

Title: THREE IMAGES TO LIVE BY, LUKE 14:25-33
(Chatham, NJ; 09/08/13, AM) [Pc – Analysis of Images]

Theme: Through the cross, a fallen tower, and a battle scene Jesus exhorts his followers to live for God alone.

Purpose: To impress these powerful images on everyone's mind and to exhort them to follow Jesus.

Introduction:

1. Jesus speaks of discipleship here, but let's think in terms of something to live by.
2. Following Jesus is a way of life.
3. These are visual tools to know how we should live. (note the images as well as the alliteration of Bs)

I. Bear Your Cross, 25-27

A. Rejecting all others

1. A more detailed perspective on the 1st commandment: have no other gods
2. What sounds heartless merely relegates others to a position of secondary importance (tribal or family solidarity, as good as it may be, can hold us back)
3. Family members are to be loved and respected not worshipped
4. We are called upon also to hate our own lives
5. We reject our selves as the center of the universe and master of morality
6. Trust in the Lord; rely not on your own insight

B. To bear the cross

1. On the way to Calvary
2. Not a burden unique to each one of us
3. We die on the cross with Jesus; hence, the image of baptism as a death, burial, and resurrection
4. This is nothing less than living the crucified life
 - Gal. 2:20 – I no longer live; Christ lives in me
 - Gal. 5:24 – we have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires
 - 2 Cor. 4:10 – we carry around the death of Christ

II. Build Your Tower with Foresight, 29 – 30

A. Planning your Project

1. Need a plan
2. Need resources (money, manpower, and supplies)
3. Likely more time than you plan will be needed or more things to be done than originally planned
4. Starting a project is easier than completing one

B. What will it cost me to follow Jesus?

1. Can I finish?
2. The rocky soil in Mt. 13:20-21 has no root to withstand difficulties
3. Several years ago Tom Coughlin, NY Giants coach, talked to his team regularly about finishing. . . they won the Super Bowl that year
4. How do we persevere when the initial excitement wears off and others have quit?
5. Will we be able to repeat 2 Tim. 4:7-8?
6. Maybe we should also first ask, "Will it be worth it?"

III. Battle Your Inner Rebel, 31-33

- A. The scene: a battle is about to begin
 - 1. Can I win the battle against a more powerful foe?
 - 2. God is the larger force
 - 3. He is at war with a rebellious world
 - Col. 1:21-22, hostile in mind toward God
 - Eph. 2:3, children of wrath

- B. Does our inner rebel want to surrender
 - 1. Can I renounce my desires and rebelliousness?
 - 2. God is going to win; can I live with that?
 - 3. The primary battle takes place inside every human heart, Rom. 7:21-24
 - 4. God always triumphs if we allow him, 8:1-2
 - 5. But I must first surrender

Conclusion:

- 1. Twice Jesus warns his followers that unless they do these things, they cannot be his disciples (26, 33).
- 2. "To renounce all that he has" is to renounce all the ways of the world that conflict with the rule of God.
- 3. We take these challenges not to turn us back, but to make us strong for the journey.
- 4. All these images are wrapped up in the plan of salvation: believe, repent, and be baptized for the remission of sins.
- 5. Consider the cross, the tower, and the battle as you make your decision.