

What does “**Look before you leap!**” mean?

- When is that really good advice?

What does “**He who hesitates is lost!**” mean?

- When is that really good advice?

Which advice is more appropriate for someone thinking about following Jesus?

1

All, or Not at all
Luke 14:25–35

bib.ly/Lu14.NIV
tiny.cc/cmchandouts



2

Setting for this passage

Jesus just finished a feast in a religious leader's house

- A man at the feast stated a common assumption:
**Everyone wants to be at the feast
in the Kingdom of God**
- Jesus said: Actually, not every does want to be there
 - Parable: **All the invited guests** chose not to come
 - Why wouldn't they want to come?
 - What's the harm in just taking the risk to come?

3

Luke 14:25-27

Potential disciples

Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: "If anyone comes to me and does not **hate** father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own life—such a person cannot be my disciple. And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.

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“Hate” can mean to “Put in second place”

Jacob had 2 wives: Leah and Rachel

“...Jacob’s **love** for Rachel was **greater than** his **love** for Leah. ... When the Lord saw that Leah was **not loved** [**literally “hated”**], he enabled her to conceive, but Rachel remained childless.” *Genesis 29:30-31*

Jesus said: “No one can serve two masters. Either you will **hate** the one and **love** the other, or you will be **devoted** to the one and **despise** the other. You cannot serve both God and money.” *Luke 16:13*

5

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6

Luke 14:25-35

25-27:

- Love & Hate are actions, not emotions
- For **some of us**, choosing Jesus brings a radical break from family, community, and ancestors
 - It can easily be seen as “hate” or treating relatives as though they are not valued
- For **some Christians**, losing life is a real issue
- For **every Christian**, being a disciple of Jesus

28-30: means a radical change in priorities and direction

31-33:

34-35:

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*Luke 14:25-35*25-27: Being Jesus' disciple **requires** total commitment

- Cross: a very shocking expression
 - “Their” is singular:
 - If you do not carry your cross, you cannot be...
 - “Your cross” is both common and unique
 - Common: obey God first, put others before self
 - Unique: Forgive and love **your** enemies (or relatives), or give up **your** money, or lose **your** family, or leave **your** career, or endure **your** hardship, or give up **your** dream, or...
- “Follow me”: we must walk the same road as Jesus

28-30:

31-33:

34-35:

8

Luke 14:28-30

“Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won’t you first sit down and estimate the cost to see if you have enough money to complete it? For if you lay the foundation and are not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule you, saying, ‘This person began to build and wasn’t able to finish.’

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Luke 14:25-35

25-27: Being Jesus’ disciple **requires** total commitment

28-30: Parable: Don’t start without counting the cost to finish

- Construction was often to bring honor to the builder
 - Herod the Great
- Failed construction projects brought great shame
- So: no one would start a public project without taking seriously whether it could be completed
- The point: don’t start following Jesus without taking seriously the whole journey

31-33: • Which will certainly include letting go of what we

34-35: hold most dear

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Luke 14:31-33

“Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Won’t he first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace.

In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples.

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Luke 14:25-35

25-27: Being Jesus’ disciple **requires** total commitment

28-30: Parable: Don’t start without counting the cost to finish

31-33: Parable: War is either “all in” or stay out of it

- War is all-or-nothing
 - If you aren’t willing to give all you have to win, you are much better off settling before it starts
- So: no one should enter war who hasn’t calculated the whole journey
- The point: There cannot be partial discipleship
 - Take seriously the call to total discipleship
- 34-35: • With all that is under my control

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Luke 14:34-35

“Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure pile; it is thrown out.

“Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear.”

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Luke 14:25-35

25-27: Being Jesus' disciple **requires** total commitment

28-30: Parable: Don't start without counting the cost to finish

31-33: Parable: War is either “all in” or stay out of it

34-35: Parable: Partial discipleship is as bad as none

- Salt that doesn't do what salt should do is worse than no salt at all
 - What salt should do: season, preserve
 - Unsalty salt: can't be 're-salted', can't mix in to soil, can't even put on a manure pile!
- Like 'lukewarm water' of Revelation 3:15-16: “I am about to spit you out of my mouth.”

14

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The Big Idea

Jesus' genuine disciples join the **lifelong** journey
 that will **eventually** change every priority in our lives
 as we follow Him to the cross

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Sometimes we want to add Jesus to our other valuables

Sometimes we expect **Him to help us** with our other valuables:

- more success at work or school
- more peace in our family
- more healing of our bodies
- more healing of my pain
- less need for patience and perseverance
- ...

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If we choose to follow Jesus...

