

ULC Sermon Study Resource
Dead Guy Summer // Bonhoeffer
Pastor Gabe
June 4, 2023

Prayer: Pause for a few moments to go to the Lord in prayer. Ask that He would draw near to you in this time, and open your heart and mind to hear His Word.

Icebreaker: If you could be a plant what would you be?

Reading: Luke 9:57-62

Outline:

- I. Count the cost (v. 57-58)
 - A. In our text, we see three people that want to follow Jesus. The first person tells Jesus he will follow him wherever he goes, and Jesus tells him to count the cost of following him.
 - B. Bonhoeffer counted the cost of following Jesus during the Nazi regime. He followed Jesus by resisting Hitler and publicly criticizing the state. He was quoted saying the church should “not just bandage the victims under the wheel of the state, but to jam the spoke of the wheel itself.”
Q: Where does following Jesus cost the most for you?
- II. Jesus above all (v. 59-60)
 - A. This is a hard saying of Jesus, but what is going on here? He isn't telling us to not care for our families. Instead, Jesus is saying, “It's go time, it's gotta be me above all else.” When the cost of following Jesus comes, we will avoid truly following him unless he is number one in our life.
 - B. Bonhoeffer placed Jesus above all by starting an underground seminary in Finkenwalde. His vision was that Christians could stand firm against the pressures of the Nazi regime and follow Jesus, because Jesus wins every time.
Q: How do you place Jesus above all in your daily life?
- III. Hand to plow (v. 61-62)
 - A. “Half-hearted Christians are the most miserable people of all. They know enough about God to feel guilty, but they haven't gone far enough with Christ to be happy.” -Ray Ortlund Sr.
 - B. Jesus calls us to put our hand to the plow and follow him, even if that is countercultural. Bonhoeffer calls this costly grace. “Such grace is costly because it calls us to follow, and it is grace because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ. It is costly because it costs a man his life, and it is grace because it gives a man the only true life.” -Bonhoeffer
Q: Where do you find most difficulty putting your “hand to the plow”?

Reflection/Application Questions:

- 1) How can we defy self-preservation urges and follow Jesus even when the cost is extraordinarily high?
- 2) How can we be sure we aren't morphing Jesus's will to fit our own when following him?
- 3) How do we avoid guilt like Ray Ortlund Sr.'s quote describes and instead go farther with Christ?
- 4) How can we work towards accepting something as costly as “costly grace”?

Suggestion for further study:

- Exodus 19:8 Q: How does this verse shed light on how we usually end up following God like the Israelites?
- Luke 14:26-33 Q: How do these verses reinforce the message of our reading from today?

Closing Prayer:

Lord Jesus, we thank you for your gracious call on our lives and your costly grace. Teach us to follow you through countercultural faithfulness and to accept your costly grace. Thank you for the model Bonhoeffer gave us, and teach us to serve you and live like he did. Amen.