



COUNT THE COST

Going to a shop,
you may see many
things that you'd
like to have.



There's one snag though – they all have a price tag.

- Many people get themselves into deep debt because they don't "count the cost" when they purchase something.
- Easy availability of credit cards has exacerbated the problem where people are in an economic mess because they failed to count the cost.





**But if you feel that what you are getting is valuable
– you will gladly count the cost and pay the price.**



AN UNFINISHED HOUSE

Imagine starting to build a house without first working out if you'll have enough money to complete it?

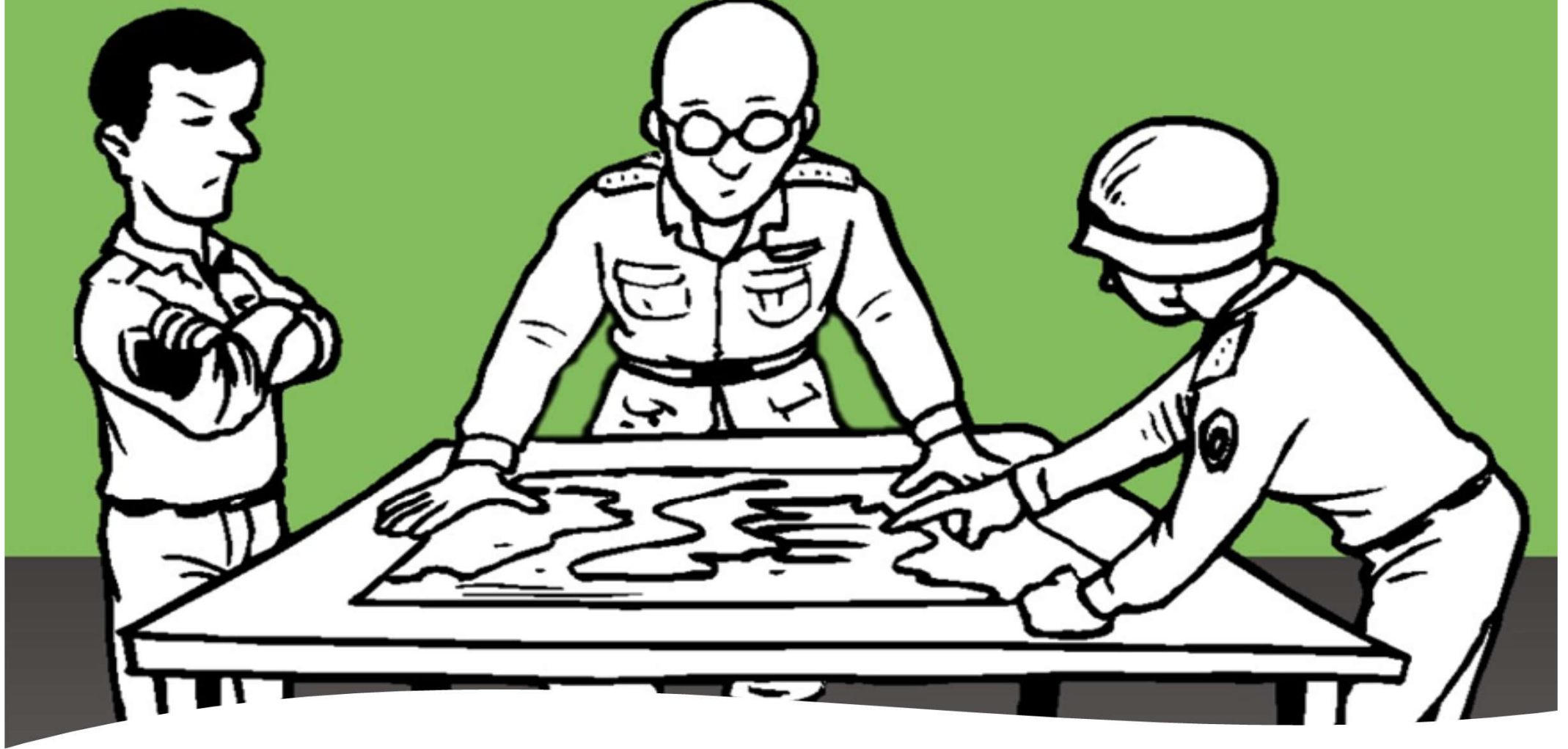
- Jesus says:
 - “Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won’t you first sit down and estimate the cost to see if you have enough money to complete it? For if you lay the foundation and are not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule you, saying, ‘This person began to build and wasn’t able to finish.’” Luke 14:28-30 (NIV)



A COSTLY WAR

- Sometimes nations go to war without “counting the cost” in human life. Years later when the war is still dragging on – they express regret.





