

## Faith in the Home

Sermon Notes for the Kiddos (and everybody else)  
Luke 14:25-33, "Hatred, and Bearing our Cross."

Now great crowds accompanied him (Jesus), and he turned and said to them, "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple."

Wow! Once again in Luke we have a radical and hard teaching from Jesus. Are we really supposed to hate our parents, spouse, children, siblings, and ourselves in order for Jesus to save us? Of course not! Jesus' desire is for us is to love God, with every fiber of our being, and to love our neighbor as ourselves. He even calls us to love our enemies. So obviously when Jesus says we "must hate our lives." Jesus is trying make an important point of the difficulty of being His disciple. He is warning us of the need cut out anything or anyone who would tempt us away from living our faith.

In verse 27, Jesus says that we must "bear our cross and follow Him." To "bear a cross" means that we must be willing to suffer and sacrifice on the account of our faith. The cost of our faith for each of is different. We have our various sinful desires. We all have different backgrounds and stories. Bearing your cross is accepting that there are people in the world that will not like you because of your faith. It hurts, especially among people that we love. But as God changes our hearts, the dynamics of our relationships will change. Some for the better, others for the worse. No matter what, Jesus is God, and God comes first.

Personal example: In college, God began to kill my desire to drink at parties with my friends. Our friendships didn't end over my desire to stay sober, but I didn't hang out with them as much because I was weary of the label, "buzz-kill." I refused to be defined by them, but chose to be defined by Jesus. In other cases, my faith has cost friendships. As painful as those experiences were, I am far more blessed to have eternal life in Christ, a Christian wife who strives with me to raise Christian children, and a wonderful family of faith here at Shepherd of the Valley.

Being a disciple in this world is a challenge. We will suffer and sacrifice, but Jesus did the same for us. In Him we will see that our new lives are so much better despite the hardships of being Christian. We have our eternal home to look forward to as well. Oh, and about our relationships... Putting God first will make you a better child, parent,

spouse, and sibling. It will make you a better friend, too. God's grace will even help you respect and forgive the person you see in the mirror.

How do we model these things to our Children in the Home?

1. Don't be afraid to consistently ask yourself this question: "Do my kids believe that Jesus comes first in my own life?" A good follow up question: "Are we too busy to spend time with God?"
2. Be the light that does not grow dim. It is okay to have non-Christian friends. In fact, that's great! However, do not let your non-Christian friends influence you in anyway contrary to the Scripture. We are to be the good influence. We will do better living morally than we will calling out others immorality.
3. Walk the tight rope. We are living through a culture war in our nation. We need to be courageous enough to embrace our biblical values, but not act belligerently towards those live differently than we do. It amazes how people in this country believe that their being right gives them permission to be terrible to those who they think are wrong. If you are belligerently calling people out for their sin or unbelief, it's not persecution when they don't receive you well. Our kids are watching how we react to our world around us.
4. Remember, some conversations just need to end with, "You live your life, please let me live mine." (As me for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.)
5. We need to teach our kids that loving our neighbor doesn't mean their life choices are acceptable to God. "Lord, help all of us raising our children in this hypersexualized culture."
6. For various reasons you will be judged harshly as a Christian, even if you have done nothing to deserve it. Blessed are you when people hate you on the account of your love for Jesus.
7. Embrace your church family. Christian friends for ourselves and for our children are increasingly hard to come by. Our church family is not just meant for us enjoy for an hour or two on Sunday morning. They are our sanctuary in this broken world. Praise God, we are not alone.