

Luke 14:25-33

Introduce yourself

First off, I'd like to thank:

Everyone for coming

Parents for coming

Mark, Casey, and Lindsey helping with the service

“God’s Word forever shall abide, no thanks to foes, who fear it. For God Himself fights by our side with weapons of Spirit. Were they to take our house, goods, honor, child or spouse, though life be wretched away. They cannot win the day. The kingdom’s ours forever.

Gladys Aylward. Elisabeth Elliot. Jim Elliot. Ann Judson. David Livingstone. Lott Carey. William Borden, Rachel Saint.

These people may or may not be familiar to you.

These people and many more have given up their individual dreams in life to follow God’s hopes, ambitions, goals, and ultimately His purpose for their lives. These people I listed? Well they are missionaries.

They have united God’s dreams with the faith of their hearts.

Are you a missionary? Would you consider yourself a missionary for God? What does being a missionary actually mean?

I want to share a story of selflessness with you all today.

Jim Elliot, Roger Youderian, Peter Fleming, and Ed McCully were four men that understood the sacrifice to follow Jesus. They were missionaries.

These men set out from the U.S. to bring the Good News of Christ to a hostile tribe, the Auca Indians of Ecuador.

Nate Saint, a missionary pilot, teamed up with the 4 men to begin building friendly relations with the tribe.

On January 3, 1956 the men decided to risk ground contact with the tribe. They made the flight to the Auca tribe who appeared hostile at first but their temperament soon changed. The men were on friendly terms with the Auca tribe..everything looked spectacular.

After four days of friendly and peaceful relations Jim, Peter, Ed, Nate, and Roger were found speared to death by the very people they were trying to reach.

Now, this could have been a horrible death of 5 dedicated missionaries. Their death could have cut short God's hands and feet from reaching the Auca Indians but it didn't. No it didn't.

Elisabeth Elliot (Jim's wife) and Rachel Saint (Nate's older sister) were spurred even further to reach this hostile tribe with God's Truth; even though these very people had murdered their loved ones.

Elisabeth and Rachel had a passion that was intensified and they were consumed with forgiveness that could only be described as from God. Rachel and Elisabeth's zeal was a catalyst for the Auca Indians in accepting Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and they are now known as the Huaorani tribe...and they are not known as hostile any longer.

"In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple."

I have truly been wrestling with this gospel passage. Is Jesus calling each us to give up everything right now, this instant..or is it more of a willingness to give up those things when I feel so called? *IS* Jesus asking us to be *prepared* to give up everything even our own life to follow Him?

I believe that...Elisabeth Elliot and Rachel Saint believed that. I believe Jesus is calling out our willingness to relinquish our father, our mother, our spouse and children, our brothers and sisters and even our very lives to be His disciple.

Now, this seemed extreme and REALLY scary to me..at first. But as I really thought about it..is it that extreme?

According to Webster, the definition of disciple is..one who accepts and assists in spreading the doctrines of another.

Jesus utilizes us as His hands and feet..His ears and mouth..His heart.

Jesus handed his life over in redemption for our sins. We are unworthy of the graces that God has bestowed on us. I sin *daily*. You sin daily. WE ALL SIN DAILY.

I don't merit the joy I receive from my family and friends. I am well aware of that. I don't deserve the gifts God has blessed me with...but He believes that I am deserving. He believes that we are..that we are worthy of His love.

In Ecclesiastes chapter 4 verse 9-10..it states "Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!

I am not trying to say that the relationships in our lives are useless or without worth because they are worthy of our time and love. I am not saying to overlook or disregard the great gifts that God has given each of us in our family and friends...because they are gifts.

However...

I *am* saying that it should be recognized that these gifts are *from* God..these gifts are NOT God. Let me say that again...it should be recognized that these gifts are *from* God..they are NOT God.

A.W. Tozer said that the man who has God as his treasure has all things in One.

Nothing can replace God..nothing and no one...ever.

I can say with confidence that no one will rejoice in your successes as much as God. No one will stand up and cheer you on in the difficult times, the stressful times, and joy-filled times like God.

No one will hurt when you are hurting more than God.

No one will comfort you in times of despair, loneliness, and frustration as much as God.

When you have made a mistake..when you have sinned and wronged..no one will hold their arms wider..more outstretched..there will be not be a bigger embrace and welcome than from God.

No one..not you parents..not your siblings..and not your friends.

God is God. And..God. Loves. You.

Way more than you or I can ever imagine.

He loves each of us so much that we wants us to be His hands and feet..His ears and mouth..emanating His heart to this world.

So you may not have considered yourself a missionary before this sermon.

I would encourage you to change your vision.

A missionary isn't always someone who goes across the oceans to spread the Truth of Jesus.

The Truth of Jesus can be and should be spread right here on this campus, in this community, in this city and the surrounding cities.

God does not call the equipped. He equips the called.

Were they to take our house, goods, honor, child or spouse, though life be wretched away.
They cannot win the day. The kingdom's ours forever.