

FLAVORLESS SALT

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In Luke 14:34-35, Jesus said, “*Salt is good, but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill, but men cast it out.*” In the context of Luke 14:34-35, those who do not count the cost of discipleship are like salt that has lost its flavor. They will be cast into hell. Thus, there is a cost to being a true Christian (which is the very name for Christ’s disciples according to Acts 11:26).

Christ our only Master

The foundation of being Christ’s disciple is found in Luke 14:26-35. There, Jesus tells three things that a person must do or he cannot be his disciple. First, Luke 14:26 says, “*If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.*” We must hate all others including ourselves. This word “hate,” the Greek word *miseo*, literally means “to detest.” To understand the Lord’s choice of this particular word, it is helpful to study the same word as it is used in the application of the very same principle taught in Luke 14:26. In Luke 16:13, Jesus said that no man can serve two masters. It is not a matter of degree. He does not say that no man can serve two masters equally. He says that no man can serve two masters at all. It is either/or. If you love one as your master, you will “hate” (again, the Greek word *miseo*) the other as your master. Luke 16:13 says that “mammon” or material things cannot be our master and God too. Luke 14:26 applies the principle to Christ versus other people, including ourselves. To be Christ’s disciple, a person must hate all others as a master. The man’s father, mother, wife, children, brothers and sisters cannot be his master because if he loves one of them as his master, then he will hate Christ as a master. That is why Jesus said we must even hate our own selves as a master (see also John 12:25). If we are our own master, then we will hate Christ as a master. We must make a choice. To be Christ’s disciple, he must be our one and only master.

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(continued)

Nobody and nothing else can compete.

Losing our life

Luke 14:27 identifies another cost of being Christ's disciple: "*And whosoever does not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.*" To be a Christian, we must bear our cross. A cross does not merely symbolize suffering. The cross was an instrument of death. To take up our cross means we must die. Jesus said to take up our cross, we must lose our life for his sake and the gospel's (Mark 8:34-36). Again, that means dying. It is our old man that must be crucified (Rom 6:6). That means our own will and desires must be completely forsaken (Gal 5:24; 2 Cor 5:15; 1 Pet 4:1-2). Paul was crucified in this way (Gal 2:20; 6:14). And all Christians must be dead with our life hid with Christ in God (Col 3:3). This must be done daily (Luke 9:23-24).

Forsaking everything

Luke 14:33 teaches that to be Christ's disciple, we must forsake everything: "*So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsakes not all that he has, he cannot be my disciple.*" This does not mean that having possessions is wrong in and of itself. Rather, we must not have any love or care for material things (Matt 6:24; Luke 8:14; 1 John 2:15-17). Peter had a house (Matt 8:14), yet Peter had forsaken it and everything (Matt 19:27). He did not have to sell his house, but he had no care for it and used it strictly as a tool to serve God. "Forsaking everything" is concerned with what is in our heart and mind. Before becoming a Christian, we like to do our own will, pleasures and desires (Eph 2:2-3). But to be Christ's disciple, we must forsake our will (John 6:38), and do nothing of ourselves (John 8:28-29). We must live only for God (Matt 4:10), with our every thought (2 Cor 10:5), word, and deed (Col 3:17). Those who do not count the cost of discipleship are like salt that has lost its flavor, and only fit to be cast out (Luke 14:26-34).