



**LESSON SEVEN:  
Counting the Cost before Baptism**

To learn how to most effectively use this study,  
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someone.

## **The Way of Discipleship Tutorials**

**by Robert Cox**

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## STUDY #7 – COUNTING THE COST BEFORE BAPTISM

**Study Goals:** To help students understand the commitment they are making to follow Jesus means they are ready and willing ...

- ... to turn away from the sin in their life.
- ... to give Jesus complete control of their lives.
- ... to sacrifice anything they need to that will hinder them from following Jesus.
- ... to fully participate in the life of the church.
- ... to be fully committed to displaying all the characteristics of a disciple.

### Galatians 5:16-17

16 So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

17 For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want.

- What am I committing to?
  - I will not “gratify the desires of the flesh” (i.e. I am turning away from sin).
  - **NOTE:** Explain to your student this does not mean you will not still struggle with sin – everyone messes up – but what should you do when you mess up? Also, there is a difference between making a mistake and living in rebellion. The commitment they’re making is that they will no longer live in rebellion.

**COUNT THE COST: Am I ready to fully turn away from the sin in my life?**

## Luke 9:23-24

23 Then he said to them all: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. 24 For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it.

- What does “take up their cross daily and follow me” mean?
  - Die to self DAILY, follow Jesus DAILY
  - DAILY = “the rest of my life” – this is a lifelong commitment I’m making.
- What is the benefit of this level of commitment to Jesus?
  - Salvation

**COUNT THE COST: Am I ready to give up the rest of my life to Jesus by daily relinquishing total control to Him?**

## Luke 9:57-62

<sup>57</sup> As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, “I will follow you wherever you go.”

<sup>58</sup> Jesus replied, “Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.”

<sup>59</sup> He said to another man, “Follow me.”

But he replied, “Lord, first let me go and bury my father.”

<sup>60</sup> Jesus said to him, “Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God.”

<sup>61</sup> Still another said, “I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say goodbye to my family.”

<sup>62</sup> Jesus replied, “No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.”

- How much must I be willing to give up in order to commit to being a disciple of Jesus (v. 58)?
- What do Jesus’s statements in verse 60 and 62 indicate about the level of priority following Him should occupy in my life?

**COUNT THE COST: Am I ready to give up anything Jesus asks me to give up, even material possessions? Am I ready to truly make being His disciple the #1 priority in my life – even more important than other “important” things?**

### Luke 14:25-33 (review)

<sup>25</sup> Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: <sup>26</sup> “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. <sup>27</sup> And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.

<sup>28</sup> “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? <sup>29</sup> For if you lay the foundation and are not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule you, <sup>30</sup> saying, ‘This person began to build and wasn’t able to finish.’

<sup>31</sup> “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? <sup>32</sup> 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. <sup>33</sup> In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples.

- What does verse 26 say about the level of commitment Jesus expects from His disciples?
- What does verse 27 teach (relate back to Luke 9:23-24)?
- Why does Jesus share the tower and king stories?
  - He wants me to understand I need to seriously think about whether I’m willing to follow through on my commitment to follow Him or not (what this Bible study is helping with).

**COUNT THE COST: Am I ready to commit to following Jesus understanding He expects me to follow through to the end of my life?**

## Hebrews 10:25

<sup>25</sup> not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

**COUNT THE COST: Am I ready to make attending church, church events, small group (etc.) a priority in my life? Am I willing to rearrange my schedule as needed?**

- **NOTE:** In some cases, disciples even need to change their job situation in order to be connected to the church. If that's the situation with the person you're studying with, they must ask themselves what is more important? My job, or my relationship with God?

## Matthew 13:44-46

<sup>44</sup> “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.

<sup>45</sup> “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls.

<sup>46</sup> When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.

- How important is the treasure in these stories? How much were the people in these stories willing to give up for the treasure?

**COUNT THE COST: Am I ready to treat my relationship with Jesus like my greatest treasure?**

## **Characteristics of a Disciple (Review)**

### John 8:31

<sup>31</sup> To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples.

- Characteristic #1 – a disciple of Jesus holds to Jesus's teaching.

## **COUNT THE COST: Am I fully committed to learning and obeying God's word?**

### **John 13:34-35**

<sup>34</sup> "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. <sup>35</sup> By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

- Characteristic #2 – a disciple of Jesus will love other disciples.
  - **NOTE:** The "one another" in this passage refers specifically to disciples of Jesus loving other disciples of Jesus.

## **COUNT THE COST: Am I fully committed to being in tight relationship with other disciples of Jesus?**

- Seek to build meaningful relationships with other disciples through the life of the church and full participation in cell/discipleship groups.
- Confessing sin, listening and being listened to.
- Being held accountable and holding others accountable.

### **John 15:1-8**

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. <sup>2</sup> He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. <sup>3</sup> You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup> Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

<sup>5</sup> "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup> If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. <sup>7</sup> If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup> This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

- Characteristic #3 – a disciple of Jesus will “bear much fruit”.

**COUNT THE COST: Am I fully committed to developing the “fruit of the Spirit” in my life through ongoing character development?**

- Fruit of the Spirit, Galatians 5:22-23 – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control

**COUNT THE COST: Am I fully committed to “bearing fruit” in terms of taking advantage of opportunities to share my faith with others and in learning to teach others to follow Jesus?**

**COUNT THE COST: Are you ready to fully commit all of your life to being a disciple of Jesus?**

- If the answer is ‘yes’, then congratulations! You are ready for baptism and new life in Christ!

**LEADER’S NOTE:** If your student is ready to surrender the rest of their lives to Christ, they are ready for baptism. If they are not ready, continue to pray for them and love them. Never attempt to force someone to make a decision to follow Jesus when they’re not ready. Encourage and love them, but remember their decision is their own to make. You will do more harm than good if you attempt to force a person to make a commitment they don’t really want to make.

