

Is It Worth It?

Matthew 10:34-42 ³⁴ "Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. ³⁵ "For I have come to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law'; ³⁶ "and a man's enemies *will be* those of his *own* household.' ³⁷ "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. ³⁸ "And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. ³⁹ "He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it. ⁴⁰ "He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me. ⁴¹ "He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward. And he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. ⁴² "And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold *water* in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward."

Verses 34 – 36 Worth Suffering

A drug addict going through withdrawal has a really rough time of it. It would be far easier in the short term to simply keep taking the drug. However the difficulty and suffering is worth the prize if you can make it through.

Jesus has come to separate us from a very potent drug, the drug of our own sin. We are far more hooked on this drug than we like to admit. We are greatly addicted to our sin. We like being the center of attention. We like putting ourselves and our needs before others. We like to give into our own desires and appetites regardless of how they hurt others.

Jesus came not just to remove sin but to rip us away from it, and that isn't going to be an easy or painless process. It is going to create anger and resentment and division, even within families.

Jesus speaks in a similar way when he says:

Matthew 21:44 "And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder."

Following Christ is like falling on a rock. You could scrape your knee. You could break a bone. It's not pleasant. It's not something we like. But the alternative is that this boulder, the judgment of Christ, falls on us. If that happens we aren't going to just break a bone but rather be ground to powder. It's worth a cuts and bruises and broken bones to be on Christ rather than under his judgement.

Jesus main point here is however positive not negative. His main point is how much he is worth, how great the prize that he offers. What he has to offer is worth so much that it is worth even leaving father or son or brother. Now hopefully it doesn't come to that. Hopefully father and son and mother and daughter come with, but even if there is not a division in our family even still it's going to be a painful process.

God's law keeps cutting into our hearts. We get caught by this sin and that sin and God's law again and again pulls sin away. It's not pleasant. But it is most certainly worth it as we receive his forgiveness and salvation.

Verse 37 – 39 Worth Our Life

In our text Jesus really emphasizes how much the salvation that he came to bring is worth. What price it is really worth.

It is worth more than father or mother, son or daughter. It is worth more than our life. By our life Jesus means all the things of this world that make up our life here on this earth. The salvation that he brings is worth picking up our cross, that is to say it is worth an entire life of suffering and burden. I am worth more than all of this Jesus says. If you want to be worthy of me be ready to pay all of this and even more.

Now are we worthy of Christ? Are we able to pay this price? No, we are not and we cannot.

Christ and the salvation which he brings is well worth all this and more, giving up family and life and even enduring tribulation and suffering. If we want to be worthy of Christ than yeah we should be willing to pay all this and even more. However we receive something worth more than even our lives for free.

As Paul reminded us last week

Romans 5:18 through one Man's righteous act *the free gift came* to all men, resulting in justification of life

So then if I have something to brag it is this that I have received Christ and his salvation which is worth more than all the goods of my life and even my soul, and yet I have received it freely as the gift of God. To be worthy of Christ to be able to pay for what he has done we should be willing to pay all this and more, but thanks be to God that Christ and his salvation are ours freely.

Verses 40 – 42 A Very Great Blessing

If I or anyone else does a good job at something usually people will acknowledge that, but if you are really good even those who are close to you receive some praise or fame by association. For example if

someone is a pretty good basketball player in high school usually they are praised for that. People maybe even want to meet you and be your friend and hang out with you in high school. If you are a really good basketball player, then not only do people want to meet you but there is even a fame of association. That is people might even brag a little about having met you and your fame might even rub off on them a little. "Wow you shook Aaron Rodgers hand?" The more famous you are the greater this fame by association. "This is the shoe that Michael Jordan wore in 1991 when he played the LA Lakers."

Jesus emphasis how great is the blessing he brings by a similar blessing by association analogy.

These three verses are a little odd to us because we are so far removed from the culture of that day. But the Jews would have been familiar with the concept that Jesus is using here. If a prophet comes to your door, you give him something to eat, or let him stay the night, then you receive whatever blessing that prophet has to give. If a holy man, this is probably someone who spends his life in a cave studying God's word, is begging for food you help him out in turn you receive a blessing.

However, says Jesus the blessing which he gives is so great that it will be received, even if it is four people removed from himself. A prophet or a holy man will give you their blessing if you do something for them directly. But Jesus is so much greater than that the blessing he brings is received even if you give up a cup of cold water to a child, and not even in his name, but even merely in the name of one of his disciples. We are so filled with his blessing that this blessing often even overflows to those around us.

This is partially an encouragement to always help out others. Notice you don't have to fly to Africa and build a hospital but even just giving a thirsty child a drink of water is something that Christ will not fail to reward. And so we should always be on the lookout for how can I help others in even just small little ways.

But it is also an indication of just how great is the blessing, the salvation that Christ brings us. Not only are we saved but others are blessed through us.

Christ is worth more than anything we can imagine, the blessing and salvation that he brings is the greatest treasure we could have. Even though it is worth our life we get it for free through Christ's death. It may be painful it may cause suffering as we are divided from this world and our own sin but it is well worth it. As the writer of Hebrews reminds us we would be very foolish to "neglect so great a salvation." It is worth more than heaven and earth and yet it is given to us freely.

Amen