

Holy Attention

Living the Liturgical Year

[Luke 14:25-33](#)

EXPLORING THE SERMON

- * What did you hear?
- * What did you think or feel about what you heard?
- * What is one thing you can take away from the sermon this week?

KEY VERSES

Now large crowds were traveling with him, and he turned and said to them, “Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions.

REFLECTION

This passage of parables is referred to as both “the cost of discipleship” and “the parables of grace.” The attention required for both the builder and the king to do their jobs well reminds us that being a true disciple requires paying attention to what it demands. When we live in a state of partial attention, it’s difficult for any one thing to receive our full focus. [As poet Mary Oliver put it](#), “attention is the beginning of devotion.” **What gets the most of your attention, and what’s your own version of distraction?**

Verse 26 is perhaps one of the most confusing in all of scripture: “Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple.” Jesus is calling us to recognize our default setting: measuring who we are based on where we come from, our status, or power. These conventional attachments hold us back from the life Jesus offers, while those who have nothing are more likely to jump at Jesus’ invitation. **What conventional attachments make it hard for you to accept Jesus’ invitation?**

Jesus invites us to a life made possible by grace, rather than by our default setting of control. The task before us is to find God’s presence in new ways as we recognize the constant attack on our attention. In addition to the means of grace we have been given through scripture, sacrament, and our church community, consider how you can implement each of these practices:

- 1) **Turn off notifications:** our phone are designed to interrupt us, take control about when to engage.
- 2) **Befriend boredom:** true of every hero in scripture; boredom opens us up to interruptions of grace.
- 3) **Prioritize connection over content:** content diminishes our attention, connection with others enhances it.