

Count the Cost

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[0:00] And great to be amongst your southerners. We've got a scripture here, Luke 14 to start with if you've got your Bibles.

I'm talking about counting the cost, counting the cost. Some would reckon they cannot afford to pay the price. But I urge you to count the cost.

Luke 14, we read from verse 25. Luke 14 from 25 through 33. The Lord Jesus says, as we read the context, And there went great multitudes with him, and he turned and said unto them, 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.

And whosoever that doth not bear his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. For which of you intending to build a tower sitteth not down first, and counter the cost, whether he hath sufficient to finish it?

Lest happily after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it. All that beholdeth began to mock him, saying, This man began to build and was not able to finish.

[1:21] Or what king going to make war against another king sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand, to meet him that cometh to him with ten thousand, twenty thousand.

Or else while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassador, and desire of conditions of peace. So likewise whosoever he be of you, that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for your word, for I found me together unto you, unto your word. Let us have ears to hear, a heart to receive. Lord, minister by your spirit.

Encourage us, Lord, in faith and our walk. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. The Lord Jesus tells us here of the cost, to count the cost.

I urge you today to consider the cost of following the Lord Jesus. Now at the end of June, the shops tend to have these stocktake sales. The stores do a stocktake, they count the stock, they take stock.

[2:26] And likewise for us, as individuals, we can take stock where we are at. It tells us to examine ourselves, examine whether you're being with fame. And our Lord Jesus tells here of the man counting the cost of building a town.

Now I know I've got some ideas of some building projects at home, but I've got to kind of check the budget first. Have I got enough to put towards that project? And the Lord tells of a man planning to build a town, but first he sits down and works out whether he can afford it.

The Lord Jesus is challenging hearers here. He was telling of a price to pay, a cost, a cross. When you consider building something, you want to consider, can I afford it?

And we built a granny flat next to our home. We had to do some budget, some planning, some preparation, working out whether it was going to be achievable.

Check whether you can afford the cost. Do you want to make this investment? It will cost you dearly.

[3:38] It will cost you everything that you have. The context here, the Lord tells these pictures of a building to build, of a war to wage.

And it's a call that goes out to let go of the comforts, to endure hardness, to enter a conflict, a warfare. To hazard your life, to undertake tribulation, to face an enemy, to even face the sword.

Examine yourself. What is it that you value? What is it that matters to you? It's a good time to have a stock take, as it were. A time of heart searching to make that honest self-evaluation.

What matters to me? What is of value to me? Consider your use of time. Check it out. The time that you give. And what you give it to.

It's more the point. The time that you take away from some things. In other words, time you do not give to some things. Now some people might make the sacrifice of even attending this meeting that you might have had to say no to some penalty rates, for example.

[4:49] The time that you withhold. And the time that you could better spend. When we look back on life as we get older, we think of time that's gone. The time that you spend.

You know, as sand through the hourglass, isn't it? So are the days of our lives. The time that we waste. The time that just evaporates before we even know it. And I know some of you are students. You've got to balance your time. You've got to juggle your time. And have got time pressure. We've got an awesome stewardship of our life. Our whole life is in that sense it's an investment, isn't it? We've got accountability. How do we spend those minutes and times? They're 86,400 seconds a day. It's like money in the bank, isn't it?

But it's so quickly gone. Those 86,400 seconds. What is my value? What is my hourly rate? Examine yourselves. Whether you be in the faith. Consider the value of your time.

[5:45] Because once it's spent, it's forever gone, isn't it? And you have the most important investment decisions to make. It's really about where do you put your life?

Who do you give your life to? And in business they talk about a cost-benefit analysis, don't they? What you put your cost into. What you fork out.

And what you gain from that. What you benefit from that. How do we invest these scant resources? Our time is a finite resource, isn't it? Let's face it. Our lives.

What is there to show for it at the end of our life? We can fetch our life away and before we know it, it's over. Paul knew that it was a living sacrifice.

As he tells us to be that living sacrifice. In Romans 12. I might just flick there.

[6:41] Romans 12, that familiar one, tells the living sacrifice of the life that's lived. Romans 12, verse 1, he says, I present, I besieged you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present yourselves.

Present your bodies a living sacrifice. Holy. Acceptable. Unto God. Which is your reasonable service. Paul lived that.

