



When The World Gets In The Way - Part 5

Worldly Comforts & Godly Sacrifices

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Luke 14:25-33

Well I don't need to tell you that life of course can be very difficult and very hard, very hectic. But there are little things in life that make it all just a little bit better. And I don't think I'm unique in saying that when I come home after a real long demanding day, there's nothing more than I want than to get in some really comfortable clothes, flop myself down into a really comfortable chair. And if I don't have enough energy to read a book, then I like the comfort of the remote control in my right hand so I can watch my dumb shows and you're not going to tell me I can't. (00:37)

But sometimes I'll come through the door and I'll be surprised because my wife will say, "Oh we have some guests." I may be wanting to sit in my chair and grab the remote and get into some comfortable clothes but we've got people in the front room, so they need my attention and there's issues that need to be discussed and so I'm going to have to postpone all that. Or worse yet I've already settled into my chair, put on my comfy PJs and the doorbell rings. Now I've got to admit I've got some high-tech gadgets and one is a little screen that shows me who's at the front door. So be careful when you come to my house, because there it is and I can see who's there. Now if it's you that's at the front door, well of course that's an important person, I need to lay aside the remote control, get out of my chair, put on a presentable shirt, come greet you into my house. But if I look down at that little screen and I see it's that magazine sales man or some guy trying to drum up business for his, you know, lawn service, or whatever, I ain't budging, I'm not moving. See because how I determine the importance of the person at the door is really going to allow me to decide whether or not I'm going to lay aside my comforts to deal with that person. (01:49)

Now of course our conscience should determine, if not the Bible is very clear in telling us that the most important person in the universe is God. And to be more specific, in the pages of the gospels the God-man Jesus Christ, no one is more important than him. By virtue of his deity he's the most supremely important person in the universe and it makes no sense at all that I would not be willing to lay aside some conveniences and comforts in my life to deal with whatever he might have me do. By virtue of his crucifixion, really wouldn't make any sense that I would cling to something that I would think would be important to me in light of his great sacrifice for me. I should be willing to sacrifice whatever it might take to please him. And just by virtue of the fact that he gives me gifts every day, he sustains my life as the Bible says, in him all things hold together. If I really think that every good and perfect gift comes from God, I mean it only makes sense that whatever the comfort might be, I'm willing to sacrifice that. (02:47)

Now Jesus speaks to these issues that are harder in practice than they are in theory. In Luke chapter 14 he reminds us of just how demanding it can be sometimes to put priorities in

place in our lives and then try to live them out on a daily basis. So, I'd like you to grab your Bibles this morning and turn to Luke 14 as we pick up our study of this book in verse number 25 as Jesus finds himself being surrounded by large crowds, great crowds. And whenever you have large crowds that are coming to learn about Christ, I mean when there's a lot of people that think that Christ is it, if there's some popularity in any given generation about Christ I think that's a good time to clarify what this is all about, because he's not your average person. And if you're going to be on his team, if you're going to be a part of his group, if you're going to be a part of his family, well then you need to recognize the supremacy and the importance of Christ and Jesus is going to clarify that in some very jarring ways in this passage. (03:47)

And normally I would read the whole thing for you, verses 25 through 33 but there's so much here just in the first three verses let's just read those and try and grapple with this real arresting statement Jesus makes. Let's start in verse 25. Now great crowds accompanied him. And he turned and he said to them, you can almost see it here, all these people starting to join in and jump on the bandwagon and Jesus turns to them and says, let's clarify a few things. And he's certainly wanting to get some attention with this statement. Verse 26, if anyone comes to me and does not – what's that word? – hate, wow, that's not what we'd expect from Christ, particularly when the next word isn't sin. Huh, if anyone come to me and does not hate – wait a minute – his own father? And mother? And wife and children? And brother and sisters? Yes, even his own life, well he doesn't do that, he can't be my disciple. Are you kidding me? What in the world are you talking about? (04:46)

Well you know sometimes in church the pastor talks about Greek words and the original language of the New Testament maybe there's a way out of this passage and there's no help for you there. Sorry. You look up this word in the original language of the New Testament means exactly what your dictionary says when you look up the word hate. Intense dislike. So, what in the world is Jesus getting at to say, "Hey, you want to be on my team, you want to be part of my group, you want to be in my crowd here, you want to be one of my disciples, well then you need to hate your father." You mean to tell me I need to have an intense dislike for my father or I can't be his disciple? I need to have an intense dislike for my mother? You mean to tell me that God would advocate that I have an intense dislike for my wife? Now, no way he would want me to have an intense dislike for my children. My brothers, my sisters? How about that guy I see in the mirror every morning when I'm shaving? Right? Look in that mirror and have an intense dislike. No, okay, if you can do that, intensely dislike all these people, well then you can be on my team. What in the world are you talking about? (05:53)

