

We are looking at JC Ryles book entitled Holiness. Last week we saw that we are to endure *hardness*. suffer evils, that is evils of affliction, expect them, and encounter and patiently endure them. *2 Timothy 2:3 Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.*

We saw we are to run the race that is set before us *Hebrews 12:1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,*

We saw The principal fight of the Christian is with **the world, the flesh, and the devil**. These are his never-dying foes. These are the three chief enemies against whom he must wage war. Unless we get the victory over these three, all other victories are useless and vain. What would it profit a man to gain victory over poverty, to gain the whole world, and lose His soul. *Luke 9:25 For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?* It's not that God is against you having the necessities of life. However all these things are added when He is first in our lives. When we seek first His kingdom and His righteousness. All these things will be added unto us. For our heavenly father knoweth we need these things.

Today we are looking at the subject of THE COST

Luke 14:28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?

If someone is buying something wisdom would say count the cost. If I buy a piki will I be able to put petrol in. Will I be able to maintain it. Most people do that with natural things in their life. But have you ever considered or ask your self what does it cost to be a true Christian, to be a really Holy person. We will look at 3 Areas.

we will look, firstly, what it costs to be a true Christian.

If we desire to be truly holy, it is a good sign. We should thank God for putting the desire into our hearts. But still the cost ought to be counted. No doubt Christ's way to eternal life is a way of pleasantness. But it is folly to shut our eyes to the fact **that His way is narrow, and the cross comes before the crown.**

Firstly, before we move on let me clarify what I mean by the cost. I'm not talking about the cost for our soul, or the cost for our redemption. We all **know it cost nothing less than the precious blood of Jesus Christ**, to provide atonement and redeem us from hell. The Price was paid at calvary. He died in our place , we deserved death we were sinners. But the spotless sinless son of God paid the price. "We are bought with a price". Christ gave Himself a ransom for many.

But what is the Cost? We know to be a **nominal Christian** a Christian in name only **costs hardly anything**. There are people who go to church on Sunday, who live reasonably morally, this is the way of multitudes, If this is how we get to heaven then we need to alter the description of the way of life. "To wide is the gate and broad is the way which leads to life".

But that's not what the bible says there is a cost to be a real Christian according to the bible standard. There are enemies to be overcome, **battles** to be fought, **sacrifices** to be made, an **Egypt to be forsaken**, a **wilderness to be passed through**, a **cross to be carried**, a **race to be run**.

Let's look at some of the costs?

it will cost us our ***self-righteousness***. We must cast away all pride and high thoughts, and pride of our own goodness. We must realise it is nothing I have done that I am saved, **I am, and I was a poor sinner saved only by grace**. I had truly gone my own way, gone astray like a lost sheep. **I MUST give up all my trust in my own goodness** and respectability. Even In my church going, in my taking of the the sacraments. And trust nothing but the Lord Jesus Christ. *I once knew a man who was a Catholic. He said to me I'm more born again than you. Because I take Holy communion 3 times a week... His faith was in the partaking sacraments.* In His diligence to take them He thought He deserved salvation.

To be a true Christian it will cost us our self-Righteousness. Its by grace through Faith.

It will cost us our sins. We must be willing to turn from our old lives and turn to the Lord. To **give up those things we know are bad habits** and are **wrong in Gods sight**. The true Christian sets their all to obeying God , They crucify the flesh and put to death old desires. They **never overlook** any known sin and **big or**

small they count them all as deadly enemies. They **never tolerate even secret sins**. or **Hidden sins**. it is a constant struggle to gain mastery over all sin, we must keep up a perpetual warfare against sin.

“Cast away from you all your transgressions.”—“Break off thy sins and iniquities.”—“Cease to do evil.”—(Ezek. 18:31; Daniel 4:27; Isa. 1:16.)

Job 20:12 Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth, though he hide it under his tongue.

Some **love their sins they are sweet in their mouth**, like one who keeps a **piece of candy under their tongue**, rolls it about in their mouth, **enjoying the taste**, making it last they don't want to swallow it it's too pleasing to them.

In the same way some are highly pleased with their sin, and hold fast to them in hearty love, and with determination hold them fast, and improve them to the greatest delight and advantage. **Turn from it, Put it off, fight against it.** But it doesn't affect anyone, It does no harm to others, Sin is a killer, it will kill you. The wages of Sin is death. **Hidden sin.** It reminds me of a story I once heard. In a Zoo the favourite time of day was when they fed the animals. People were especially fascinated by the snakes. A mouse was thrown into the cage and in panic the mouse would quickly dig and dig and cover and hide its self under the top soil. Now thinking no one can see, I'm safe – and begin to relax. When suddenly the snake would strike without mercy and swallow the mouse. You are never safe from sin, when you least expect it will swallow you alive. **Repent** – keep up the warfare against it. Never tolerate it.

it will cost a man his love of ease. We must be careful to maintain a successful race towards heaven. We must take heed and be on guard against his behaviour every **day every hour**, In **public at home**, with **strangers and with friends**. Diligence is needful not Laziness. We must be diligent with our prayers our devotional times. **Diligent with the use of the Lords Day.** Is the Lords Day special to us? Is it set aside for **public worship, Private devotion**, Is the Lords Day a blessing to us? Is the Lords Day **A time when we look heavenward.** **A time to have communion with God.**

Some are don't make it special, they don't really see the Lords Day as a gift - They come to church in the morning but in the afternoon rush to the market to sell their

goods. **No rather be diligent with the use of the Lords day.** Which is a gift from God for us. diligence is required we have to do our part to benefit from it. Diligence to Feeding and reading Gods Word. Diligence to prayer. Diligence to thanksgiving. **But forget not** the gathering together of the saints for public worship. *Hebrews 10:25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.* Don't desert the church when you should be helping.