That was Paul's life. As he didn't just talk about it. He lived it. He was that. A living sacrifice. In Philippians 2, verse 17.

He says, Yea, if I'll be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and I rejoice with you all. He says, if I'll be offered. He talks about himself as being a sacrifice. And ministry is that.

People have sacrificed things to be ministering in this church. As we know. People are amongst us. As we all can consider. How can my life be used?

[7:42] And Paul said his life was like a drink offering poured out, if you like. It was like a living sacrifice. The senses of an offering that's poured. And it's got that metaphor of the blood of Jesus.

A sacrificial service rendered unto the Lord. As a sacrifice. As it was poured out upon the altar. As oil, as wine was poured out. As it was poured out.

A drink offering. And 2 Timothy 4, verse 16. He uses the same picture. He says, as he closes the chapter of his life. He says, For I am now ready to depart.

Ready to be offered. And the time of my departure is at hand. He's ready to be offered. He's got that same sense of the sacrificial poured out offering. And we're talking here about value this morning.

About values. You know, some of the political parties talk about labour values. Or green values. Or, you know, the world's values. And then we've got, really, what are Bible values?

[8:40] Which can be countered to some of those things. What is it that we value? And we show that by what we put our time into. Our money. Our devotion.

Our energy. Our strength. And what do we lead our children towards is a big question too. Where do we want them to end up? That can be a big investment decision too, isn't it?

Because we want to invest in our families. In our children. And for me, they act as if the TV is the family babysitter. That can be a big mistake, don't it? When the values that come from the TV box are instilled into the children in our home.

And then we wonder what happened when problems happened later down the track. And, of course, I've made that mistake as a parent. I think when I reflect back on some of the things that children watched, even what might be considered potentially harmless and family-friendly such things, consider maybe we could have been better, wiser.

But you get that wisdom in hindsight, don't you? I urge you, fellow traveller here, on that journey of life, to think about value, about values, about what values we're absorbing.

[9:51] Let's face it, worldliness abounds. It's in our faces all the time, isn't it? Let's not deviate from the book. It's going to cost you, in that sense of discipleship, to consider what do I want to put my life into?

What do I want to leave off of my life and not apply myself to? And when you make the right decisions, it will be worth it. It will be a wise investment decision.

You'll have that cost-benefit analysis and you'll think, yes, I made the right decision, how I invested my time, my life. And what matters is eternal values. Consider that.

In 1 Peter 1, verse 23, it tells us of some eternal values. And Peter writes, he says, being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.

For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away. But the word of the Lord abideth, endureth forever.

[10:54] And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you. Internal values. This is the word which endureth forever, the gospel.

When we look at life and make these investment decisions, as I put to you, we're surrounded by toys and treasures that are going to fade and fail. We're going to see lives blossom and then decay. And we realise the mortality of life. As we see, as we go through life, we see loved ones that will leave us. And it makes us think and takes stop.

So take stop. We want to hang on to that which is eternal, that which will endure forever. That which has enduring value. When you think, how can I invest my time, my life, to put it into something of enduring value, of eternal value.

Count the cost. Count the cost. Consider more so the cost of not investing in what is lasting.

Judgment looms. Some people, their lives are invested in chasing after the almighty dollar, as they call it.

[12:05] And the world is in peril. The souls are at stake. The world is filled with haters of God. We just have to see what's on the media, what the world feasts its flesh on.

Philippians 3 verse 19, it says of the world, whose end is destruction. Whose God is their belly. And whose glory is their shame. Whose mind, earthly things.

What a reproach to be in that number. Whose God is their belly. Whose glory is in their shame. You know, pride. Whose mind, earthly things.

They're proud of what is evil. Their glory is in their shame. And their mind, earthly things. So it's good to check. I don't want to be in that number.

I don't want to have that mind. I don't want to be driven by that. Whose side are you on? It's the fact that whatever we do in life, we get out what we put in. There's an investment, as it were.

[13:06] Investment decision. I'm using kind of picturesque and kind of trying to get an analogy across here in the sense that I want to sell you on this. That this is an investment decision.

It's an investment too precious and too important for you to miss this. I know lately, Julie and I, we bought some cookware. And it was quite expensive. But the one who sold us the cookware sold us on the value of that cookware.

And the health benefits. The benefits that would come from that cookware. Now, I know when we were out witnessing, we were knocking up north lately. I knocked on the door.

