusalem's streets on his way to Golgotha. We must each bear the cross that our Heavenly Father has given us. This will cost us greatly of our time, energy, and earthly reputation. Jesus stated, "Whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple." (Luke 14:33, *NKJV*) Hence, giving our little all to God for the sake of Christ is a very modest cost indeed for the inestimable worth of discipleship. ■