Well that should be the question we ask because Jesus said this in a very provocative way to let us know there's something that goes on, not in our hearts, not in our disposition, not in our temperament toward other people because all of these people are commanded in scripture for me to honor and love and respect. But there must be something on the other end. There must be something on the end of perception, there must be something on the end of impression that should allow me to understand that if I'm going to follow Christ sometimes that's going get in the way of my other relationships. So much so that I might



have people think, well what? Why do you not even like me? (06:35)

Now let's think this through, this word, hate, in light of other passages. Just to make this clear so you don't think that Jesus somehow just didn't read the rest of his own Bible. Ephesians chapter 6, honor your father and mother, right? Very clear, Ephesians 6:2. Honor them, not have an intense dislike for them. A chapter earlier, Ephesians chapter 5, husbands love your wives just as Christ loved the church. That's not an intense dislike. How about Titus chapter 2 verse 4 speaking of children? You should love your children. I mean that's what it says. 1 Peter chapter 2 verse 17, love the brothers, I mean it tells me to love the brothers. Matthew 22:39 it assumes although the Bible never commands us to, it assumes that I'm going to love my neighbor and all you've got to do is look in the mirror and recognize how much I love myself and recognize that that's just a default position of every human being. Of course, I'm going to take care of me so I ought to take care of others the way I take care of me. So, none of these things seem to square with scripture if I'm going to take the word hate linguistically right off the page and try and say this is my disposition and my temperament toward people. That's clearly not what the Bible is teaching. (07:48)

Jesus is saying this because there will be a conflict of loyalty and love every time we get serious about a supreme love in our lives and there's no difference in our relationship with God as we've experienced in our relationship with others throughout our lives. For instance, it's going to be a stretch for some of us, but let's imagine you're "the guy" on your high school campus. "The guy", every girl would want to be your girlfriend, for a couple of you that may not be a stretch, but for some of us that's a stretch, okay. Everybody is lined up, wants to go out with you. Well you get to the place where you say I want to go out, I'm going to go out with this person and I like this girl so much she's going to become my girlfriend. Well, when that decision is made and this is my girl than all of a sudden, all these other relationships, it's not that I hate them but I guarantee you that's not going to make all the girls in the high school happy. Not if you're all that and you're the guy everyone wants to be with. (08:43)

And then how about marriage, you put that ring on your finger. I mean that certainly says something to the others. Say listen you're not going to be in this position I have a supreme commitment here. And speaking of that, when a man puts that ring on the finger of that girl and gets engaged and says I'm going to establish a new house now, particularly in our day when a lot of parents don't want to let their kids go, basically you're going to say to Mom and Dad, I'm done here in terms of this kind of relationship having this kind of bond and as the Bible says there's going to be a leaving and a cleaving and so all of a sudden now Mom feels second and she feels left out and he never calls anymore and why doesn't he like me anymore, and you have all that going on. (09:24)

Now what's with that? Well every time you have a real loyal committed relationship there are other relationships that are impacted by that, there's no other way around that. I mean I think of the time when I try to teach my kids that I love my wife and they were toddlers and they had that separation anxiety like every kid has and I say because I love my wife I'm taking my wife out on a date every week and I know you don't like staying with babysitters

but here's your babysitter and we're leaving now as they come and grab your thigh with their fingernails and dig their nails into your leg going, "Nooooo." Now if they could speak in cogent clear sentences they would be telling you why do you hate me so much? Right? I don't hate you. It's just that right now my commitment and supreme loyalty to your mother, to love her and date her and cultivate this relationship is going to negatively in this situation impact you. Now, I love you, I love you but this love is getting in the way of that love when it comes to how you perceive it and the impression that you have. (10:28)

So, when Jesus says, "Listen if you don't hate your father, mother, wife, children, brother, sisters and even your own life you can't be my disciple." He's not talking about your disposition or your temperament toward your mother, your wife, your brothers and sisters, he's not talking about that. He's talking about are you willing to have that relationship with all these close human relationships, are you ready to have that relationship be perceived as something less than or second, and people don't like being second, are you ready to have that impression be left? Not that we do all that we can to affirm our love for people even when my love for Christ is going to supersede the expectations they may have for me, but still I just need to be ready to let you down in that regard. Let me state it this way, number 1 if you're taking notes, just to summarize the first three verses of this passage, if you want to be a follower of Christ, let's just deal with verse 26 there, you'd better sacrifice the comforts of pleasing people. (11:26)

1. Sacrifice the Comforts of Pleasing People

Now it's not that you'll please people as a Christian but you better sacrifice on the alter the fact that you might because of your love for Christ let people down. You need to get use to that. There will be things that you'll be called to do because of a supreme love for Christ that is going to take your father, your mother, your sister, your wife, your kids, your sister, your brothers everyone is going to say, I don't think that's the right thing to do. I don't think you should do that, that's negatively impacting me. (11:52)

