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## The Parables of Jesus Christ: Whether a Building or a Battle - Count the Cost

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# THE PARABLES OF JESUS CHRIST

## THIRTY: Whether a Building or a Battle—Count the Cost (Lk. 14:28-33)

### SURVEY

This parable consists of two divine "don'ts":

1. Don't begin construction unless and until you know sufficient funds are available to complete it, lest you suffer derision and ridicule.
2. Don't initiate a battle unless and until you are assured you can muster more troops than the enemy, lest you suffer defeat and ruin.

### SIGNIFICANCE

This is perhaps the key parable dealing with the cost of discipleship.

### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- It is a tragic thing to begin something but not be able to complete it. It is a tremendous thing to begin something and to successfully complete.
  1. A scriptural example of the first— Belshazzar the king:

*"In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the kings palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote . . . And this is the writing that was written, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. This is the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians."* (Dan. 5:5, 25-28)
  2. A scriptural example of the second—Paul the Apostle:

*"For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."* (2 Tim. 4:6-8)
- Before declaring war on an enemy, four things must be carefully considered:
  1. What are the strengths of my foe?
  2. What are my strengths?
  3. What are the weaknesses of my foe?

#### 4. What are my weaknesses?

- Three would-be followers of Jesus failed the test of discipleship during our Lord's earthly ministry.

##### 1. First candidate:

*"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. 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."* (Lk. 9:57-58)

##### 2. Second candidate:

*"And he said unto another, follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God."* (Lk. 9:59-60)

##### 3. Third candidate:

*"And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell which are at home at my house. And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."* (Lk. 9:61-62)