And the sign said, no salespeople. And the man responded. He pointed to the sign and he said, do not knock, no salespeople.

And I said, I'm not selling anything. He said, you're selling God. Selling God. And in a sense, we are, aren't we? We are salespeople for God in a way. But of course, that would be putting it in a very crass kind of comparison.

[14:08] Because we know that his offer is eternal. And it's free. It's a free gift. And the cost really is, it's cost free really salvation.

Of course, in this context, we're talking about discipleship. Which is how we make that free gift that we've received. How we make it such that we apply ourselves to live it out in our lives.

As Christians. And there's a sense where if we put in, we get out. If you pay the price, as it were, you put your life into living for the Lord.

There's a sense there are rewards. Of course, we know our salvation is not by our works. I'm not trying to communicate that. But there's that sense where because of our loving Master and his gift to us, it's our glad, joy and privilege to render some service unto him.

And what better use of your life can that be than to do that? And there's the sense of you're adding to your faith. That there's a value that you gain. Some eternal value.

[15:13] As your life is invested in what matters. There's that sense of adding to your faith. Of drawing nigh to God. He will draw nigh to you. As you put in, he will bless.

As you reach and extend yourself in his service. There's a joy that comes. There's a fulfillment. And a blessing. There's a growing of your faith. The deepening of your fellowship.

As you attend the fellowship meetings. As you build up yourself. As you lock into your church. As you hook in. As you say, yes, I'm in.

I'm all in. There's a building up of yourself. That happens spiritually. As you give, you receive. And it's just that manifold purpose of God. That we give ourselves unto him.

With all our heart. And whatever the cost. Because it is worth the cost. That's the point. As I had to be convinced that that cookware. That there would be a benefit.

[16:09] That was worth the investment. And I put to you. There's no greater investment. Than you can make of your life. To give your life to him. To receive his gift. And put your faith into action.

There's a value beyond compare. And as to that cookware. When I realised the value of that investment.

The expense was a secondary consideration. It really didn't factor. Because when we understand what is at stake. These eternal realities. That we understand eternity is in view.

Then we will count the cost. And we will say yes Lord. It's worth that investment of my life. It's worth me giving myself to this. Wholly unto him.

And we'll hold back no exertion. Nothing will be too much. Effort. Nothing will deter us. Because our Lord has given his everything to us. Count the cost.

[17:09] And be willing to pay the price. As to your response. As a saved person. As a saved man. As a saved woman. As a saved. Our salvation is free. It's a gift.

I want to make that very clear. It's receiving his saving. By faith. Through his grace. It follows on then. That we put our faith into action.

It follows on. That once we receive the gift. We move forward. In faith. And we put our life in his hands. There's a renouncing. There's a letting go.

There's a denial. A self-denial. There's a sacrifice. A laying hold. An ongoing cost. A lifelong awareness. And we want to keep close to our Lord.

And seek to please him. We've got a whole new way of living. And we'll make some decisions that are wise. We'll let go of idols. And we'll refuse that which is questionable.

[18:06] In a generation that's fed what values we've got real value. Not political values of whatever colour. But we've got Bible values. Biblical values.

And while the world is gorging itself on the pig's swill. And they're so completely fooled that they think we are the crazy ones.

We'll know what counts. What matters. And friends let's face it. We're witnessing an intentional education of the masses against Christianity.

It's not like why would the Folau case come about. Because there is an intent to attack Christians. In the workplace.

In the media. In every place. In the education system. And many will just follow the landings. And succumb to that kind of programming. That anti-Christian messaging.

[18:59] We have to wise up and be conscious of that. That's the world we're in. It's costly to take a different track. Because you're going to stand down. As a Christian. You know.

A cross is. When you're carrying a cross. It's a bit hard to hide it. Isn't it? Because it's very public. Isn't it? And we're going to be persecuted. We're going to be thought ill of.

It's going to cost us. To not follow the ground. But that's okay. Because there's an eternal value. That is in view. Are we seeking after God.

Or are we earthly minded? Will we avoid rising up. Because it's going to be uncomfortable. Or will we count the cost. And say yes Lord.

Because of the peril. That of those who miss this. We consider the value of what we have. So friends. There's a clash of cultures going on.

[19:56] All around us. There's darkness and light. Values have been eroded. Biblical values. Values that. Just common sense values. Are kind of out the window. There's this perverting.