There are some comforts to pleasing people. Clearly in my illustration that I opened with there's some comforts that are obviously there when I try to do things for my good and relieve my stress and to have a comfortable evening. Now clearly if you come to the front door, if I am going to minister to you, if I'm going to care for you, if I'm just going to be a friend to you, I'm going to have to sacrifice my personal comforts to get out of my chair and go into the front room and entertain and deal with this and talk to you and develop our conversation because I'm willing to, even as it says here at the bottom of verse 26, even my own life sometimes I'm going to dislike myself in the regard that I'm going to say I'd much rather not do this right now. We talk about going the extra mile, staying the extra hour, spending the extra dollar. Well when you do that for Christ because of your supreme love for him, sometimes you're going to look in the mirror and go wow that didn't really work out for me. And certainly, people in your life are going to say that didn't work out for us either. And so, we've got to be ready for that. There has to be that sense that I'm willing to give that up. (12:58)

Just to make this something that Paul expresses in his own life, he talks about the problem



that the church there's going to be preachers for instance that are called to live as leaders in the church and they're going to be tempted to alter what they say to their churches so that they please people in the pew. People in the church are going to say I like those messages so they're not going to be faithful representatives of the truth. Here's how he puts it in 2 Timothy chapter 4, there are going to be people with itching ears, verse 3. And because they want things said a certain way, if you don't say it that way, they're going to dismiss you and they're going to accumulate for themselves teachers that are going to say what their ears want to hear according to their desires and there will be people that are willing to do that. Now think about that, there have been pastors that have lost positions in churches and they've been replaced by other people that are willing to be people pleasers. Not to mention the fact that the biggest churches often times in America, filling arenas full of people, have people behind a podium not telling them what they should hear because it would please Christ to put the truth out from that pulpit. They tell people what they want to hear and there's great advantages to that. I could have my own personal jet if I did that, right? I could. I mean, I don't know if I could, but I could get a bigger car, I can tell you that. (14:11)

Why? All I've got to do is pander to peoples wants. And you know it's the same way in your life. You can be a Christian at work, you can be a Christian at your home, be a Christian in your neighborhood as long as your objective is I want people to like me, I want people to be pleased with me. You'll do much better, at least for here and now. But we have to resolve that I'm going to live for the audience of one. I'm going to try to please one person above all the other people, and even when I know I'm disappointing them, and they say why do you hate me so much, I'm going to try to respond to that with gentleness and respect as the Bible says. But I'm eventually just going to let the chips fall because you know what? I have to please God first. That's why by the way in Galatians chapter 1 Paul said when it comes to my commitment to teaching you, it's not altering the truth. He said it this way, if I were still trying to please men, if that's what this is all about, not trying to please God, well then, I wouldn't even be able to be called a servant of Christ. And by the way that's not second tier Christianity just like in our passage the word discipleship or disciple is not second tier Christianity. That's the only word that was used other than brother at this point in biblical history for describing people that have forgiveness and some kind of friendship and alliance with God. They were called disciples. So, it's not like you know you can really be a second-tier varsity Christian if you just get to the place where you want to please God above other people. No, this is like freshmen Christianity, this is just bottom-line Christianity. This is as Paul said in Galatians 1 if you just want to be a servant of Christ which is one of the basic designations of what it means to be Christian, I'm a servant of Christ. Well that means I've taken the decision to please God and I put that on the top-shelf when I've taken my decision to please other people and put it on the second shelf. As a matter of fact, on that second shelf there's an alter and I say if I have to sacrifice pleasing people for the sake of pleasing God, just like you were willing to please that girl in high school at the expense of displeasing other girls in high school, that's what you do. You recognize that there are colliding loyalties and colliding loves and you have to determine ahead of time which one is going to win. Sacrifice the comforts of pleasing people, that's the only way to be a Christian. (16:21)



Verses 28 through 30, still have this passage called up there? Look at verse 28, he gets around to exactly what I just referenced, and that is you better think ahead if you're going to be a Christian because you've got to count the cost. Verse 28, which of you desiring to build a tower does not first sit down and count the cost. You better figure out whether or not you have enough to complete it. Otherwise when he's laid a foundation and he's not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him saying this man began to build and was not able to finish. (16:51)

