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Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

**The Oaks
Baptist Church**
Grand Prairie, Texas

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Called to Sacrifice Mark 1:16-20; Luke 14:25-33

Lesson Background and Introduction

The first of today's two texts comes from the beginning of Mark's Gospel. His storyline begins with John the Baptist's preaching that all must repent and be cleansed by God to prepare for the imminent arrival of God's king (Mark 1:2-8). Jesus then appears in the storyline for his baptism. At that time, he is identified by a voice from Heaven as God's kingly Son (1:9-11). After his triumph over the devil's tests (1:12, 13), Jesus repeats John's message of repentance, announcing that God's promised reign is very near (1:14, 15). The coming of God's promised reign, His "kingdom," is central to Jesus' teaching. God's kingdom is the reestablishment of His rule over all creation, especially over rebellious humanity. The well-known words of the Lord's Prayer express this idea: "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10). Jesus links His coming and ministry to the inauguration of God's kingdom. This is a movement that will one day extend the rule of God to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8), reaching complete fulfillment as Jesus returns as king (1:11). It is in this light that Jesus calls the first of His disciples. Our second text, from Luke's Gospel, occurs in the period of Jesus' ministry when he was on his final trip to Jerusalem. He knew he was to die there, and he had warned his disciple of that fact (Luke 9:22, 44). But they failed to understand (9:45). The crowds that joined him had high expectations of his kingly triumph. He would indeed triumph as king, but not in a way anybody expected!

(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

The Call - Jesus called four fishermen—Andrew, Simon (Peter), James, and John—to put aside their livelihood and follow Him. These four, as well as the other disciples, responded to an uncommon call. The Father, according to His plan, had already appointed these men to become fishers of men, drawing people into God's kingdom.

True Disciples - Jesus' small group of disciples accompanied Him as He ministered to the multitudes. He appealed to the crowd to look beyond immediate needs and become true disciples. He knew within each audience stood people who saw Him as more than a miracle worker. A few desired to become a student or learner, wholeheartedly committed to Him. A genuine Christ follower understands the need to place their relationship with Him as their first and main priority. The alliance to other family members and friends has to become secondary or in a place of a low priority in comparison to their relationship with the Lord.

The Cross - Jesus' disciples must willingly lay down their lives, reputations, and careers for the cause of furthering God's kingdom. Jesus called this "taking up your cross." People in His day knew all about Roman executions. No one willingly died on a cross. Dying for Christ opens the door to disappointments, ridicule, pain, and loss as you put aside the highly valued things of this world. Enlisting in Christ's army requires a total surrender of earthly, self-seeking pleasures and positions. Those who cling to the things of this world cannot be His disciples.

Count the Cost - Jesus illustrated the cost of following Him with parables about construction of a tower and a king headed to war. In these stories, a wise builder and a military leader made plans and anticipated the cost. In the same way, Jesus challenged His disciples to seriously sit down and think through their commitment. Those committed to Jesus need to understand the proper place of all other relationships in comparison to Him. Believers in other countries understand when they say "yes" to Christ it may mean losing their lives or the lives of their loved ones. Yet, they count the cost, pledge allegiance to Christ, and remain steadfast. Their witness should cause all Christians to consider how committed they are to Christ themselves

(Adapted from the Echoes Commentary)

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:

When we offer ourselves as living sacrifices, we honor God

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:

Lord Jesus Christ, You humbled Yourself and lay down Your life that I might live. May I never forget this most precious gift of grace and love

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service
(Rom 12:1 NKJV)

from "Our Daily Bread", Feb 21, 2019)

Series: Discipleship & Mission

UNIT: Call To Discipleship

NEXT WEEK

Called to Return

(Luke 15:11-24)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

Call for Sacrificial Following (Mark 1:16-20)

Following God's calling

- God's calls are irrevocable (Rom 11:29)
- God's calls are faithful (1 Thess 5:23-24)
- God's calls are Holy (2 Tim 1:9)

Following Jesus

- We follow Jesus because we know His voice (John 10:2-5)
- To serve Jesus we must follow Him (John 12:26)
- We have been called to follow Jesus' example (1 Peter 2:21)

Importance of obedience

- Obedience to God proves our love of Him (John 14:21)
- Jesus was the perfect example of obedience (Heb 5:7-9)
- We were chosen by God to be obedient (1 Peter 1:2)

Sacrificial Requirements for Discipleship (Luke 14:25-27)

Requirement to follow

- The first key is to recognize when God is speaking to us (1 Sam 3:7-10)
- Always test the spirit of the calling by the Spirit (Josh 5:13-14)
- Our correct response must be 'What shall we do Lord' (Acts 22:6-11)

Requirement to not let relationships hinder

- Beware of loved ones possibly betraying (Luke 21:16-19)
- Beware of the hatred of the world (Matt 24:9-10)
- Beware of those who belong to the world (John 15:19)

Requirement of taking up cross

- If we don't take up the cross, we are not worthy of Jesus (Matt 10:38)
- We must deny self (Matt 16:24)
- We must not let treasures keep us from following Jesus (Mark 10:21-22)

Sacrificial Readiness for Discipleship (Luke 14:28-32)

Always consider the preparedness

- Be prepared to give an answer for hope in God (1 Peter 3:15)
- Be prepared because no one knows when Jesus will return (Matt 24:44)
- Be prepared and know whom are we depending (2 Kings 18:20)

What the Bible teaches about planning

- We must be careful to not make our plans in a worldly manner (2 Cor 1:17)
- We must ensure that we are following God's will and in agreement with His word (John 8:16)
- Realize God may have other plans for us (Acts 16:6-10)

Cost of Discipleship (Luke 14:33)

We must ensure we understand what it takes to finish the call of Jesus

- Living a life worthy of God's calling (Ephesians 4:1)
- Pressing onward toward the goal that God has called us to do (Philippians 3:13-14)
- Keep the faith and finish the race (2 Timothy 4:7)
- We should throw off everything that hinders our walk with Jesus (Heb 12:1)

We must ensure our priority is loyalty and commitment to Jesus

- Never be ashamed of God (Mark 8:38)
- Always acknowledge God as our Master (Luke 12:8-9)
- Never deny God or Jesus (1 John 2:23)

We must consider the cost by being willing to die for Jesus

- Consider our life worthless compared to being with God (Acts 20:24)
- Don't let anything, including our body, hinder our obedience and service to God (Mark 9:43-47)
- Nothing is more important than God owning our soul (Matthew 16:25-26)