

Count the Cost

Acts 16

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1. Jesus encouraged His followers to count the cost of following Him, knowing it would affect their whole lives and come with serious consequences.
2. Paul saw Timothy's potential and invited him on a dangerous journey. Timothy's circumcision reminds us to be sensitive to the culture around us and avoid unnecessary offence.
3. Although the goal in ministry is not attendance, sound Biblical teaching strengthens faith and encourages growth.
4. Even when our plans are well thought out (like Paul's), God may have other goals and close doors to things that seem good to us.
5. Discerning God's Will can be difficult. As His servants, we should remain faithful to His last instructions until He provides new direction.
6. Because Paul followed God's leading, the Western World was evangelized - reminding us that our response to God's call is never insignificant.
7. When you have clear direction from God, move forward and trust Him with the outcome. You'll know when God's opportunity is matched with His timing.
8. The lack of a synagogue in Philippi led Paul to adjust his strategy-he took the posture of a teacher not a preacher and met outside the city. This shift resulted in the salvation of many women and countless others through their faith.
9. Despite angry crowds, beatings, injustice, and imprisonment, Paul and Silas didn't let their circumstances shape their theology. They chose to evaluate their situation in light of what they knew to be true about God.
10. Because of Paul, Silas, and Timothy's commitment, the Gospel spread across Europe. Their story challenges us to ask, "What are we willing to do for the sake of God's Kingdom?"

GREEK & HEBREW WORDS

Krazo (krad´-zo) to “croak” (as a raven) or scream, to call aloud (shriek, exclaim): – cry (out)

Paçach (paw-sakh´) to hop, skip over; by implication, to hesitate;

QUOTES

“Any fool can sing in the day...” – Charles Haddon Spurgeon

“There comes into the life of every man a task for which he and he alone is uniquely suited. What a shame if that moment finds him either unwilling or unprepared for that which would become his finest hour.” - Winston Churchill, 1940

TODAY'S WORSHIP

Every Step
Because He Lives
O Praise the Name

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

The sermon begins with a focus on the cost of following Jesus. Compare the response given by the rich young ruler (Matthew 19:16-22) to Paul and Timothy. Why do you think someone would follow so many commandments, but be unwilling to sell their possessions? What are some other “lines in the sand” people have that may keep them from experiencing great usefulness?

Paul publicly aligned himself with Jesus, walked 1500 miles and was the instrument of God to change the face of Europe. What are some public steps of alignment you can make (or break) for kingdom purposes?

Read I Corinthians 9:19, 22. Timothy was circumcised in an effort to avoid any stumbling blocks when presenting the message of salvation to Jews. Do you recall any stumbling blocks challenging your ability to hear or respond to the gospel?

Paul and Silas could sing despite being beaten and imprisoned. Explain the difference between a theology based on circumstances vs. circumstances seen through what is known about God.

Do you feel that God is calling you to a specific task or asking you to make changes to adapt and prepare for a specific work? What is the task and how can others help you?

Timothy’s background uniquely positioned him to work alongside Paul in both Greek and Jewish cultures. The absence of Timothy being home to contribute to the well-being of his family was a great sacrifice. Also, the perils of traveling with Paul had great risks. Reflect upon those who make similar sacrifices today as missionaries or within the persecuted church. Discuss practical ideas on how to encourage and support them.