You've seen this big construction site around the corner, do you drive past it there on Aliso Viejo Parkway and Enterprise, that little piece of property they've been developing over the months? It's right next to the Pacific Life Building, which is a beautiful building of course, may be some of you work there. And there's that big parking structure there that abuts next to Mission Viejo parkway next to the toll road. Well, next to it their building an even bigger parking structure, 822 parking spaces there and that's right up against the street and behind it you've seen that building going up and the welding going on and all that in there. I mean that's awesome. And I've read about it, 800 employees are going to be housed there. State of the art facility, Summit it's called. The Summit office suites completes its final phase and it's little over 5 acres of property and the budget for this I read in the paper, 100-million-dollar project. Now I'm sure that the guys that are investing in this and doing this and as they're developing this piece of property, they sit down, they have their architects draw this up, they have all these estimators out there and they figure out what's this going to cost. And at least according to the paper this is a 100-million-dollar project to complete this 6, 7, 8 story building that they're building. And so, they go at it. (17:57)

And we're hoping as neighbors to this big piece of property that they actually finish it, because if they don't then it's like that building in Garden Grove. Have you seen the Garden Grove building? That 10 years ago was going to be call the Garden Grove Galleria, right off of Brookhurst and the 22. Right? It was and I looked this up in the old archives when they rolled it out, they called it the most magnificent building in Garden Grove. That's what they were calling it over 10 years ago. It was a 42-million-dollar project, they were going to start to build it, this 8 story condos, you know they had all kinds of things, parking, it was a beautiful thing sketched out and it's been sitting there half built for over 10 years now. Matter of fact I looked up in the OC Register it's now called Orange County Epic Eyesore. It sits there half built. Now as neighbors of this piece we're hoping this doesn't become Orange County's newest eyesore. Finish it, that's what we expect of you. Because if you don't finish it we're going to say you guys are losers. I'll just quote scripture to you, I'm going to mock you and say you started to build it, you're not able to finish. Why would you do that? Why would you not finish it? And the reason you don't finish it is maybe you weren't thinking ahead. Thinking I know what this is going to cost, you better get some good estimators out there to figure out what it's going to cost to make sure you have enough to finish it. (19:13)

Now in light of what we just heard here, that I've got to know that this is going to negatively impact my relationships even with myself as verse 28 reminds us the cross did not please Christ. He said not my will, yours be done. This is not how I want to spend my Friday afternoon, hanging on a Roman execution rack. And yet I'm willing to defer my own like for



myself and my own comfort for God. And now he says, "You know what? You don't know where this is going to take you, count the cost." Well, you told me to count the cost and you said there's no budget, right? How does that even work? You don't know where this is going to take you, how can you count the cost if there's no budget? Well I guess what you do is you say, if it's going to cost whatever it's going to cost, I'm all in. And that seems stupid but that's exactly what God is asking us to do. You say, "Well no one would do that." If you've got one of these on, you've already done it, haven't you? Didn't you? I mean hopefully you walked down an aisle, you had someone say something and asking you to respond in the affirmative to the question, are you in, better or worse? Richer or poorer? In sickness and in health? I mean you had to at that point, pardon the poker analogy, you had to slide all your chips in that, and say, "I'm in." Not knowing where this is going to take me, not knowing how this is going to turn out, not knowing whether or not you're going to be in some terrible accident in two months and be, you know, in a wheelchair as a quadriplegic, I don't know what's going to happen but I'm saying right now, I'm in, I'm committed and I'm all in. I don't know what it's going to cost me, but I guess what I'm saying is that you've got all of me and I'm all in. (20:49)

See that's Jesus is asking for. It's a lot like signing a blank check. No developer wants to do that. No one is going to say it's going to cost what it's going to cost, well see I can only afford to pay what I have, but that's all of me. There can be no partial in, it has to be all in. And by the way that's the problem for a lot of us, when we don't count the cost. We think we can be partial about this. I can kind of sample it, I can put my foot in, I can try this out. Remember that old campaign, Try God. Do you remember that old phrase? Thankfully it went away pretty quickly because you don't try this out. You know we're not going to sit there and talk to people at the Aliso Viejo City Council meeting and say we're going to try out building something over there in the corner, we're just going to try it. No, you don't try it, you estimate it, you figure out and you do it. And when it comes to this we've got to say, "I'm all in, my whole life, I'm ready. I'm fully in." It's comfortable to say, when I'm in it I'll get out if I need to. You can't think that way. Number 2 let's summarize these two verses this way, we've got to sacrifice the comforts of, let's call it this, partial commitment. (21:55)

