Ring of Truth daily devotion

Ring of Truth provides 366 daily 'proofs' that the Bible is consistent throughout from Genesis to Revelation and relevant for our lives today!

24 September

Luke 14:26

"If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters - yes, even his own life - he cannot be My disciple."

The progression continues.

Two days ago, we were 'called' - Yesterday, we were 'empowered' and 'sent' - Today, we find out the 'cost' of being a disciple.

We can be followers without being disciples but we cannot be disciples without being followers. Jesus had thousands of followers. They came to hear and be fed, to witness the miracles and the excitement. They shouted ***"Hosanna"*** as He entered Jerusalem and ***"Crucify Him"*** when he refused to become King in the way they wanted Him to.

There are also many followers of Jesus today. They go to church when it suits them, they pray when they get into difficulties and drop out of church when it no longer 'meets their needs'. Like the grain in the parable of the farmer who went out to sow seeds, they are the ones which fall by the wayside, among rocks and among thorns. They have an insufficient root system and get sidetracked by the enemy, human desires or the attractions of the world (see Matthew 13).

Jesus desired that all His 'followers' would become 'disciples'. You are not *'a disciple of the rabbi'* until the 'dust of his feet' covers you (Hebrew saying).

Teaching has to be experiential. We have to live it out. You can have all the Biblical knowledge in the world in your head but if you don't live it out, it is worthless.

That is why Jesus gave the parable of the men who built houses - one on the sand and the other on the rock. They both **heard** the Word - but only one *put it into practice* (see Luke 6:46-49). Only *his* house stood against the storms of life.

To become a disciple you have to count the cost. Discipleship to Jesus is a full-time vocation. There can be no compromise. You have to be "Sold out for Jesus".

When Jesus said you have to ***"hate (your) father, mother, wife, children, etc."***, it was not as we understand the term 'hate' today. He doesn't expect you to reject them, treat them without respect or stop loving them. He has 'given' them to you so you must hold them in the highest place after Jesus. What He does mean is that no matter how close we are to them, they must never be allowed to come between Jesus and us.

God hates divorce so He will never violate marriage, but neither must we allow our spouse to get in between God and us. Rather than divorce, we have to work it through. As God sees marriage as a one-flesh union, He will not 'call' only one spouse. The 'call' therefore has to be verified and actioned in unity. (His will never conflicts with His Word.)

The same is true for the children. God loves your children much more than you do - but if He gives you, as parents, a call which seems to disadvantage the children, follow the call if it is genuine and see the miraculous provision and protection of God upon you all. We've done it many times and each time 'Father' has looked after our children materially and spiritually and each one of our young adults loves and serves Jesus.

Yes, they may not have had all the designer labels, etc., but their character is more mature because of it and their faith is, I believe, stronger and more real.

God is no one's debtor but He does expect obedience and to be the first love and have the first and highest place in our lives. Have *you* given over *your life to Jesus* yet?

Ask yourself right now - Which are you? - A 'follower' or a 'disciple'?

What does Jesus think?