

## Biblical Decision-making (Part 2)

### Counting the Cost

When you come to the place of counting the cost, then God can use you for anything. One of the primary reasons many are not fully used by God is they have limited Him by not counting the cost and completely yielding to Him.

#### Luke 14:25-34 New Living Translation (NLT)

<sup>25</sup> A large crowd was following Jesus. He turned around and said to them, <sup>26</sup> "If you want to be my disciple, you must, by comparison, hate everyone else—your father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even your own life. Otherwise, you cannot be my disciple.<sup>27</sup> And if you do not carry your own cross and follow me, you cannot be my disciple.<sup>28</sup> "But don't begin until you count the cost. For who would begin construction of a building without first calculating the cost to see if there is enough money to finish it? <sup>29</sup> Otherwise, you might complete only the foundation before running out of money, and then everyone would laugh at you. <sup>30</sup> They would say, 'There's the person who started that building and couldn't afford to finish it!' <sup>31</sup> "Or what king would go to war against another king without first sitting down with his counsellors to discuss whether his army of 10,000 could defeat the 20,000 soldiers marching against him? <sup>32</sup> And if he can't, he will send a delegation to discuss terms of peace while the enemy is still far away. <sup>33</sup> So you cannot become my disciple without giving up everything you own.

#### I. What are the consequences of not counting the cost?

##### 1. We won't finish strong

Those who are following Jesus simply for what they can get won't stick around when the going gets tough.

##### 2. We will be offended

When God's way conflicts with our way, we will feel betrayed by the shallow, me-first faith we have bought into.

##### 3. In our pain, we will seek counterfeit pleasures

If we have not counted the cost of being His child, we will turn away at the threat of sacrifice and find something else to gratify our selfish desires.

##### 4. We will not be prepared

To go where God has called you, you need to be prepared. You can't just wing it. This is why Cristiano Ronaldo's trajectory has gone to another level.

##### 5. We become discouraged

##### 6. We become disillusioned and cynical

##### 7. We become envious

#### II. What are some key questions to ask when counting the cost?

Opportunity cost – what will I lose?

What will I gain?

Who will benefit?

What preparation is required?

How much persecution will this mean for me?

How will this decision affect my relationship with God?

How does it affect significant relationships in my life?  
How will it impact the call of God on my life?  
How will it derail me from the call of God on my life?  
How is it worship unto God?  
What will the people I love gain and what will they lose?  
What will the church gain and what will it lose?

E.g. me and writing books, what will I lose? Cash. What will the world gain? What will my family lose? Me, for a while as I am editing books whilst on holiday. Is it worth it? Be honest about **opportunity cost**.

How much delayed gratification am I willing to experience? How long can I wait for the breakthrough? "For the joy set before me"

### **III. How do you develop the mindset for counting the cost?**

#### **1. Meditate on the consequences of not counting the cost**

##### **Proverbs 27:12 NASB**

*A prudent man sees evil and hides himself, the naïve proceed and pay the penalty.*

#### **2. Rebuke those who try to derail you from carrying your cross**

##### **Matthew 16:21-25**

*From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life. 22 Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!" 23 Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns." 24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. 25 For whoever wants to save their life[a] will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it.*

#### **3. Meditate on the long-term benefits of the decision**

##### **Luke 9:23-26 ESV**

*And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself? For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.*

##### **Philippians 3:7-8 ESV**

*But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ*

#### **4. Remember that what's easy for others might not be for you.**

**Proverbs 14:15**

**The simple believe anything, but the prudent give thought to their steps.**

People are at different life stages. Someone can think a PHD is easy for you but you might not be ready with regards to other commitments.

#### **5. Prioritize your soul's condition**

**Matthew 16:26 ESV**

*For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?*

#### **6. Make sure God comes first in your life**

**Matthew 10:37**

*Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.*

- Watch out for unhealthy soul ties and approval addiction.
- Family is one of the major causes of us walking in God's purposes or NOT walking in His purposes.
- Be clear about the pre-eminence of Christ's Lordship

#### **7. Overcome the power of mammon in your life**

**Luke 14:33 NIV**

*33 In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples.*

**Matthew 8:18-22 ESV**

*Now when Jesus saw a crowd around him, he gave orders to go over to the other side. And a scribe came up and said to him, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." Another of the disciples said to him, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." And Jesus said to him, "Follow me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead."*