

Level 1 Lesson 7

COMMITMENT

By Don Krow

Luke 14:25-26 – And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them, If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

“And there went great multitudes with Jesus, and He turned, and said unto them...” (Luke 14:25). At this time in Jesus’ ministry, there were multitudes of people who followed Jesus. The English language doesn’t bring this out, but in the Greek language, this is an imperfect tense. This means that at this time, the great multitudes began to repeatedly and continuously follow Jesus. Perhaps it was because of His miracles or because He fed them, we don’t know the exact reason, but great multitudes were following Him. It was at this time that Jesus turned and deliberately said something which appears to have caused many people to turn and follow Him no more.

“If any man come to Me [that means wants go with me, wants to accompany me, wants to follow me, this is the requirement], and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:26, brackets mine). As I looked at that scripture, I thought, *Lord, you can’t mean that. What does that word “hate” mean? It probably means to love less or something like that.* As I began to study, however, I discovered that the word literally means “hate.”

Jesus used the strongest possible word to emphasize a point. He said unless you hate your father, your mother, your sister, your brother, even your own life, you can’t be His disciple. I want to ask you something: What is the closest relationship you will ever have on this earth? It’s your mother and father or your spouse and children. What happens if your wife turns against you and divorces you, or your mother and father die? Who will stick with you then? It will be your brothers and your sisters. Jesus said, unless you hate them, you can’t be His disciple. What is He saying???

Jesus is talking about the closest relationships we will ever have. He is asking for a commitment from you, a commitment in which He is preeminent. He wants to be number one in your life. He is going to compare His relationship with you to the closest relationships you have on earth. “Hate” is a metaphor, a word of comparison, and Jesus is saying, “My relationship with you is so important that I want it to be above all earthly things.” There is one person you love more than your wife, your children, your mother, your father, or your sisters and brothers. Do you know who that is? It’s not God . . . it’s you. You love yourself more than you love your closest relationships.

Why do marriages break up? Why do people divorce? Because they love themselves more than they love their spouse. “You’re not doing it like I want you to, so I’m getting rid of you.”

Jesus said there is one relationship I want to be number one above—it’s your own selfish life. This is true discipleship. He is not talking about a no-cost discipleship. He’s asking us to follow Him. He’s asking to be number one in our lives.

Discipleship Questions

1. Read Luke 9:57-62. What does this passage teach about the level of commitment toward following Christ? _____
2. Read Luke 8:13-14. Why do some people seem to fall away, or turn away, from the Christian faith? _____
3. Read Ezekiel 16:8. God uses the illustration of marriage to describe a relationship with His people. Whose possession does one become in this relationship? _____
4. Read 1 Corinthians 6:19. Who do you belong to? _____
5. Read 1 Corinthians 6:20. Who does your body and your spirit belong to?

6. Read James 4:4. Can you commit spiritual adultery against God? _____
7. What would constitute spiritual adultery in God’s eyes? See Romans 1:25.

8. Read John 2:23-25. What can we learn about commitment and faith from these verses? _____
9. Read Luke 14:28-30. Have you counted the cost to follow Jesus? Do you want to follow Him? _____

Scriptures to Use with Questions

Luke 9:57-62 – “[57] *And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. [58] And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. [59] And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. [60] Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. [61] And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. [62] And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.*”

Luke 8:13-14 – “[13] *They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away. [14] And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.*”

Ezekiel 16:8 – “*Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I swore unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord GOD, and thou becamest mine.*”

1 Corinthians 6:19 – “*What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?*”

1 Corinthians 6:20 – “*For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.*”

James 4:4 – “*Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.*”

Romans 1:25 – “*Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.*”

John 2:23-25 – “[23] *Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. [24] But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, [25] And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.*”

Luke 14:28-30 – “[28] *For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? [29] Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, [30] Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.*”

Answer Key

1. Read Luke 9:57-62. What does this passage teach about the level of commitment toward following Christ? **Absolute surrender.**
2. Read Luke 8:13-14. Why do some people seem to fall away, or turn away, from the Christian faith? **They have never put down a root system in the Word of God. The cares, riches, and pleasures of this life take them away.**
3. Read Ezekiel 16:8. God uses the illustration of marriage to describe a relationship with His people. Whose possession does one become in this relationship? **God’s.**

4. Read 1 Corinthians 6:19. Who do you belong to? **God.**
5. Read 1 Corinthians 6:20. Who does your body and your spirit belong to? **God.**
6. Read James 4:4. Can you commit spiritual adultery against God? **Yes.**
7. What would constitute spiritual adultery in God's eyes? **A heart that is turned away from Him to idols (things that you have made more important than God). See Romans 1:25.**
8. Read John 2:23-25. What can we learn about commitment and faith from these verses? **That Jesus wants all of our hearts (a total commitment).**
9. Read Luke 14:28-30. Have you counted the cost to follow Jesus? Do you want to follow Him? **Yes.**

Copyright © 2004, Don W. Krow

Permission is granted to duplicate or reproduce for discipleship purposes on the condition that it is distributed free of charge.

DKM
10065 Sun Ridge Circle
Rogers, AR 72756
USA
delessons.org