Luke 14:31-33 (NIV) “Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Won’t he first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. **In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples.”**



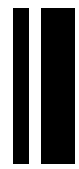
You might be saying, “Isn’t salvation free? What’s this cost you’re talking about?” When Jesus said we must count the cost, he wasn’t talking about **becoming a Christian**, but about **being a Christian**. Salvation is free – but there is a cost to discipleship.

DISCOUNT DISCIPLESHIP

- Now for many in the West, being a Christian may seem to have little or no cost at all.
- To a lot of South Africans, being a Christian means little more than ticking a box on their census form (“none of the above” Christians).
- That’s why (according to StatsSA) 84.2% of South Africans claim to be Christians,¹ but only 56.4% say they attend church regularly (at least once a week).²

¹ <https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/south-african-culture/south-african-culture-religion>²
Ibid. General Household Survey

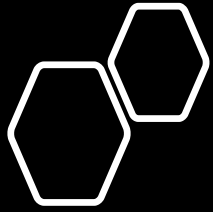




DISCOUNT DISCIPLESHIP

- To make things worse, in our Western society some have tried to cheapen the cost of discipleship in order to entice people and draw in the crowds.
- We live in the age where preachers are told to have “seeker-sensitive” churches, where the church is viewed as a business and the congregation as consumers.





As consumers must be given what they want, God needs to be presented as 'consumer-friendly'. Most 'consumers' want to be made to feel comfortable and 'positive' - even if they haven't repented. And so God is presented as a nice grandfather, whose main concern is to make you happy. They talk exclusively of God's blessing and avoid any mention of suffering or persecution.



**DISCOUNT
DISCIPLESHIP**





DISCOUNT DISCIPLESHIP

- But there is a cost to true discipleship and Jesus didn't try to hide that from would-be disciples. He made it clear that following him could entail losing friends and family and even your life.
- Converts in countries with Islamic or atheistic governments more fully understand these words of Jesus about counting the costs involved in being a disciple.

THE WORD 'DISCIPLINE' IS DERIVED FROM 'DISCIPLE'.

- WIKIPEDIA: In its original sense, **discipline** referred to systematic instruction given to **disciples** to train them as students in a craft or trade, or to follow a particular code of conduct or 'order'. ¹
- The disciple is that one who has been taught or trained by the Master, who has come with his ignorance, superstition, and sin, to find learning, truth, and forgiveness from the Saviour. Without discipline we are not disciples, even though we profess His Name and pass for a follower of the lowly Nazarene. In an undisciplined age when liberty and license have replaced law and loyalty, there is greater need than ever before that we be disciplined to be His disciples. ~ V. Raymond Edman ²

¹ [http:// en.wikipedia.org/ wiki/ Discipline](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Discipline)

² The Disciplines of Life (Van Kampen Press, Wheaton, IL, 1948)



**HAVE YOU
COUNTED THE
COST?
WILL YOU PAY
THE PRICE?**

- So are you committed to following Jesus as a disciple?
- Have you counted the cost? Are you prepared to pay the cost, whatever it may be?

**WHAT COULD I LOSE, IF AM FULLY
COMMITTED TO FOLLOWING JESUS?**

WHAT COULD I LOSE, IF AM FULLY COMMITTED TO FOLLOWING JESUS?

- Your family (husband, wife, children, brothers, sisters, parents...)
- Your friends (and your place in society)
- Your job
- Your wealth
- Your comforts
- Your property
- Your freedom
- Your life



There are examples in the Scriptures, and over the course of history of people losing these because they have chosen to follow Jesus.

FAMILY



- The context of these parables about counting the cost is interesting. Right before he told the stories of the man building a tower and the king going to war, Jesus noted the “large crowds” following him and said something that’s not very seeker-sensitive:
 - Luke 14:25-26 (NIV) **Large crowds** were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: “If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters - yes, even his own life - he cannot be my disciple.”
- So just before his parables about counting costs, Jesus mentions one of the biggest obstacles to discipleship; not persecution from our enemies but our **love of our families**.

- Now Jesus is using hyperbole here as he clearly doesn't expect us to hate our families – that would contradict other Scripture. He means that we cannot put our families (or our very lives) before our decision to follow him.

- Matt 10:37-39 (NIV) “Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.”



