**LET’S ASSESS IT!**

**Luke 14:25-35**

Premise: Ministry is a movement. To fulfill God’s plan and purpose for our lives and for the life of our church, we cannot become complacent or stagnant. We must get *On the Move*! To accomplish this, we must honestly examine who we are, where we are, and what we are as a ministry, and with boldness, begin making the necessary changes to fulfill God call (Ephesians 2:10).

**DISCUSSION**

This section of verses (Luke 14:25-35) can be subtitled, “The Cost of Following Jesus.”

The word hate (v.26) is not implying a negative, combative, disdain; rather, the emphasis is actually on having a lesser love.

Jesus is calling His disciples to cultivate the kind of devotion to Him that their attachment to everything else – including their own lives – would seem like hatred by comparison.

We are being called to a PRIORITIZED RELATIONSHIP, as Christ followers.

When Jesus directed His followers to carry their crosses and follow Him (v.27), He was referring to a public display before others that Jesus was right.

Bearing one’s cross is a volitional act. I do it willingly; freely; without coercion. This demands

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY.

Assuming personal responsibility for a prioritized life of discipleship is not easy. It is not the most desirable position; neither is it glamorous or publicly popular. But, when following Jesus becomes one’s priority, God promises a life of blessing despite challenge, trouble, and hardship.

**DISCOVERY**

Prioritized Relationship (v. 26)

\* What components are present when a relationship is given priority?

Elsa no longer remembers what the argument was about, but it began before breakfast one morning and continued as Steve started off to work.

"How can you just go off like that?" cried Elsa. "We haven't settled a thing!"

Then Steve did what few men as ambitious and driven as Steve is could do: he turned around and went to the phone and canceled all his appointments for that day, "saying to me, in effect, that our relationship meant more than business meetings, saying that I'd married a man who would sacrifice work for love."

Priority speaks to “order of importance”. In the grand scheme of your life, where does Jesus fall in your “order of importance”?

Many people, in theory, place Christ first in order of importance; however, the evidence of their lives demonstrates quite the opposite. Christ is first in the head, but not first in the heart.

**Isaiah 29:13 – This is an Old Testament verse that has New Testament implications and 2023 application.**

Whether we admit it or not, this indicates that there are other people, places, or things which occupy the place of priority in our lives.

When Christ is first in order of importance in our lives we will, as the husband in the anecdote previously shared, shift our schedules, cancel our appointments, and preemptively sacrifice all out of our love for Christ.

For your consideration:

What sacrifices are you making to follow Jesus?

Personal Responsibility (v.27)

(KJV/NKJV)“…whoever does not carry his cross…”

(CSB) “…whoever does carry his own cross…”

The truth which must be embraced and accepted by every Christ follower is this:

I HAVE A CROSS TO CARRY.

\* What is associated with the cross of Christ?

\*Are these words associated with the cross I am to carry?

For your consideration:

Am I willing to carry my cross?

Luke 14:27 (NCV) “27 Whoever is not willing to carry his cross and follow me cannot be my follower.”

Personal responsibility requires the engagement of the **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**.

Carrying my cross is with laden with difficulty and struggle yet it is the best place that you could be.

It is here that the sovereign God of the universe protects and carries us.

**Deuteronomy 1:31**

Always remember that when we carry our cross, we identify with Christ; His suffering, His shame, His surrender.

**2 Timothy 2:12**

**DIRECTION**

Assess – Evaluate - Examine

What sacrifices are you making to follow Jesus? Are you taking up your cross and following him?