There's this mocking of Christ. When you look at the media of late. There's people routinely. And openly cursing. And mocking Christ. They're using his name.

In blasphemy. Look at the. There's a foul mouthed soccer player. In the US. You might have seen the stories. Superb. And what she stands for.

As she opens her guts and her mouth. And despite children present. And people think it funny. And they applaud her. Because she's kicked a few goals.

And won a few soccer games. She's the star of the moment. And they don't care. Her mouth is filled with cursing. And she supports sin openly.

[20:54] Our land is being overtaken. And they're the values. And they're the values. And they're the values. Largely. Of at times the government. That we're under. Thank God there is some.

Some mention of God. From the current Prime Minister. And we pray for him. But friends. By and large. The direction of our nation. Is hellward. Who will rise up.

Is the question. There's a sense. We're a bit caught to this. In Psalm 94.16. It says. Who will rise up for me. Against the evil doers. Who will stand up for me. Against the workers of iniquity.

Psalm 94.16. There's a question. Out there. Who will rise up. It's going to be costly. It's going to mean. Going against the grave. And there's need. For some qualities.

Of militancy. Because we will rise up. In a. In a contradiction. To the world around us. It's being willing.

[21:52] To count costs. It can be costly. To be the one. Who rises up. It can be costly. To be the one. Who ventures. Out to witness. It can be costly.

To be willing. To carry the cross. Because we know. Where the cross. Will lead us. And in some nations. That's the reality. It's the death penalty. It's costly. Brothers and sisters.

But it's worth. It's worth. Isn't it? Are you with me? Yes. Let's respond. To the battle cry. Because. As our Lord.

Gave that analogy. A man building a tower. Then he gave an analogy. Of a man. About to war. Or warfare. And we need to. Hearken to the battle cry. To hear. The rousing.

Of the trumpet call. To take action. In Exodus 15. 3. It says. The Lord. Is a man. Of war. The Lord. Is his name. That's a good one.

[22:47] Isn't it? Exodus 15. 3. The Lord. Is a man. Of war. There's a militancy. There's a. There's a. A calling to battle. God is a warrior.

Is what it's saying. And thank God. It says. God shall fight. For us. We have something. We're fighting for. There's a valley in here. This is. More than.

Fighting for. The nation of Australia. Or. Whatever it be. Whatever cause. This. There is no greater cause. There is no greater mission. No greater.

Army. And God shall fight for us. He'll enable us. Now war is costly. Isn't it? It's going to cost. Something to wage war. You see. The millions of dollars.

That. Or trillions of dollars. Probably. For a world war. That have been fought. War is costly. It's destructive. It's going to cost. Blood. Sweat and tears. As Churchill said.

[23:43] Yet we are at war. Aren't we? Yes. We are at war. We face an enemy. Whether we like it or not. It's a warfare. Will we surrender. Or will we fight?

There's a cost. To consider. Isn't it? Psalm 11 verse 3. It says. If the foundations be destroyed. What shall? What can the righteous do? Some people don't have a foundation to build on. It's sinking sand for them. And it does boil down to that foundation. What are we standing on? And who has control? Who do we give our allegiance to? Let's face it.

Today. Many of us are given over. And controlled by the flesh. And they have this wrong attitude. And they follow the trendsetters. Whoever it is on Twitter. Or Facebook.

Or whatever the media is painting. As the latest, greatest praise. The modern day influencers. They just follow these. The names that are in lights. And they just go along.

[24:41] With the babble of the media. And there's this not so subtle brainwashing going on. Without us even realising it. Sometimes it's more blatant. But it's becoming more so.

But darkness is overtaking the land. And many are ignorant of what is happening. It's like they don't even realise that this is going on. You know, look back to even 10, 20 years ago.

The world was different back then. It's changing. Ever more so. And ignorance. It's clouding people's vision and minds. Friends, we need to be having our eyes open to take stock.

Take the stock date of the world and of ourselves. Where are we at? Count the cost. Everybody's worshipping something. Even the atheists, they worship themselves, don't they?

They think they're a higher authority than the God of the Bible. Well, God is looking for a God-fearing people. In such a time as this. The woman at the well in John 4.

[25:43] Our Lord tells her, You worship, you know not what. We know what we worship, he says. Verse 23 of John 4. But the hour cometh and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth.