2. Sacrifice the Comforts of Partial Commitment

And there are a lot of people trying to put their toe in the water of Christianity saying, well I'll try. You can't try it, I mean you can't kind of do it. It's like being kind of pregnant, right? Or sort of married, right? You either are or you aren't. And when it comes to Christianity you're either all in or you not in at all. I mean that's the clarity of the Bible. You're either all in or you're not in at all. That's how this works and Jesus made that very clear for church goers in particular and we heard testimonies of church goers this morning who tried to put their toe in and recognized that's not how God works. That's not how it works. You can't do it that way. Jesus put it this way to the church filled with people that think that way in Revelation chapter 3. He writes that last postcard to the church of Laodicea, do you remember that church? And he said I know you guys, I know your works, I know how you operate and you're neither cold nor hot. I wish you were cold or hot but because you're not you're lukewarm, because of that I'm going to spit you out of my mouth. There will be no place for you here because you think you can kind of have one foot in the world and one



foot in the church. You can kind of be sort of in, sort of married, sort of pregnant. You can't, you have to say I'm all in. And he says you better count the cost. Are you ready to give your life to Christ? Are you ready to walk an aisle and commit your life to this person? See if your seventh grade Jr High girl came home from school and said I'm getting married. You hope she's just theorizing about the future. But she says, no, no, next week I'm getting married. How would you respond to that, your seventh-grade daughter? Oh no, you're not, right? Well why not? Right? Why not? Maybe ten years from now she will say I'm getting married next week and maybe you'll bring a present. Why won't you do it with a seventh grader? Well, I assume because you think she's not at the place of rightly counting the cost. And you want to meet this pimply faced 8th grader that she's in love with to see what kind of, I mean, who are you putting your trust in here? (24:01)

And you want to think it through, you want to think is this even possible? Right, you're not ready. There are a lot of people when it comes to this all-in commitment who haven't really thought it through, they haven't said I'm going to follow Christ I'm in it to the end, I'm fully in, I'm committed, I recognize it may take me away from my job, it may move me to a different zip code, it may move me to a whole different kind of line of work, but I'm in because I'm going to follow and he's going to lead. See when the fishermen were told to leave their nets and follow Christ, they did that. But as Peter, James and John former fisherman watch Jesus deal with the rich young lawyer, who came to him and he said leave everything and follow me and he turned away sad, looking at the top of his sandals because he was someone who had a lot of wealth. Jesus said it's hard for the rich man to enter the kingdom of God. What's the point? If you're not willing to slide your whole life over and say I'm in, it doesn't work. It's not that you can't enter Christianity 2.0 it's that you can't even enter the kingdom. (25:08)

Can't try God, you can't ease into this. If I'm going to come preach a sermon to you this morning I can't phone it in, I can't Skype it in from my recliner. I've got to get out of my recliner and come and do this thing called preaching. And you want to follow Christ you can't do it holding onto the world. You can't say I like the comfort of laying here in the world and I'm going to keep at least a foot on the recliner and I'll go and I'll have my other foot follow Christ. It doesn't work that way. You have to sacrifice the comforts of partial commitment. (24:40)

Lastly Jesus gives us another illustration, verses 31 through 33. It says, what king going out to encounter another king in war will not first sit down and deliberate. He's going to count the cost. Whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand. And if not, because those aren't real good odds, while the other is yet a great way off, I'm going to send my fastest runners out there with some authorized things on a scroll with the seal of the king on it, it's a delegation and they're going to ask for terms of peace. Why? Because I'm going to get decimated with my army of ten thousand if that opposing army has twenty thousand. (26:18)

So, here's a word to underline, therefore. Any one of you does not denounce all that he has cannot be my disciple. Now you do not understand verses 31 and 32 until you can relate it to verse 33. That's why the 'therefore' is there. Therefore is there to say whatever it means



here to be a person with ten thousand resources, God's got twenty thousand resources, he is a coming conquering king, whatever it means to count the cost, means he is coming, I'm small, he's big, I'm the servant, he's the master, I'm the created creature, he's the creator. There has to be this deliberation. This delegation that goes and this negotiation for peace. And when that happens, it doesn't call off the war, it may call off the fighting but whatever the intension of the commander of that foreign army was well I guess that prevails. Let me illustrate it this way. (27:08)

Junior High, I had a rough Junior High, tried to avoid the fights. But there's a lot of fights breaking out everywhere. Certainly, I tried to avoid the fights when I realized the one coming against me with 20 thousand grams of muscle. Right? I was trying to fight me with 10 thousand grams of muscle and I thought he's going to pound my face in. I don't want to fight. Now if you're in Junior High and you've got the bully that's twice your size who you're afraid is going to crush your nose and you say I don't want to fight. Does he say, Okay fine then I guess we'll just avoid the whole mess. No. you can't call off the fight without now subjecting yourself to the bully there's just no way around it. And in Jr High it's usually doing his homework for a week, right? Or carrying his backpack around. Or you know, washing his bike on the weekend or whatever. You now become subservient to the one who comes against you with the stronger army. And it's the same way here, we've got to recognize I you're going to come to a place of recognize that Christ has walked into the front room of your life, see you're basically saying, 'You win, you're in charge.' Therefore, my consideration of how my life ought to go is – here's the key word, verse 33 – renounced. What does that mean? Translated elsewhere, bid farewell, to say farewell, say good bye. I've taken my life and I've said, "Okay my life as I've known it. Business as usual. That's over. And I'm now recognizing that you are new management and I answer to you." (28:33)