FAMILY

- In the following account Jesus warns a man who was putting family matters before the kingdom of God. Again Jesus fails to be seeker-sensitive:
 - Luke 9:59-60 (NIV) He said to another man, "Follow me." But the man replied, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God."
- It is believed that this man's father was not already dead i.e. he was not just going to attend the funeral. Rather he was saying that he would wait until his father died until he followed Jesus. Others feel that he might have lost his inheritance if he didn't stay with his father until he died. Either way, Jesus shows that proclaiming the kingdom of God took preference.

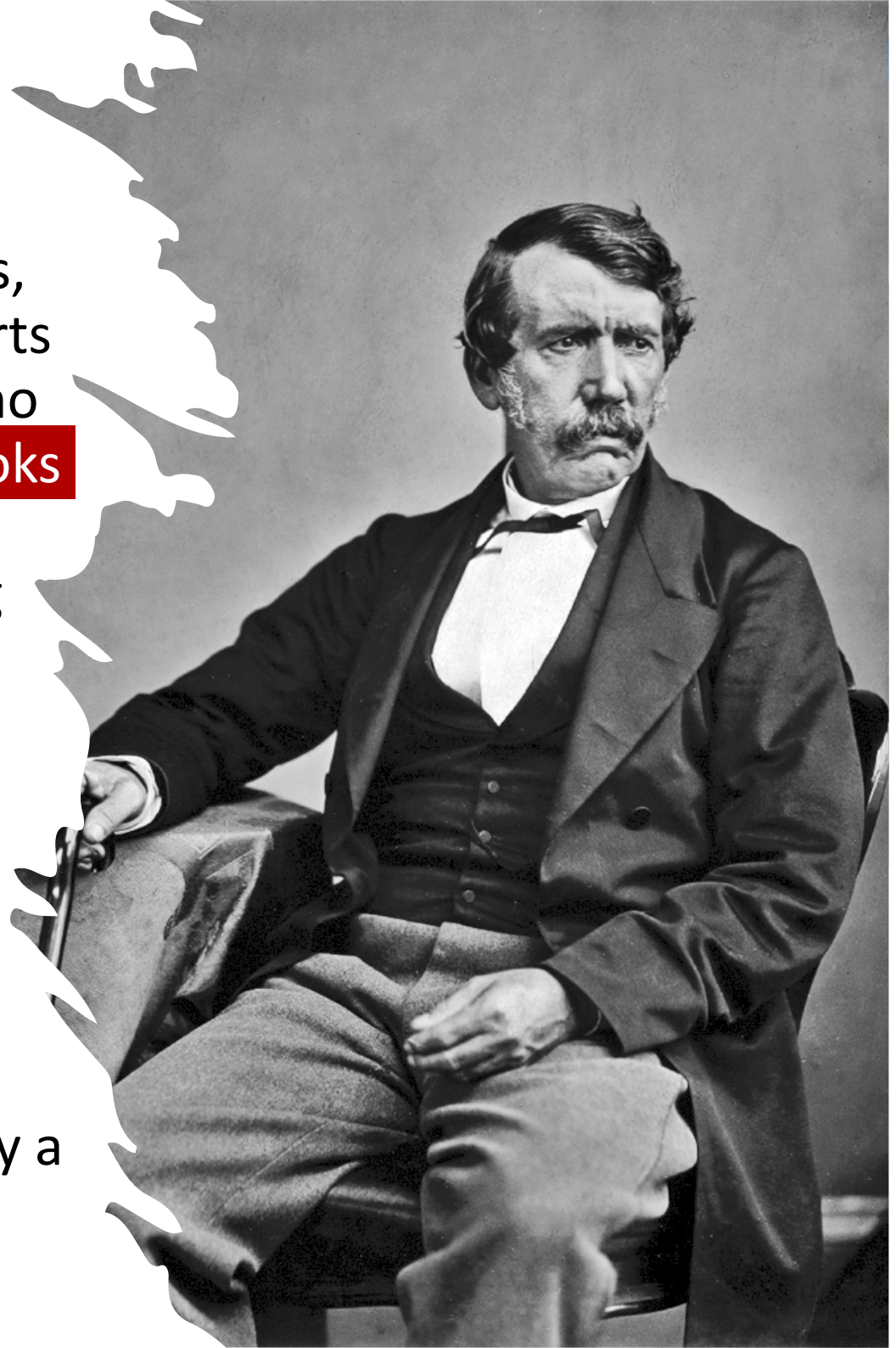
FAMILY



- Immediately afterwards Luke records how Jesus rebukes another man who was also putting his family before following him.
 - Luke 9:61-62 (NIV) Still another said, “I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say good-bye to my family.” Jesus replied, “No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.”
- This man offers to follow Jesus but sets a condition. Jesus shows him that **discipleship is unconditional**.