For the Father seeketh such to worship him. God's seeking worshippers. He's wanting our worship. He's wanting you to worship him. The world will worship in all kinds of ways.

But we must seek after God. Count the cost. Do you render your service to him? Do you render your life to him? In Psalm 119 verse 10.

The psalmist cried, With my whole heart have I sought thee. Oh, let me not wander from thy commandments. But my whole heart have I sought thee. Will we follow Jesus?

It's going to cost you something, he says. There's a sense of the cost to calculate. There's a price to pay. And will we seek after God with our whole heart?

[26:49] Or will we do it half-heartedly? It's very easy to be half-hearted. There's always something else to occupy our time, our energy, our devotion.

In Hebrews 11 verse 6 it says, But without faith it is impossible to please him. For he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them.

That diligently seek him. There's a sense where we should have diligence to this. How is the stocktake going? We've worked out what's the value, what we want to keep, what we want to go, what we want to, how do we price, as it were, the life that we live.

Count the cost, dear friend, today. Of your Christian walk. Let today be a decision point where you say, Yes, this matters to me. This counts. This counts more than anything I can calculate.

Of my life, of my values as a Christian. The eternal value of the enduring word of God. What is our values base? Paul said, I am crucified with Christ.

[27:57] He was a living sacrifice. He was an offering poured out. And in case you didn't notice it, the devil-run world has a different set of values, doesn't it?

What the world values, you could say inclusion, tolerance. Anything goes. Anything but Christianity. There's this kind of mind-altering device that we plug in.

And it changes the way we think, the way we view reality. Because it's conditioning us. It's programmed. It's filtered. It's twisted such that it presents a false view.

And the enemy of your soul wants to misguide and to lead us in a false direction. Such that we don't recognise the truth and lies anymore.

The world's mindset. It's so easy to get programmed with that. And to get stuck in that. Spurgeon said, self is the worst enemy a Christian has.

[29:03] I'm enemy number one to myself. The man that looks in the mirror is my worst enemy. Self is the worst enemy a Christian has. And sometimes ourselves, we can be inclined to wonder.

How does that song go? Prone to wonder. Lord, I feel it. You know, we're under attack. And our own heart, we have to keep check and keep stock and keep counting the cost, as it were. And to guard ourselves, to guard the truth. It tells us that we're born again by the incorruptible seed, the Word of God, which endures, which lives and abides forever.

It's going to cost you to stand with the book. But nothing else will do. Nothing else matters in comparison. As it were, if you compare everything and Christ and His call, His truth, nothing else will do.

In Psalm 12, 6, it says, The words of the Lord are pure words, as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. The Word of God, it's precious.

[30:10] It's purified. It matters to us. And we're committed to that. The unchanging values. The unchanging truth of the Word of God.

It doesn't change. The truth is the truth. Always has been. Is and always will be. The whole truth. Nothing but the truth. As they still say when they put their hands on it.

And this book tells us to count the cost, as it were. Now when you count the cost, when, as a believer, and you start that walk, you're safe, you're heaven bound, you're glory bound.

Yet there's a sense, add to your faith. Make that faith active. Make that faith live. Make that faith walk in your shoes. And when you count the cost, it means you identify with a man the world still hates.

Isn't that true? When you count the cost, when you say, I'm a Christian, you identify with Christ. The one the world still mocks and hates. Despised and rejected of men, isn't he?

[31:19] And when you count the cost, it means I'm going to enlist in God's army. I'm going to say, yes sir. How does that song go? I'm too young. To march in the infantry.

Ride in the cavalry. Shoot the artillery. Fly over land and sea. But I'm in the Lord's army. Yes sir. There's truth to that song, isn't there? And we're going to enlist in God's army.

That's what it means. And I've spent some time in the khaki. Colour. I was just a weekend warrior. But it was an interesting time. And you can learn through the picture of that.

Of being in a nation's army. But we are in something much bigger and grander, aren't we? In God's army, as it were. It means you're going to have to change sides from where you were.

It means putting on a new uniform. It means you're flying a new flag. You're serving a new commander in chief. That's the allegiance we have. And the picture of that.

[32:23] And as the Lord talked about the man building a tower. He had to count the cost. And he talks about a man about to wage war. And about taking stock of looking at what that warfare is going to cost.

And in Romans 13, it tells us of an armour of light that we had to put on. Verse 12. Let us cast off the works of darkness. And let us put on the armour of light.