Put it in corporate terms, the business that has a corporate takeover, now has a new board of directors, has new leadership and you're sitting there wondering if you're going to get transferred, if you're going to get laid off, if you're going to be fired. And it may be that you aren't but you still are going to now be responsible to and accountable to a whole different set of leaders. They may have a different employee handbook, they may have a different set of raise structures and pay scales. They may have a whole different, you know, set of numbers for you to hit on the sales job that you do. They are now in charge, you answer to them. (29:04)

And it's worse than changing management when it comes to the thought of me becoming a Christian because not like I have one manager and I'm trading him in for God. It's really that thought that we're born into a world where we're managing ourselves. And that's the hardest thing, I'd like to be my own boss. Right? Let's put it this way, number 3, if you want to jot this down, we need to sacrifice the comforts of – here it is – self-management. (29:25)

3. Sacrifice the Comforts of Self-Management

Because I'd like to say to everyone who comes and tries to dominate me, you're not the boss of me, to go back to grade school playground. But in reality, when it comes to Christ coming and invading the front room of my life, he's saying, "Well, I am actually because I'm



God and you're not." And therefore, you need to be willing to see your life under new management and now I may move you, you may be transferred to Cincinnati that may be what happens. I don't know, and it may be that he keeps you right where you are. There's Christians in this room that have genuinely become genuine followers of Christ and he's kept you in the same job, kept you in the same place, kept you doing basically the same kinds of things that you might have done except of course he's added the Bible and prayer and service in the church. But you know so much of the exterior of your life looks the same but the interior of your life has radically changed. See when the rich young ruler was asked to give up all that he had, that was not a unique request. It's just that he wanted him to cash that in, he wanted to exercise the option of sovereignty in his life. Christ has sovereignty over every Christian's life. The question is whether he'll exercise that option to move something around in your life. Therefore, when I became a Christian I trusted when you became a Christian our hands, our eyes, our brain, our house, our car, our future these all now became his. In other words, I stopped being the owner and self-manager of my life and I now became the steward and the servant of God. And now it's what do you want me to do with my life? And literally for me and maybe because I was young, I was young enough in college when I became a Christian to say God what do you want me to do? I had my own plans but I laid those on the altar, saying what do you want me to do? And a lot of people said why don't you keep on doing what you're doing just do it for Christ. And I was open to that, and I had my plans. And God said, "No, I want to move some things around." You just need to be open to that. Everything needs to be on the altar. (31:18)

That's what it means to be a Christian to say, "You know what? I'm not into pleasing people anymore I'm ultimately into pleasing Christ." You know it's not about partial commitment, I'm all in my whole life is his. And when it comes to the comforts of self-management I recognize I don't own myself anymore, I'm not the lord of my life, I'm not that captain of my fate. I'm now a follower of Christ. This is a hard thing for moderns to recognize because somehow they think that Christianity can be sampled. Or at best maybe this passage is some call to second tiered Christianity and this is for serious zealous Christians but the rest of us can get our ticket to heaven and not have to abide by this. (31:57)

You've heard through the testimonies this morning and I hope you learn every time you open the scriptures up that there's no such thing, you can't dichotomize Christianity into Varsity Christianity and Jr. Varsity Christianity. There's only one kind, what he does with your life, I mean the varieties are infinite. But how we come to Christ is the same. He may say just stay right there, you don't have to give up that, you don't have to give up that. And he may say, "You know what? Move here, go there." But I know this, he may keep you in that robe and he may keep you in that recliner but he certainly going to take the remote out of your hand. I can guarantee you that. He's going to control all that. And just like that "Try God" slogan was a real bad one, here's the other real bad one that I often harp on, the "God is my Co-Pilot" bumper sticker. He didn't sign up for that. You realize. God will not sign up for that because I know how it works with people that say "God join the cockpit of my life, come on in, I'll give you a spot, here's a seat, a nice little seat right here that's not being used. I've been flying solo my whole life, why don't you join me on this journey and you know if I really have a bad, bad turbulence here then I'll cry out, you know, and I'll say it with the best country singers, Jesus take the wheel, now is the time. Right? That'll be



awesome. Then when we get back to smooth sailing I want it back. Or I know for sure landings, I'm not real good with landings when I'm getting near death and I don't know what's going to happen at the end of my life. Well surely, I'm going to have you take the wheel at that point because you know what that's what it's all about. Christ getting me into heaven. So, near the end of my life, take the wheel, take it over. (33:22)

