

WORD FROM THE PASTOR

THE DEMANDS OF DISCIPLESHIP



The word of God invites us to balance our approach to God. Knowledge alone has limits. **We also need wisdom to understand the ways of God. God's power has no boundaries; it is not limited by space and time.** Paul encourages one of his converts to consider his former slave a brother in Christ Jesus for we are created in the image and likeness of God. We are all called to be Jesus' disciples and embrace and accept His mission with its demands of discipleship.

Today we hear Jesus is inviting us to make a radical and fundamental choice in our life. He addressed the people who gathered at the table about the difficulties of following Him. They were suspicious about Jesus, looking to catch Him doing something wrong. Jesus addresses the in parable, emphasizing that **although there is a right way to be a disciple and enter the kingdom of his Father, it is a difficult path to follow.** Many, even some of the guests at the table, reject the invitation. Jesus does not feel offended instead turns to the crowds and tells them of discipleship. Jesus explains that, when it comes to making a choice for the Kingdom of God, nothing can get in the way.

When Jesus describes “hating” one's father and mother, He is not talking about feelings. Rather, He is emphasizing very strongly that **choosing to be a disciple means that everything else—family, money, your own life—must come second. Jesus makes it very clear that being a disciple is not easy.** It means to bear one's own cross. Discipleship is difficult and is something we can commit to only if we are prepared to put the Kingdom of God before everything else. Faith is like that. Your faith doesn't come because your mother and father taught you how to believe. It comes from feeling the terrible alternative of walking through life without faith, without hope and without love.

And so, what Jesus is saying is, **“Whatever stands in your way, whatever stands in your way of following me as we walk together for a great cause to bring God's love and forgiveness to the whole world, we're doing that, but you must commit yourself to it. You must commit your heart; you must commit your soul.”**

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