It tells us of putting on the Lord Jesus Christ. And we will make no provision for the flesh. It's counting the cost, isn't it? It's our new allegiance.

And as we count the cost. As we wear that uniform. We're entering into battle. Into a brutal battle zone. Into mortal combat. Count the cost. It means fight. The good fight of the fame.

There's a sense of. This is serious. Paul says. 1 Timothy 6. 12. Fight the good fight of the fame.

[33:24] Take hold on eternal life. For which thou art called. And confess the good confession. Good confession. In the sight of many witnesses. Count the cost.

Take stock. You are one heartbeat from eternity. Wow. Why should I worry about. You know. Of course we've still got to make a living.

We've got family to support. We've got needs to meet. But what is our values base? What really matters? When it all boils down to it. When it all boils down. What really counts? What really is of importance?

Realise. These are the last days. And factors. The majority are in the wrong. And even as Christians.

Can we restore the values that we need? Sometimes we lose sight of them. Can we regain what we've lost? Count the cost. Take stock. Wow. Maybe I've let some things slip. I was talking to Julie. [34:23] On the way. Hey. I could be praying a bit more than I am. And when we resort unto God. Unto believing prayer. Fervent prayer. Earnest prayer. When we realise the value of eternal things.

The unsearchable riches of Christ. Wow. You've got a great treasure store. An inheritance. A reserve in heaven for you. Realise the strength of your God.

To carry you through. It says Psalm 55.22. Cast thy burden upon the Lord. And he shall sustain thee. He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved. What a great strength you have.

That his arms are able to carry. All your burden. All your care. Will you depend upon him? We need to more, don't we? To know his shielding power and care. To know that.

He that is begotten of God. Keepeth himself. And that wicked one toucheth him not. You're untouchable. He's got his shield of protection over you.

[35:24] Of course we still have the rain falling on the just and the unjust. We still have the difficulties of life. And the sad things of life. Yet God is holding us close.

And we've got a hope. We've got a value. That's beyond what this world would put its energy and love into. A value that we speak. A value that's worth fighting for.

When we think of the great cause that we have. Is there not a cause? And in this world of culture wars. When everything's anti-Christ. Isn't it?

Everything's anti-Christ. When you scarcely can do a course these days. Or join some institute of learning. And have some messaging that's driven at you.

To twist your thinking against the Lord. And he's true. But we have a truth that matters. And we've an assured victory. That he's promised.

[36:23] You can live the godly life. There's values here that matter. And in this war that's going on. It's a propaganda war. There's social media.

All kinds of media. They're starting a generation against Christianity. They're making Christians look like they're wackos. And that that is not worth intelligent consideration.

And we can get diverted ourselves. We can get impressed. Even unknowingly. In taking on board some of that thinking. And to maybe.

Oh. I'm not going to. I'm not going to put the price on that. That I need to. I'm going to kind of hold back some of that. When he says count the cost.

We say I'll give him this much. As it were. You know. Okay. I'll count the cost. I'll give God this much. When God says. You know. Give yourself. Holy. Holy.

[37:20] W-H-O. W-H-O. Double L-Y. Holy. Unto the Lord. And the whole. As it were. The thing. My life should be a living sacrifice.

I should be like an offering poured out. As Paul demonstrated. And I'm going to rise up. When he says. Who will rise up for me. Against the evil doers. I'm going to say.

Count me in. Who will take a stand. Who will join the army. And say yes sir. Yes Lord. Yes master. To the captain of your salvation.

In Psalm 27 verse 8. He says. Seek ye my face. And my heart said unto thee. Thy face Lord. Will I seek. Psalm 27 verse 8.

Seek ye my face. My heart said unto thee. Thy face Lord. Will I seek. It's about our response isn't it. As we count the cost. And it's his working by his spirit.

[38:17] That makes us holy. It talks about the sanctification of the spirit. It's his work. He will sanctify you. Just yield. We can disobey. We can grieve.

We can quench the spirit. We can. Stifle God's working in our heart. We can say. Just this much Lord. Not this much. And.

We can miss out. On his best. As it were. The working of his spirit. Let's. Yield. To him. And you know.

I'm saying this. I'm preaching to myself. I need to yield. It's the working of his spirit. Isn't it? The convicting of God's spirit. To get on the conviction.

