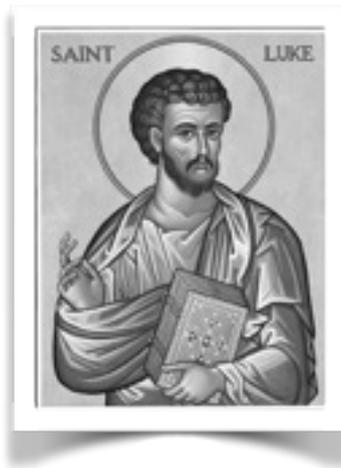


## Home Group notes w/c 4th September 2016

### Jesus' words in Luke

#### The Cost of Discipleship

This autumn I am staying with the Lectionary readings and spending some time looking at the teaching of Jesus as it is recorded in Luke's Gospel. The talks have been recorded and are available at [ChadTalks.org](http://ChadTalks.org) so you can listen again or catch up if you need to.



We read Jesus' words in Luke chapter 14 verses 25 to 33. As expected, Jesus pulls no punches.

How do we feel about these words of Jesus? Our 21st Century society is very wary of anybody who smacks of being a "religious extremist" - so can we be totally committed to following Jesus without coming across as a nut or a weirdo?

On Sunday I highlighted three areas in which we need to consider the cost:-

Firstly, in our commitment to following Jesus. In what areas have we found following Jesus to be costly? How have people come to terms with paying this cost?

In Jesus' time being a religious extremist was almost a badge of honour, but nowadays people are very wary of what they think of as fanaticism. How can we be totally committed to Jesus, and yet not be seen as wacky or strange? (it occurs to me that Jesus was criticised for his relationships with sinners, so was seen as wishy-washy. I can't think of anywhere in which Jesus is criticised for being too extreme by his opponents in the Gospel stories).

The second area was that of our priorities. Specifically, I mentioned time and money, but this could be extended to more things. If somebody looked at your diary, and calendar and bank statements, how would they know what your priorities are? Would they be able to work out you were a Christian?

The third area relates to the other Bible reading we used, Philemon verses 8 to 21. Philemon's slave, Onesimus, had run away from Colossae and met Paul in Rome. Paul wrote this personal letter to Philemon asking him to take Onesimus back. Philemon's "rights" would have allowed him to punish Onesimus - that's what was needed in order to maintain order in the household. However, Paul asks for Philemon's accepting of Onesimus back. I wonder how Philemon might have felt about this? Would it have caused on-going issues in the household? Would the other slaves have complained about favouritism? Would the other slaves have thought that perhaps they might get away without being punished for other things? We can only surmise what went on, but Philemon had to relinquish some of his rights and risk continued problems by obeying Paul. How do you think Philemon might have felt about this and gone about resolving this issue?

Sometimes Christians can give the impression that once you follow Jesus, everything becomes simpler. Are there examples from your life where your faith has made some area of life or work *more* complicated, rather than less? How did you resolve this?

I added a quote from Mike Pilavachi, leader of the Soul Survivor festival.

Don't settle for superficial Christianity. It's the most boring thing in the world. Go for broke. Ask God to take you deeper and further.