It will cost a man *the favour of the world.* He must decide He would rather be belittled for keeping Gods ways than siding with the World. He must be willing to suffer ridicule slander and it may be that they are even hated. We must not be surprised to find that people mock our Christianaty.

None of us is greater than our Lord. *Isaiah 53:3 He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.*

To be a true believer who stands for truth will cost us the favour of the World. But Id far rather have the favour of God who is Eternal, than the favour of man who is here today and gone tomorrow.

The Cost is to take up our Cross and follow Him.

Luke 9:23 And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

THESE words of our Lord Jesus Christ **apply to all** ranks and classes without exception. They are intended for **every age and time**, and for **every branch of the visible church.** **To *take up our cross means* being willing to endure anything or everything for Christ's sake.**

There may be a cost to be a true Christian, but nothing is more worthwhile, nothing more rewarding. Not just an earthly reward but an eternal reward.

Next, we must look at the subject of **GROWTH.** *2 Peter 3:18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*

Growth in grace is not interesting to the one who only goes to church once a Sunday, **There Christianity is like their Sunday Cloths they put it on once a week, then laid aside till next Sunday.**

But we are to hunger and thirst after righteousness. **We are to desire Growth, Growth in Grace.** We must ask ourselves are we growing and becoming more like our Lord and Saviour.

Are we making progress in our Christianity. How are our lives built? Time is fast vanishing away and the day is approaching when it will be revealed whether we built upon the Rock or upon the Sand. **We must examine our foundation** and how we are building, are we making progress in our faith.

“growth in grace,” as an essential part of true holiness. When we speak about growth in grace **we mean simply this**, —that his **sense of sin** is becoming deeper, **his faith stronger**, his **hope brighter**, his **love more extensive**, his spiritual-mindedness more noticeable. We are going on from strength to strength, from faith to faith, and from grace to grace.

This concept of growth is built upon Scripture. *1 Thessalonians 4:10 And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more;*

We examine ourselves and ask the question is there increase and do I **abound in love** one toward another. **“Increasing in the knowledge of God.”** (Col. 1:10.) “Having hope, when your faith is increased.” (2 Cor. 10:15.) **“Desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby.”** (1 Pet. 2:2.) **Growth:** - but *this* one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, - I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. - Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: Philip 3 :15-17.

Growth in Grace is the best evidence of Spiritual health. Think how worried a mother would be about her young baby’s health if there was no growth, if the baby put on no weight. would she not be concerned about the health of the child? It applies whether are talking about a Child a flower or a tree if there is no growth then something is very wrong. When we increase and grow in grace its pleasing to the Lord.

We need to ask ourselves what are the marks that we are growing in Grace. We are very bad Judges of our own condition. Others often know us better than we know ourselves. Of course, if we want to know our progress and condition we look into the mirror of the Word of God.

One sure mark of Growth is increased Humility. They are ready to admit their unworthiness without the Lord. The nearer we draw to the Lord the more we see our imperfections. When we are first converted, we think we are not so bad. But the longer we walk with the Lord the more we realise how perfect he is and how many shortcomings we have. If we are growing in grace, we will have increased Humility.

If we are growing in grace **another mark is increased faith and love towards Christ.** One growing in Christ **rejoices more and more in Him**, and sees more and more of His wonder attributes. His love, His power, His heart, His intentions, His offices as a **substitute**, an **intercessor**, a priest an advocate, a physician, a shepherd, a friend. **These truths are unfolding and growing in the soul.**

If you are growing in Christ, there is increased knowledge of Christ.

Increased Love for the Brethren and for the Lord. **Increased Zeal** to do Gods Work are all marks of Growth.

If we desire to Grow in Grace how do we do it? What is the means by which we grow? We must put away all thinking, that if I'm not growing then it's not my own fault. We must remember the words of *Proverbs 13:4 The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat. Diligence simply means constant effort.*

There is one thing essential to growing in Grace. Diligence in private means of grace - that simply means private prayer, private reading of the Scriptures, and private meditation and self-examination. The man who does not take special care about these three things must never expect to grow. **Here are the roots of true Christianity. If we get this wrong everything is wrong.**

It is an absolute necessity to take time and commune with God

*Psalms 4:4 Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still.
Selah.*

Private devotion must receive our first attention if we are going to grow.

How profitable it is to us that we would examine ourselves and ask are we growing in Holiness. Desire it Nothing is more worthwhile. Nothing so rewarding both now and eternity amen.