

All or Nothing

Bid Idea: To be a disciple of Jesus requires all or nothing. Fortunately, what we give to Him He often gives back to us with His blessing! (Text: Luke 5).

While the gift of salvation is free (Ephesians 2:8,9), discipleship costs big time. Before Jesus chose His disciples most of them had been watching Him and listening to Him for over a year. They knew what He had given up by leaving behind His heavenly home and His earthly family in Nazareth. They had seen Him pull away frequently to pray before every major decision (Luke 5:16; 6:12). No doubt they had heard Him teach about the high cost of becoming a follower. Jesus made it pretty clear on several occasions: *“If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it”* (Matt. 16:24-25).

1. Leaving Everything For Him

And Jesus said to Simon, “Do not fear, from now on you will be ‘catching men.’ When they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed Him (Luke 5:10b,11).

After that He went out and noticed a tax collector named Levi sitting in the tax booth, and He said to him, “Follow Me.” And he left everything behind, and got up and began to follow Him (Luke 5:27,28).

They knew that giving up everything included the big 3: family, friends, and finances. But they also knew that Jesus could be trusted as Lord over these important areas of obligation. Giving them up meant transferring ownership, not responsibility. As stewards they were still expected to care for God’s property, but because He was the rightful owner they could rest assured He would protect His investment.

2. Leaving Everything With Him

The disciples knew that Jesus could be trusted with every concern of their lives. What they entrusted to Him would be entrusted back to them with God’s added protection and provision!

a. Families

They had faith that even though they were giving up time to care for their families, God the Father would be watching out for their well-being: *And he arose and left the synagogue and entered Simon’s house. Now Simon’s mother-in-law was ill with a high fever, and they appealed to him on her behalf. And he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her, and immediately she rose and began to serve them (Luke 4:38,39).* When Jesus is in charge He can provide a level of care for our families that goes far beyond our own!

b. Friends

Because Matthew (Levi) was a Jewish tax-collector, he was rejected by both the Romans and the Jews. The only friends he could find were fellow tax-collectors and other rejects. He may have thought that following Jesus would mean giving them up, but He soon learned that Jesus was even more committed to his friends than He was: *And Levi made him a great feast in his house, and there was a large company of tax collectors and others reclining at the table with them. And the Pharisees and their scribes grumbled at his disciples, saying, “Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?” And Jesus answered them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance” (Luke 5:29-32).*

c. Finances

Jesus chose working men as His disciples. They couldn’t afford to give up their professions and still hope to feed their families unless Jesus would provide: *And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.” And Simon answered, “Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets.” And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking (Luke 5:4-6).*

What do you need to give up to Jesus today? Remember it’s all or nothing!

Our Father's Love Letter

My Child,

You may not know me, but I know everything about you (Psalm 139.1)
I know when you sit down and when you rise up (Psalm 139.2)
I am familiar with all your ways (Psalm 139.3)
Even the very hairs on your head are numbered (Matthew 10.29-31)
For you were made in my image (Genesis 1.27)
In me you live and move and have your being (Acts 17.28)
For you are my offspring (Acts 17.28)
I knew you even before you were conceived (Jeremiah 1.4-5)
I chose you when I planned creation (Ephesians 1.11-12)
You were not a mistake, for all your days are written in my book (Psalm 139.15-16)
I determined the exact time of your birth and where you would live (Acts 17.26)
You are fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139.14)
I knit you together in your mother's womb (Psalm 139.13)
And brought you forth on the day you were born (Psalm 71.6)
I have been misrepresented by those who don't know me (John 8.41-44)
I am not distant and angry, but am the complete expression of love (1 John 4.16)
And it is my desire to lavish my love on you (1 John 3.1)
Simply because you are my child and I am your Father (1 John 3.1)
I offer you more than your earthly father ever could (Matthew 7.11)
For I am the perfect father (Matthew 5.48)
Every good gift that you receive comes from my hand (James 1.17)
For I am your provider and I meet all your needs (Matthew 6.31-33)
My plan for your future has always been filled with hope (Jeremiah 29.11)
Because I love you with an everlasting love (Jeremiah 31.3)
My thoughts toward you are countless as the sand on the seashore (Psalms 139.17-18)
And I rejoice over you with singing (Zephaniah 3.17)
I will never stop doing good to you (Jeremiah 32.40)
For you are my treasured possession (Exodus 19.5)
I desire to establish you with all my heart and all my soul (Jeremiah 32.41)
And I want to show you great and marvelous things (Jeremiah 33.3)
If you seek me with all your heart, you will find me (Deuteronomy 4.29)
Delight in me and I will give you the desires of your heart (Psalm 37.4)
For it is I who gave you those desires (Philippians 2.13)
I am able to do more for you than you could possibly imagine (Ephesians 3.20)
For I am your greatest encourager (2 Thessalonians 2.16-17)
I am also the Father who comforts you in all your troubles (2 Corinthians 1.3-4)
When you are broken-hearted, I am close to you (Psalm 34.18)
As a shepherd carries a lamb, I have carried you close to my heart (Isaiah 40.11)
One day I will wipe away every tear from your eyes (Revelation 21.3-4)
And I'll take away all the pain you have suffered on this earth (Revelation 21.3-4)
I am your Father, and I love you even as I love my son, Jesus (John 17.23)
For in Jesus, my love for you is revealed (John 17.26)
He is the exact representation of my being (Hebrews 1.3)
He came to demonstrate that I am for you, not against you (Romans 8.31)
And to tell you that I am not counting your sins (2 Corinthians 5.18-19)
Jesus died so that you and I could be reconciled (2 Corinthians 5.18-19)
His death was the ultimate expression of my love for you (1 John 4.10)
I gave up everything I loved that I might gain your love (Romans 8.31-32)
If you receive the gift of my son Jesus, you receive me (1 John 2.23)
And nothing will ever separate you from my love again (Romans 8.38-39)
Come home and I'll throw the biggest party heaven has ever seen (Luke 15.7)
I have always been Father, and will always be Father (Ephesians 3.14-15)
My question is **"Will you be my child?"** (John 1.12-13)
I am waiting for you (Luke 15.11-32)

Love, Your Dad, Almighty God