Well that's not how it works. You recognize that who you're inviting into the front room of our life, the cockpit of our life is the king of king and the Lord of Lords and you are the most junior ranking want to be aviators ever. And you hand him the keys and you sit him in the prime seat and he will sit you there next to him, I understand, but he's the one in charge. Two passages I'd like you to jot down as we wrap this up, just for the sake of completeness I can't talk about the relinquishing of the self-management of my life without talking about Philippians 3 and 1 Timothy 6. Just jot down Philippians chapter 3 if you want to be very specific verses 5 through 9 is the heart of it. 1 Timothy 6 verses 17 through 19 that's the heart of that passages. Philippians 3:5 through 9, 1 Timothy 6:17 through 19. This helps us recognize that when it comes to my own life, what I'm counting as loss or renouncing in my life is first of all any claim that I have to be worthy before a holy God. Here's the theology part of it, spiritually every asset that was counted to my credit, everything that would make me think that God should like me because I've done this, God should like me because I've done that, God should like me because I haven't done this, God should like me because I haven't done that. All of those things Philippians 3 says I have counted as loss so that I can be found in him not having a righteousness of my own that comes from keeping the law. That I can have a righteousness that comes by faith through Christ. (34:57)

So, what I'm recognizing when I hand him the keys to my life is all the good things that I think should merit any attention from a holy God I'm recognizing it doesn't matter, I count that as loss. The other side of that is 1 Timothy 6 same thing for the physical assets of my life. He calls people who have stuff they can have intelligence to graduate from a good school and get a good job, make a good living. All of that the Bible says comes from God. He supplies all of that for us. And just like Job when he supplies something to us we know he keeps the right to take it back and at any time he can take those things back. God's given me in the middle of my life relative good health doing whatever I'm doing, it's his, if he wants to turn me into something else and do something else, I'm open I'm ready I'm willing. I'm what we call around here, ATAPAT. Anything, any place, any time. That has to be the willingness of my life regarding every asset that I have. Whether it be the talents or the actual physical asset, it's my money, or my house or my stuff, it's God's. All of it really is counted as nothing to me, I'm no longer an owner of these things. I'm a steward. (36:06)

That's Biblical Christianity. Speaking of Pilots, pilots talk a lot about v-speeds. Maybe you've heard this or you are a pilot and you know all these v-speeds you have to learn. They talk with all their jargon about the speeds. All kinds of v-speeds, there's a V with a letter, a V with a number next to it. These are speeds that represent all kinds of different things that pilots need to know. You look it up on Google and see the big chart. And when you talk about v-speeds there are some that are critical that you must know like the v-speed if you talk about a VS speed, S stands for stall and the velocity of your aircraft given its weight and all of its lift on its wings and the area surface of the fuselage and everything you need to



know what speed is the minimum speed you can maintain the lift that you need to keep this thing afloat and if not you're going to hit the velocity of a stall and your plane is going to stall. Speaking of stall there's the D-speed, the VD speed, when you're diving how fast is this aircraft able to keep itself together and the top speed of a dive for instance or maneuver speed, there's all kinds of speeds. There's speeds with numbers like V2 speed. The V2 speed is important because that's speed when you're going down the runway at what speed given the temperature air pressure, wind speed, wind direction the weight of the aircraft, you know, all this size of the aircraft, at what speed am I able to pull that yoke back and actually have enough speed for the lift to get this plane off the ground. Now that's an important thing to know because I don't want to be pulling this yoke back and you know I'm not going fast enough yet. The V2 speed. (37:35)

The most important speed of all is the V1 speed. You know I'm not a pilot but I'm thinking this is a pretty important speed I need to know this speed. That's the speed, V1 speed, that's the speed of velocity this aircraft going down this runway that determines the exact moment when I either have to pull that yoke back, I have to pull that stick back and I have to have the airplane take off or if I don't I just passed the speed where I'm going to crash through the end of the runway. Now don't you want your pilot to know that? I'd like to know, you either lift off now, it's the last point of an aborted takeoff. This is the last moment of an aborted takeoff. (38:14)

There's a lot of people that like to illustrate this passage when they preach through it or teach through it they talk about leap of faith because there's a lot of things that make you think of a leap. Talk about being all in, talk about pleasing God alone, talk about my life being under his jurisdiction. All of these things seem so whole life so people talk about jumping off a cliff so they illustrate it like putting on a you know, parachute on and jumping out of an airplane. I don't like those illustrations. Not because I don't understand what these guys are trying to illustrate. But I think so often they lead to the wrong impression that Christians are jumping into the unknown of some irrational belief and an invisible Casper the Friendly Ghost. And that is not Christianity. This is an intelligent faith, just like someone walking down the aisle and saying I know this person, I trust this person, I'm entrusting my life and covenant with this person. It is a rational faith based on historic truth and this is the thing that we look at and say it's not some leap into darkness. Faith is not believing in my mind, hope against hope that maybe this will work out if I just take this leap of faith. (39:15)

