

Sunday, October 02, 2011

Jesus Should Always Get Our Highest Priority

by Jon Walker

Those who come to me cannot be my disciples unless they love me more than they love father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, and themselves as well.

(Luke 14:26 TEV)

Jesus will not share our affection for him with anyone else, not even our own families. If you are faced with a choice between loyalty to him and loyalty to your father or mother, sister or brother, you must choose Jesus.

If you are faced with a choice between your own interests and the interests of Jesus, you must choose for Jesus. Think about Peter warming his hands by the fire. Someone says, "Aren't you one of his disciples?" Will Peter choose for Jesus or for himself?

We face the same decision every day at school, at work, among our friends and even within our families. Jesus appears ruthless as he commands you to give preference to him over anyone else, including the greatest love of your life, your best friend, even your own mother.

But we misunderstand Jesus if we think *what appears to be ruthlessness* emerges from mean-spiritedness, self-interest, or even callous insensitivity. Jesus always has the endgame in mind, and he wants us with him in heaven, so he insists we re-centre into his image.

Jesus isn't saying we can't love others or make others a priority in our lives; he is saying he should be our highest priority. When you think of Jesus, could you ever think of him as having greater loyalty to anyone but the Father? Yet Jesus also loves us dearly, so much that he gave his life for us.

Signs Jesus may not be the highest priority in my life:

- There are Jesus things and secular things. I can keep them separate.
- I might miss out on something if I make Jesus my highest priority.
- Two people can share my highest loyalty: Jesus and _____.

In a conflict of loyalties, Jesus always gets the higher priority. Who or what gets the highest priority in your life?

Jon Walker is the author of [Costly Grace: A Contemporary View of Bonhoeffer's 'The Cost of Discipleship'](#) managing editor of [Rick Warren's Daily Devotionals](#). © 2011 Jon Walker. Used by permission.