SACRIFICE?

- When looking at Jesus' responses, remember that he knew the hearts of men. Jesus' words "No one who puts his hand to the plow and **looks back**" seems to indicate that this man felt some **regret** in following Jesus - along with a sense of **sacrifice**.
- David Livingstone (1813–1873), who lost his beloved wife Mary to fever on the mission field in Africa, said, "If a commission by an earthly king is considered an honour, how can a commission by a Heavenly King be considered a sacrifice?"



FAMILY

- In Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, animist (and even Jewish) cultures, becoming a Christian can mean being ostracized and disinherited by your family.
 - Matt 10:34-36 (NIV) “Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to turn ‘a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law - a man’s enemies will be the members of his own household.’”
 - Matt 10:21-22 (NIV) “Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.”

FAMILY

- Even in “Christian” countries, if you become too ‘extreme’ in your commitment to Jesus, well-meaning family may try and discourage you.
- **Do you put your family before serving God?**





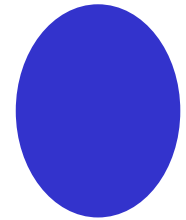
FRIENDS



- Generally if you become a committed Christian, many of your friends may not be keen to “hang out” with you any more.
- **Are you prepared to be a social outcast for Jesus?**
- **Do you deny Jesus in front of your friends?**
- Matt 10:32-33 (NIV) “Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven.”

YOUR JOB

- Do you put your job before serving God?
 - Do you stay away from fellowship because your job is too demanding and you're too tired?
 - Do you compromise your Christian ethics to get a deal or because of pressure from your employer?
 - Do you lie to customers to cover up your mistakes?
 - When asked for your opinion, do you give the politically correct answer or your real Christian convictions?



- What if following Jesus could cost you your job?
- Not possible in the West? Here are a few cases from so called 'Christian' countries:
- Michigan, US (2008) - A high school wrestling coach was dismissed after complaints from Muslim parents that his former assistant was trying to convert Muslim students. *
- UK (2012) - For helping homosexual men become straight, Christian psychotherapist, Lesley Pilkington, was accused of "professional malpractice" and being "negligent", "dogmatic" and "unprofessional".²



YOUR JOB

¹ www.christiantoday.com ² [https:// independent.co.uk](https://independent.co.uk)

YOUR JOB

- Pilkington had been secretly recorded by an undercover journalist from The Independent during a counselling session. The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy - withdrew her membership. ¹

¹ Ibid.

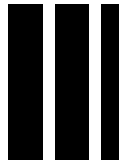


YOUR JOB

- UK (2017) - For offering to pray with patients before surgery Sarah Kuteh, a Christian nurse for 15 years, was charged for gross misconduct and fired from a hospital in Dartford, Kent . *

* [http:// www.telegraph.co.uk](http://www.telegraph.co.uk)





IMPRISONMENT

- A Christian member of the Finnish Parliament is facing 6 years imprisonment for allegedly committing 3 crimes, including “hate speech,” for sharing her opinion on marriage and human sexuality on social media, on television and in a pamphlet. *

* [https:// christianpost.com/ news/ christian-mp-faces-prison-for-tweeting-bible-verses-on-marriage.html](https://christianpost.com/news/christian-mp-faces-prison-for-tweeting-bible-verses-on-marriage.html)



IMPRISONMENT



- The politician, who is a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland ... has been under police investigation since June 2019 for publicly voicing her opinion on marriage and human sexuality in a 2004 pamphlet, for comments made on a 2018 TV show, and a tweet directed at her church leadership. In 2019, Räsänen wrote a tweet questioning the leadership of her church for sponsoring the LGBT event “Pride 2019,” it was accompanied by an image of a Bible verse. As a result, she was accused of hate speech and interrogated by the police. *
- Räsänen said “I do not consider myself guilty of threatening, slandering or insulting anyone. My statements were all based on the Bible’s teachings on marriage and sexuality.” *