But maybe this V1 illustration is a little bit better. Because it gives you that sense that there comes a point in your life when you have enough speed, you have enough velocity, you have enough information from God. You have enough exposure to Christ you haven't you have conviction of the Spirit and right now it is do or die, it's the last minute, either you pull that yoke back and down that throttle and you take off or you abort because if you pass this particular point you're going to crash through the end of the runway if you do not pull that stick back. To me that's exactly what we're talking about. We're talking about people that have been impressed with the truth of the gospel. They've been exposed to enough about Christianity. They've heard enough testimony from other Christians they've had enough preaching from the word of God where they have enough information and right now it's do



or die. (40:05)

To put it in the words of Hebrews. The writer of Hebrews knew that the audience was ready and it was do or die for them and he compares their response to that sermon this way. Today if you'd hear his voice do not harden your heart as they did in the wilderness on the day of testing. Now if you go back and learn that historically here are the children of Israel coming out of Egypt into the desert in their day of testing can be found in Numbers chapter 13 and Numbers chapter 14. They had a day, they had enough information, they had enough proof, they had enough witness from the plagues, they had enough leadership from Moses. They were there, it was scary, you needed to put your confidence in God and take Canaan, take the promised land. They had reached V1 speed. Now you either put the throttle down and pull the yoke back and you take off with God or you're going to crash and burn. It was their day of testing. And unfortunately, you know that in Numbers chapter 14 at Kadesh Barnea there at the edge of the Promised Land they crashed and burned and their bodies were strewn throughout the desert for the next 40 years because they had a moment to put their trust in God or even anachronistically to put their trust in Christ as it says in 1 Corinthians 10 because it was Christ that was ultimately their leader in that desert. That picture an image of Christ leading them into a place they should have had enough rational and intelligent faith in their leader but they chose not to do it. And they crashed and burned. (41:37)

Multiple times in Hebrews the writer of Hebrews says today it's the same way for you. You've had enough information, Jesus put his finger in your chest and says, "Listen you've got to be done living your life to please yourself and please everyone else. You've got to live your life to please the most important supreme person in the universe." You've had enough information and enough conviction to know that the commitment is not partial. You're all in or you're not at all. And when it comes to who's in charge you better lay down your scepter and take off your crown and realize that the main pilot, the real pilot, the king has stepped into your life, you give the controls over to him. You follow his orders. Some of you may not have other chances at this and I'm not here to try to manipulate anybody but people do pass the V1 speed every day in their spiritual pathway, their discipleship. I say discipleship because even non-Christians are called disciples as they learn about Christ and it comes to a point of decision. Are you today going to hear his voice and respond by putting your trust in him? Or are you going to harden your heart. (42:43)

There's no aisles to walk, there's no hands to raise, there's no cards to fill out, there's none of that. It's you and God dealing with the issues of the gospel and either responding or choosing to reject it. That's the human experience that we have. And I invite you today not to harden your heart. And if you are a Christian and you did put the throttle down and you pulled that yoke back. Look out the window there's no turning back, right? You are off the runway now, right? You read a passage like this I hope and go that's us, that's me, I'm not here to please people anymore. Here to please God. I'm not partially in, I'm all in and I'm 30 thousand feet at this point. When it comes down to it, I'm not the pilot, I'm the very underqualified copilot. So, for those of you who aren't there yet, you're still on the runway, today is the day to take off. Let's pray (43:35)



God, as I said, no manipulation, no hands raised but I do pray there would be some people right now that would do business with you. They've heard enough testimonies, they've heard enough scripture, they know this is not a matter of needing to learn more or be convinced of things. These aren't intellectual issues that stand in the way of their becoming Christians. It is a volitional concern. So, I pray God for them right now that you do work in their lives to break down their excuses and the barriers in their lives and you'd have some people bow as we like to say, bow their knee to Christ. I understand it's an illustration but really, it's that sense of our heart being submissive to you, realizing that we're going to accept your diagnosis of our lives, we're going to affirm and embrace your solution for our life. We're going to accept and adopt your leadership in our lives. Make that a reality for us today not just those of us that can look back at a time when we took off, but for those that are still running down the runway and have reached that place today where they need to make that call. So, God work in this room even those that hear me on the radio right now, those that are driving down the road. I pray you'd work in their lives in a way that makes it clear you've heard testimony this morning that this is not just more information but that's it's a real change of heart as Pastor Lucus said, from the inside out. It's a change that starts on the inside. I pray you'd do that through the work of your Spirit this morning. In Jesus Name, Amen (45:07)