



The Good News

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Counting the Cost

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We have a hymn in our hymnal that asks the question, “Have you counted the cost?” The hymn takes its perspective from the point of view of a disobedient individual counting the cost “if your soul should be lost”. In our article this morning, let’s ask the question: Have we counted the cost of obedience as well as disobedience? It’s a basic choice-consequence situation that we face every day, but the choice of whether or not to obey God is one that will impact our souls for eternity. So...have we counted the cost?

Counting the cost of disobedience: God, in His infinite wisdom and godly fairness, has given man the choice of whether to obey Him or not. This serves two purposes: God ends up with godly people who truly desire to serve Him, and it also eliminates the opportunity to argue with God in judgment. Every person will be without excuse in judgment because we make our own choices how we are going to live our lives. Let’s consider some Scriptures that relate to this choice-consequence situation: **Matt. 10:33** says “**But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in Heaven.**” This denial is not limited to verbally denying Christ as Peter did at the Lord’s trial. It also encompasses our behavior and conduct in this life, as our actions are to testify of the Lord’s sovereignty. Therefore, if we do not live according to God’s word, we deny Christ before men. In **Luke 9:62** Jesus says, “**No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of Heaven.**” This applies to two sets of people: those who want to come to Jesus, yet are unwilling to give themselves entirely to Him, and Christians who made the commitment to Him but have begun to “look back” and have

become distracted in their service. We find that these are not “fit” for the kingdom.

Counting the cost of obedience: We also find that there is indeed a “cost” to obedience if we seek the heavenly home. We learn that we will have to bear the burdens of this life as Jesus says in **Luke 9:23**, “**If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.**” God seeks those who will surrender all to Him in obedience and humility, and he promises to reward those who are faithful. Jesus says again, in **Matt. 25:34** of those that did as God commanded, “**Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world;’**”

Jesus describes for us the judgment scene and gives us a glimpse as to what it means to truly count the cost. He says in **Matt. 7:21**, “**Not everyone who says to Me ‘Lord, Lord’, shall enter the kingdom of Heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in Heaven.**” God has given us His Will in written form in the New Testament so that we can know what we must do. Truly counting the cost involves setting aside our own thoughts and opinions and giving ourselves over to the Law of God, without any additions or subtractions. Finally, counting the cost involves identifying and submitting to that which is authorized, as Jesus says in **Matt. 7:23** to those who did not submit to the will of the Father, “**I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.**” Let’s be sure to always count the cost of obedience and disobedience and be sure that we make the choice that we want to live with for eternity.