

# The Tower and The King

## Stories to Live By-part 1

February 14, 2016

### **DAY 1: Jesus, Lord over our relationships.**

*Luke 14:25 Large crowds were traveling with Jesus...*

1. The setting: Multitudes surrounding Christ.

*Luke 14:26 "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters--yes, even his own life--he cannot be my disciple."*

2. Wording and ideas are stunning. Aren't we supposed to love everybody? What is Jesus getting at?

3. He is using hyperbole. Hyperbole is an overstatement to drive home a point. He is not, obviously, telling us to hate the most important people in our lives! What do you think is Jesus' point?

4. If you listen to people, like us, who claim to be Jesus' disciples (followers) you'll sometimes hear us say something like this:

"It's not that I don't love Jesus. It's just that I love someone else more."

5. What would Jesus have to say to us?

6. You may wonder why this is so important. The paradox is simple.

a. When we put Jesus first, when we are depending on Him for our deepest love needs, we are freed to love others like He loves us.

b. Instead, when we "love" anyone else more than Jesus, we will inevitably inject self into the relationship in such a way that we create expectations. Unmet expectations create drama and conflict.

7. How does your love for Jesus compare to your love for anyone else?

## **DAY 2: Jesus, Lord over self.**

### **Personal Goals.**

*Luke 14:27 And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.*

1. Obviously, Jesus does not mean that we are to actually carry a physical cross. He is using imagery to illustrate a point. What do you think is His point?

2. Though this condition of discipleship may also leave us scratching our head, this was easily understood by His listeners in a first century, middle eastern culture. Someone carrying a cross was on his way to his own execution!

3. The metaphor of the cross is dying to "self," and self-will. The essence of discipleship is living for your Lord, not yourself.

4. The essence of our old life was living for our will. The essence of discipleship is living for His will.

5. Carrying the cross means that my life is to be shaped by giving myself to the mission of Christ. "I am going to do the will of God no matter what it costs me."

His mission is more important than my "wishin'."

6. This flies right in the headwinds of current culture, which shouts from the mountaintops that self-actualization and self-fulfillment are the pinnacles of life!

- Life's guide: my self-fulfillment
- Daily guide: my preference.

7. As you look at your life, how much of "self" do you see is driving you?

8. Are you intentional in saying "no" to self? Are you saying "yes" to being used by God?

### **DAY 3: Jesus, Lord over possessions.**

*Luke 14:33 Whoever does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.*

1. "Renounce" does not mean "give away." Renounce means to "give up."
2. Are you fundamentally using the things you have for you or for His kingdom?
3. The Greek verb "renounce" is in the present tense, which in Greek syntax means renounce now and continue to renounce. Not just a one-time decision.
4. Why is this important? Because possessions can possess us.

*1 John 2:15-16 Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love for the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life is not of the Father but of the world.*

5. Our human nature is always seeking ways to fulfill itself in any way possible, other than yielding ourselves to God, first.

a. How would you rate your "possession-quotient"?

b. Have you placed your possessions in the hands of Jesus? Does He have the title to your possessions?

6. As you finish today's devotion, yield your possessions to God, giving Him the ownership and title deeds to Him.

## DAY 4: Counting the cost of discipleship

### The "careless builder"

1. Jesus now gives us two ways to think about the call to discipleship. The first is an illustration with which anyone would be familiar.

*Luke 14:28 "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it?"*

2. The "tower" in that agrarian culture would have been a tower in the middle of a farmer's vineyard. The tower was something of a silo, a place for sacks of seed, and a place to keep watch over predators and thieves. To not build a tower put the vineyard at a distinct disadvantage.

3. "Sit down" is the Greek word, "*kathizo*" which means a long and serious consideration.

4. Jesus adds to the parable.

*Luke 14:29 For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him,  
<sup>30</sup> saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.'*

5. The parable of the tower is a famous one. It highlights what has been called "the cost of discipleship."

6. Being a "follower" of Christ is different than being a "fan."

7. Christians are not to be "fair-weather" fans. There are times when life gets rough as a Christian. We are susceptible to persecution, misunderstanding, conflict, and of course, our own self-centeredness!

8. Following Christ, being His disciple, means we walk the narrow road of obedience, pursue holiness, and build our lives around living for Jesus and pleasing Him as the "first thing" in our lives.

9. What "costs" have you had to pay in order to follow Christ?

10. Are you facing any costs right now? Surrender, afresh, to Him.

## **DAY 5: Counting the consequences of not being a disciple**

### **The careful king**

*Luke 14:31 "Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king....*

*<sup>32</sup> If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace.*

1. This second parable causes us to envision a modern day event. Imagine the situation room at the White House. Generals, admirals, and NSA leadership all huddle around a table. An invasion force is making its way here. There are some who would say, "I don't care how many they have in their army, we've got more courage. We're fighting for our land, our homes, our wives and families." Admirable as those things are, the situation is more complex than our motivations to defend ourselves.

2. Jesus continues his parable.

*... Will he not first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand?*

3. Somebody better do some number crunching, and fast! "If we do stand up and go toe-to-toe with the other army, what's the most reasonable outcome?"

4. Let's say the decision is not so easy. The temptation may be to procrastinate. But in decisions like that, to not make a decision is to make a decision! This turns the discipleship question upside down!

\*\*\* What are the consequences of NOT becoming a disciple of Jesus? \*\*\*

5. Becoming and being a disciple involves two questions, illustrated in two parables:

1st parable: What is the cost of being a disciple?

2nd parable: What are the consequences of not being a disciple?

*Luke 9:24 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it.*

6. How would you answer the second question? What are the consequences of NOT being a disciple?