

THE LIFE OF JESUS

The Characteristics Of A True Christian

Luke 14:25-35 – Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: ²⁶“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. ²⁷And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. ²⁸Suppose 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? ²⁹For if you lay the foundation and are not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule you, ³⁰saying, ‘This person began to build and wasn’t able to finish.’”

³¹“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? ³²If 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. ³³In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples. ³⁴Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? ³⁵It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure pile; it is thrown out. Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear.”

Three Characteristics Of A True Christian

1) A true Christian will no longer place their hope in worldly things.

- **Jesus is greater than relationships.** v 26
- **Jesus is greater than myself.** v 26
- **Jesus is greater than possessions.** v 33

Matthew 22:37-38 - Jesus said, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ ³⁸This is the first and greatest commandment.”

2) A true Christian wants to follow Jesus forever regardless of what happens to them. v 28-32

“The Christian landscape is strewn with the wreckage of derelict, half-built towers – the ruins of those who began to build and were unable to finish. For thousands of people still ignore Christ’s warning and undertake to follow him without first pausing to reflect on the cost of doing so. The result is the great scandal of Christendom today, so-called ‘nominal Christianity.’ In countries to which Christian civilization has spread, large numbers of people have covered themselves with a decent, but thin, veneer of Christianity. They have allowed themselves to become somewhat involved; enough to be respectable but not enough to be uncomfortable. Their religion is a great, soft cushion. It protects them from the hard unpleasantness of life, while changing its place and shape to suit their convenience. No wonder the cynics speak of hypocrites in the church and dismiss religion as escapism.”

- John Stott, *Basic Christianity*

3) True Christians do not make a temporary decision.

A person who is a true follower of Christ will make a commitment to a lifelong loyalty to Jesus. v 34-35

Temporary disciples are ultimately useless to the Lord. Like contaminated salt, those contaminated by worldliness will be thrown out into eternal judgment.

2 Timothy 4:7-8 - I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have remained faithful. ⁸And now the prize awaits me—the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on the day of his return. And the prize is not just for me but for all who eagerly look forward to his appearing.