

**FAMILY TIES // Luke 14:25-26**

*Message from the series, The Cost of Discipleship*

“Disciple” is synonymous with “Christian follower of Jesus,” and discipleship is the process by which we mature in our relationship with Christ. Being a disciple means believing what Jesus believes, doing what he does, saying what he says, and going where he goes. Jesus does not call potential disciples or would-be disciples or peripheral disciples—he calls disciples.

There are expectation for membership. At Coats Baptist Church, members are expected to have a relationship with the church, to attend and participate; to be in partnership in ministry and service; and they are expected to exercise stewardship, being generous with resources.

In this passage from Luke, Jesus describes the expectations of his followers. He makes four radical claims:

1. You are going to have to hate your family in comparison with your love for Jesus.
2. You are going to have to carry your cross.
3. You are going to have to sell your stuff, laying it all down.
4. You are going to have to stay salty.

**Main Idea of the Series: It costs something to be a disciple of Jesus.**

As in verse 25, there is always a crowd following Jesus, people on the outside looking in. For them, the bigger the crowd the better the experience—they can blend in and be casual about Jesus.

Jesus has called us from the crowd to be his disciples. You may have been in the Christian crowd for a long time without ever surrendering to Jesus. In verse 26, Jesus says, “If anyone comes to me.” This is John 3:16 language—“whosoever believes.” There is an open invitation to anyone in the crowd. The language doesn’t discriminate—Jesus is looking at you as an individual.

**Main Idea of the Sermon: You must love Jesus more than any other person in your life.**

Jesus must be supreme over all other relationships. If Jesus is not in the driver’s seat, he’s not getting in the car

Is Jesus calling people literally to hate their family? No, rather he is using rhetorical language, hyperbolic overstatement, to make a point. Both the New Testament and the Old Testament call believers to love others and to honor father and mother. What’s being called for here is to love Jesus so intensely that all other loves look like hate in comparison.

Genesis 29:30-31, Deuteronomy 21:15, and Judges 14:16 all point to instances in which relationships are discussed in terms of these categories: love and hate. Matthew 10: 37 is clear: Jesus says, if you love your family more than me, you are not worthy of me. If forced to choose between your family and Jesus, Jesus wins every time. As J.C. Ryle puts it, the greatest foes to a man’s soul are sometimes those in his own house.

Verse 26 spells out each relationship. When we look at each individual category—mother, father, spouse, children, siblings—we see just how specific this calling is.

We should also consider this calling by turning it on its head—we should not only ask: do I have a mom or dad, but am I mom or dad who is making it easy or difficult for my children to grow in discipleship?

1. **Father:** a father represents family leadership, but no one can lead you like Jesus. A father has a **name** to protect, but a disciple has to make a decision—whose name will I make famous? My family's or Jesus'? A father must be willing to tell his children, "I want you to love Jesus more than you love me."
2. **Mother:** a mother has a **plan** for her children. She raises and teaches them; she is concerned for what they will do and how they will do it. A mother has a caretaking mindset, but no one can care for you like Jesus.
3. **Wife** (spouse): she has a **home** in mind and a future; she brings an "us-ness" to the relationship. You did not choose your mother or father, but you do choose your spouse--are you marrying someone who understands that you love Jesus more? Or will they insist on first place? We will crucify our marriage and offer it to Jesus.
4. **Children:** children want **attention**. Parents have the responsibility of leading children, not the other way around. Many parents have their identity rooted in their children, but this will drain you dry.
5. **Siblings:** brothers want **respect** and camaraderie; sisters want emotional **support**. A brother may live contrary to the gospel, but want you do condone his lifestyle. We must love Jesus more, the friend that sticks closer than a brother. Jesus will love, care, and lead better, represent a greater marriage, a more fruitful and multiplying life, and be a friend better than any brother or sister.
6. **Self:** we have an **image** to bear. We have love affairs with ourself, and we will love ourselves so much that there is no room for Jesus. Jesus calls for self-denial, the end of us.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Who is in the driver's seat of your life?
2. Do any of these family relationships strive for first place in your life? How can you align your loves with Jesus' calling?
3. Are you a father, mother, child, spouse, or sibling? How can you encourage your family members to love Jesus more?