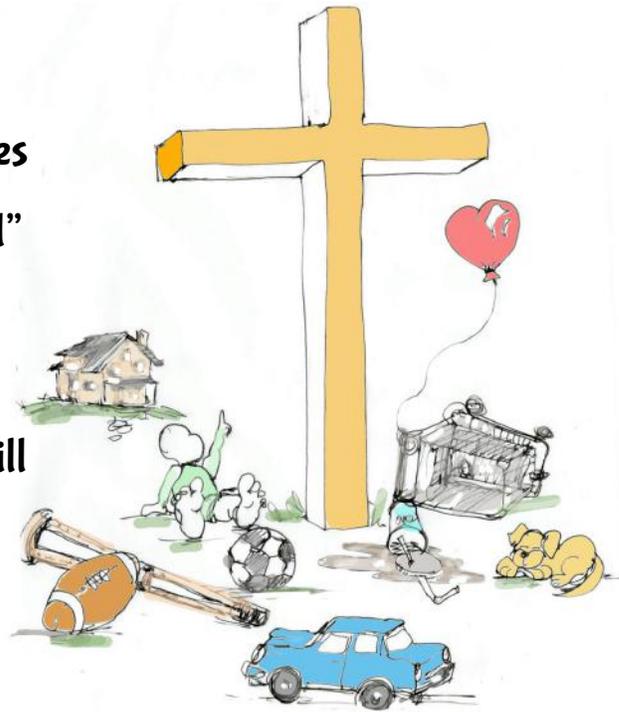
The cross must be the center of our lives

Everything else is second place: "hated"

Some of our valuables will be lost or abandoned

Our connection with every valuable will be only through Jesus:

→ they are not our own



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Jesus invited all people to come to Him,
especially the sick and sinners

- “Jesus said to them, ‘It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.’ ” *Mark 2:17*
- This is **Radical grace:**
Jesus welcomed sinners and the unworthy

For those who came, Jesus demanded full submission

- This is **Radical obedience:**
**All who come must put Jesus
before everything else**

Both are essential for Christian community

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Core Value Proposal: Radical Grace and Radical Obedience

*Approved by the Board on September 8, 2021
to be proposed to the congregation at the 2022 annual meeting*

We are committed to building a community that **practices radical grace** while **calling our people to radical obedience** to Christ. In **radical grace**, we welcome people to come as they are, and we are committed to building relationships with people as Jesus did, including with those who are often judged by others, just as Jesus welcomed sinners, prostitutes, and tax collectors (Luke 5:29-32). **We also call our people to radical obedience to Jesus in all parts of our lives,** conforming to His call to holiness and to sacrificial service (Luke 5:27-28; 9:23-26). And we recognize that **this road to radical obedience is lifelong and requires grace, patience, perseverance, and mutual encouragement** (Hebrews 10:23-25; 12:7-13).

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^{eventually}
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as we follow Him to the cross

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Application

Recognize the never–ending need to turn my life toward Jesus

- **Repeatedly** turning **the same areas** back to Jesus
 - Most battles are won through perseverance rather than one victory
- Learning **new areas** that I need to turn over to Him
 - “Q” in Chinese
 - You have to learn: It is like the English “ch”
 - Then you have to learn that it isn’t
 - **When we become Christians**
 - We don’t know every area where we need to submit to Jesus
 - We can’t know!
 - We should know and accept that **we will never be done turning parts over to Jesus**, and some will be very hard to do
 - It is likely that the harder areas will come later in life

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Application

Recognize the never–ending need to turn my life toward Jesus

- **This is true for EVERY Christian**
 - From the first day you have new life in Christ
 - To the last breath you take on earth
- “Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as **a living sacrifice**, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” *Romans 12:1-2a*

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Application

Recognize the never–ending need to turn my life toward Jesus

Put into His hands what He is asking for today

- YOUR cross is unique to you today
 - Listening to the words of the Bible
 - Listening to the words of the Holy Spirit
 - Put Jesus before family, friends, and possessions
 - Pursue the call to holiness, purity, submission, and service
 - Obey the call to forgive those who hurt us and to love our enemies
 - Obey the call to pursue His calling and priorities instead of my own
- We must **abandon completely** some things we deeply value
- We must **abandon our claim** to some things that stay in our hands
- The choice is not between Jesus and the devil
 - It is: Jesus or what I hold most dear / what shapes my life most

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Application

Recognize the never–ending need to turn my life toward Jesus

Put into His hands what He is asking for today

- We want to help each other in this journey
 - Sometimes our spirit is willing but our flesh is weak
 - “Strengthen the feeble hands,
steady the knees that give way;
say to those with fearful hearts,
“Be strong, do not fear;
your God will come,
he will come with vengeance;
with divine retribution
he will come to save you.” *Isaiah 35:3-4*

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Application

Recognize the never–ending need to turn my life toward Jesus

Put into His hands what He is asking for today

- Know that we will eventually lose it all anyway!
- And **nothing** is worth having if it means losing the Author of life
 - “I say to the Lord, “You are my Lord;
apart from you I have no good thing.” *Psalm 16:2*
- **Whatever we entrust to Him, we will eventually receive something worth far more in return**
 - “That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet this is no cause for shame, because I know whom I have believed, and **am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until that day.**” *2 Timothy 1:12*

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Jesus said: “Whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.”

- Do you accept the never-ending need to turn your life toward Jesus?
- What is He asking you to put into His hands today?
 - **“Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution he will come to save you.”** *Isaiah 35:3-4*
 - **Trust Jesus who gave up everything so you could truly live**
 - **Will you trust Him today?**