As it were. To let God have his way. And to say to our captain. Yes Lord. Whatever you. Whatever you say. I will do. And we'll know you're sustaining.

[39:11] It says. The Lord sustained me. The psalmist cried. There's a constant warfare for the time. And then listening. 2 Timothy 3. We read. Paul tells Timothy. Now therefore. Endure hardness. As a good soldier. Of Jesus Christ. No man that wreath. Entangleth himself. In the affairs. Of this life. That he may please him. Who hath chosen him. To be a soldier. And when you're a soldier. There's a sense of total allegiance. And loyalty. And you know. You hear stories about the. Was it the Romans. That march off a cliff. If they were told to. You know. There's a sense where. There's that total allegiance. That absolute commitment. That they would count the cost. And they would say. Whatever it takes. To please. My commanding officer. He has chosen me. To be a soldier. And when you've got that kind of.

[40:08] Determination. When you say. Yes I'm going to count that cost. I'm going to pay that price. I'm going to brace myself. For the heat of battle. That you'll consider the warfare. To be waged. And you'll say. Yes. We will go. Forward. Into battle. We will shirk not. We will shrink not back. We'll hear Israeli. Cry. And we'll enter into the. Forefront of battle. Or press forward. And we'll have a holy aggression. Such that. We won't be deterred. By those who will oppose us. Or mock us. Or try to deter us. We will man the battle stations. Because they must be manned. I've got a quote here. Just to close. It says. I'm not sure where I picked this up from. But it was. I'll adapt it somewhat. But it spoke to me. About being in the Lord's army. So I'll read it. And adapt it somewhat.

[41:04] It says. There is no conscription. Draft. Or compulsory national service. Forcing the unwilling. Into the Lord's army. He has no bouncing hunters. Or press gangs. Roaming the streets. To grab the unwary. And press them. Into service. Enlistment and enrolment. Into his glorious ranks. Entail an absolute allegiance. And loyalty. To him. As we take our arms. We voluntarily pledge. Our enduring. And everlasting fidelity. To his cause. It's a loyalty there. To Christ. His volunteer soldier. Must be ready. Willing. And able to. Respond wholeheartedly. Heart. Soul. Mind. And body. From the opening salvo. To the final post. Of his life. On earth. There is no doubt. A volunteer army. Is the best army. In that sense. Where he doesn't. Force us. He says.

[41:59] Count the cost. You make that. Decision. As it is in the army. Of our land. There's no one. Forcing people. To become. A soldier. That those who will say. Yes. I volunteer. I step up. I enlist. It goes on. This has been proven. Once more. On the battlefield. Today. The army. That will ultimately. Prevail in battle. Is the army. Comprised of volunteers. Who have a real. Committal to the commander. And his cause. When David arrived. Upon the battlefield. And witnessed. The cowardly. And cowering. Conscripts. Of Saul's army. He cried out. This immortal challenge. Is there not. A cause. There's this sense. Where. Does anybody care. This is. This is a cause. This is a call. This is a mission. This is a mandate.

[42:54] That is so vital. You know. Count the cost. Is what he's saying. The quote goes on. That David. Enthusiastically. Volunteered to carry the fight. To the enemy of God. God blessed his volunteer. With a great immortal victory. For his nation. And his God. The volunteer soldier. In the Lord's army. Must be willing to identify. With his commander in chief. And fellow soldiers. And join up. With a local unit. Now we are a fighting unit. This is a. An outpost. For the kingdom of God. This. This gathering here. This assembly. This. This church body. Is a fighting unit. On the front line. Taking the south. For the kingdom of God. Taking. Territory. From the enemy. We're summoned to the front lines. To wear the uniform. With honour. And the call. As we read. In 2 Timothy 2. Verse 3 to 4. Is.

[43:48] Don't entangle yourself. With the affairs of this life. We can get. Entangled. Can't we? We can get. Bugged down. And tied up. And constricted. And.

Slowed down. By. Putting our. Affection. On the. Things of this life. Unduly. That it takes away. From that which matters. Kingdom of God.

Do we please. Our commanding officer. It's going to cost something. But don't let that deter you. Now as a Christian. We know. We're saved by his grace. Through faith.

It's a great gift. And you're heaven bound. You don't have to do anything. But why would you not do anything. How could you sit. As it were. And just ride the glory train.

