



ST. ANDREW'S IN THE PINES EPISCOPAL CHURCH

SERMON

September 8, 2013

- I. Consider the cost. Image of Jesus with large crowd following Him and he turns to say those astonishing words. Consider the cost. Are you ready to do this? Can you remain faithful? Will you really make me the top priority? The pledge you make –where will it lead you. Will you be able to complete the course?
- II. What do you think happened? Did people turn away forever? Did they give up? What about us – have we turned away and given up? Are we disciples?
- III. Story of my second baptism and the working on me of the promises. It took time but those promises were always forming me. Many here are baptized. Is it working on you?
- IV. Story of my marriage and doing a renewal of the vows. Do any of us really know what we are committing to when we say, I do? It's a journey, it changes us, works on us. Many of you here are married or have been married. Did you truly know the cost?
- V. I think we learn the cost as we go and if we truly knew some of the costs at the start – we might be inclined not to start. But I think Jesus' words do show that this is serious business – these are choices between life and death – between cracked cisterns that will drain away your possibility of truly living. The call of God over and over in the OT – choose this day whom you will serve. Choose this day. What is your commitment?
- VI. Would you say today that you are a disciple of Jesus Christ?
- VII. 15-20 years into my journey of faith – I was asked – “Who do you love more than anyone or anything?” I answered, “You Lord.” Over and over I realize how fully I mean that.
- VIII. God and god alone is my highest priority – my foundation- I have nowhere else to go besides choosing to live with faith and follow the teachings and ways of God's Spirit.
- IX. So now consider Jesus' questions. In Hebrew's – to hate would be understood as to have a single minded loyalty. You would decide how to treat what does not fit your priorities and it would be a rejection or denial – that would represent your hate. So, the Middle Eastern culture of family first would not draw you from the teachings of and the serving of God. Your father could not order you to forsake what you knew was God's way.
- X. And your possessions – they would never be more than cracked cisterns. There is no possession on earth that will provide you with life- with the fullness of who we were created to be. It's not the literal giving away stuff and ignoring family. It is the condition of your heart that directs the choices that you make. I have possessions but they can disappear and I will be fine. I love my parents but they will not take me from my first love. In fact, because of my first love I have more love to share. I share love, not hate.

- XI. And you begin to learn – no this is what I will cling to. I will not follow down false trails or build false foundations. I have considered the costs and there is nowhere else for me to go. I am walking this pathway – I am following as a disciple.
- XII. So – are you a disciple?

Thanks be to God.