And just sort of. Kick back. And kind of. Enjoy the ride. Is that sense where. Wow. This is too. This is too tremendous. And. And such a great gift. Such a great blessing.

[44:44] Such a. Such a cause. Such. A wonderful. Mission. That we're called to this. To be living sacrifices. That our lives can be poured out.

Offering. As it were. On the altar. And. It will cost. As it were. To take that. That cross. To follow. To. To take. The.

The task of. Of building. As it were. Building the town. As it were. Of building up your faith. Of building up. The kingdom of God. As it were. For God playing a part.

For you. As he built his church. To use you. As one. Who will help. Make that happen. And to be. As it were. The one. Who calculates. The cost of the war.

That he's about to enter in. And of facing the enemy. He's about to face. And of counting the cost. There will be a cost. It's going to cost. There will be some loss.

[45:39] There will be some. Effort. Expended. There will be some energy. There will be some. Of your life's blood.

That's poured out. As it were. As we know. This church. Is evangelistic. This cares about souls. That's investing in time. That time can be spent.

Earning income. Or. In. Having some. Pleasure. Or leisure. Or such. But when. You actually. Wave things up. You do that stop.

Take. You think. Actually. Eternity. Matters. Eternal souls. Matters. The kingdom of God. Matters. It's so important. And as we start.

From where we are. With what we've got. We'll count the cost. We'll do that stop. Take. Examine ourselves. Where are we at? Lord. I know. I've been pouring my life.

[46:31] Into some things. That. I admit. They're. They're vain. Some things. That I've spent my time in. Is vain. You know. I can't fathom.

Look. You might. You might say. Preacher. You're getting a bit too. It's a bit too raw. For you to say that. But. Some people. They play these little. Video games. And. Why would you do that. With your time.

I mean. Maybe. You know. You can have some. Kind of downtime. You can kind of relax. It's harmless. Recreation. But you think. Wow. Those minutes. Those hours.

Days. At times. They can be. It's like. Taking money. And burning it. Isn't it? It's like. Isn't there no value to your time. So that you can use your time.

So you fritter it away. With such vanities. When really. Count the cost. We've got an army here. That's calling. There's work to do.

[47:25] You know. I'm sure. Pastor. And Luke. And the ministry here. And there's many opportunities. To volunteer.

To join. This cause. To rally. To the. To the call. To sign up. And enlist. As it were. But of course it starts.

I'm conscious. I don't want to. Leave you with this thought. Here this morning. That I'm preaching works. That. Salvation is a gift. And it happens. As you put your faith in Christ.

Eternal sacrifice. On your part. Dying on the cross for your sin. Knowing his saving love. Receiving his gift. Extended. Trust in him. Alone. Believing in him.

Only. For your saving. And receiving that eternal life. By faith. In him. As you trust him. As you reach out. And put your faith. upon him.

[48:20] And receive his forgiveness. And that's the beginning. Of a whole new mission. Isn't it? That. And you know. We've heard missionary.

Letters here.

This morning. That every believer. Is a missionary. You are a missionary too. And so. Count the cost. Pay the price. Know that it's worth that investment.

Of your soul. Of your eternity. Of your life. Of your calling. Trust him today. Let's pray. Lord. We thank you. For your church here. For the souls gathered.

This morning. And others. Not here. Present. Lord. For Pastor Lars. And the ministry. Of this church. Lord. We thank you. That each one here.

Has a calling. And that Lord. We've all got a role. A place. Of serving. Lord. We've all got a calling. A life. That will be expended.

[49:15] And Lord. Help us to use it wisely. As we consider our time. As we sit down. And count the cost. We do a stock take. Of where we are personally. With you. And Lord.

We know. Accounting time will come. There will be a stewardship. Of what. We've done. What we've used. What we've had. Whether it's been wisely used. Lord. And we're all.

Personally. We'll have to give a count. For that. Lord. Help us. For the meantime. To take stock. And use our lives wisely. For your glory.

Lord. We pray Lord. As you. Put on our heart to do. Show us what you've called us to do. To be. Show us new missionary opportunities. Show us new works of service.

Lord. Of people we can reach out. Of how we can. Change the use of our time. So that it's wisely spent. Lord. That we can.

[50:11] Know one day. When the reckoning time comes. We'll have no regret. Lord. Help us to be such a people. In Jesus name. Amen.

God bless you today. God bless you. Thank you.