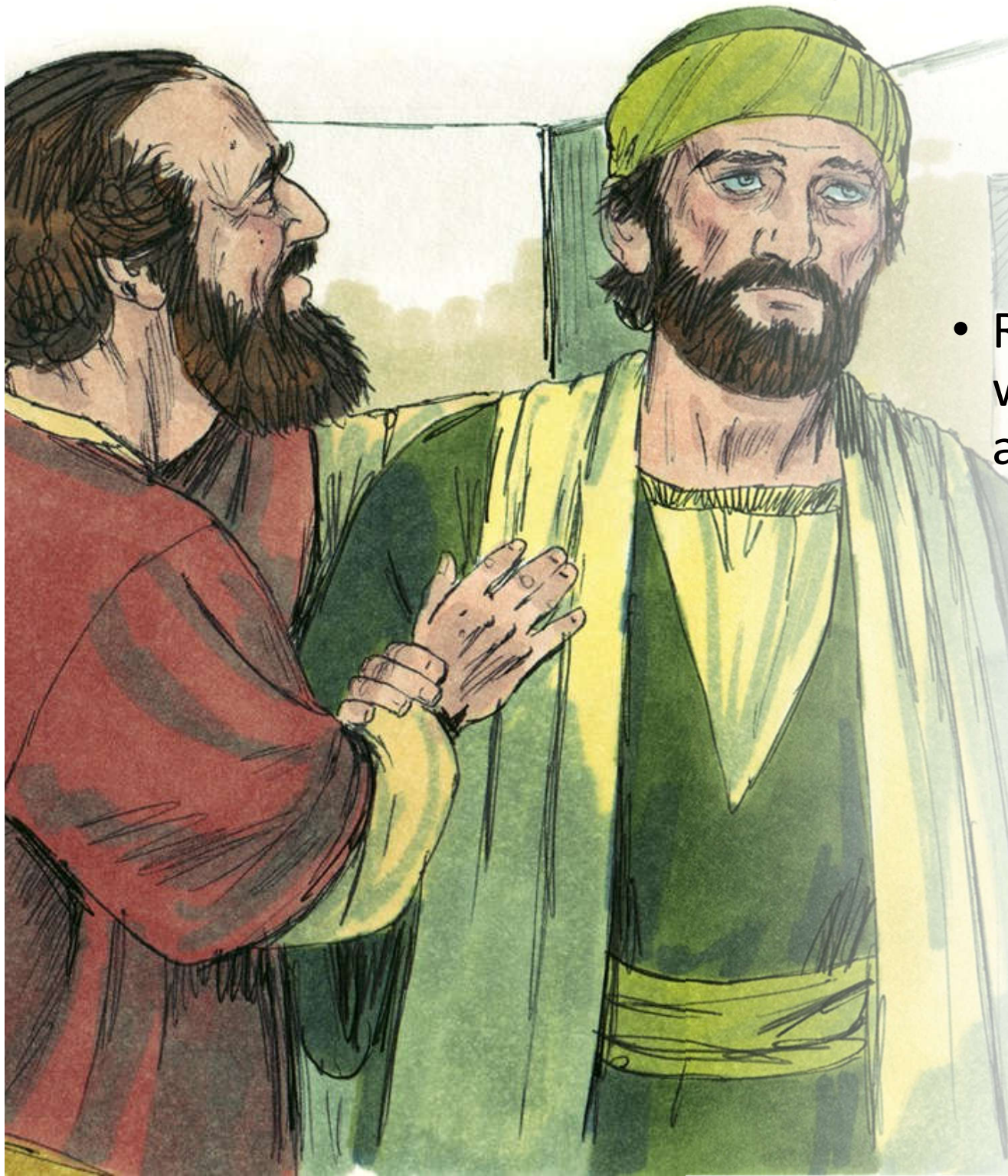
* Ibid.

WHAT IF SERVING JESUS COST YOUR PROPERTY?

Heb 10:34 (NIV)
You suffered along
with those in prison
and joyfully accepted
the confiscation of your
property, because you knew
that you yourselves had
better and lasting
possession.



A Christian home
burned down by
extremists in India



IS IT WORTH THE COST?

- Right at the outset, God warned Paul that there was a cost to following him:
- Acts 9:15-16 (NIV) But the Lord said to Ananias, “Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. **I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.”**

IS IT WORTH THE COST?

- Like the man building a house in Jesus' parable, Paul had counted the cost – and said that it was worth it.
 - Rom 8:18 (NIV) I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.
- In fact, after speaking of his pedigree and status which he gave up to follow Jesus, Paul writes:
 - Phil 3:7-8 (NIV) But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ...

COMFORT

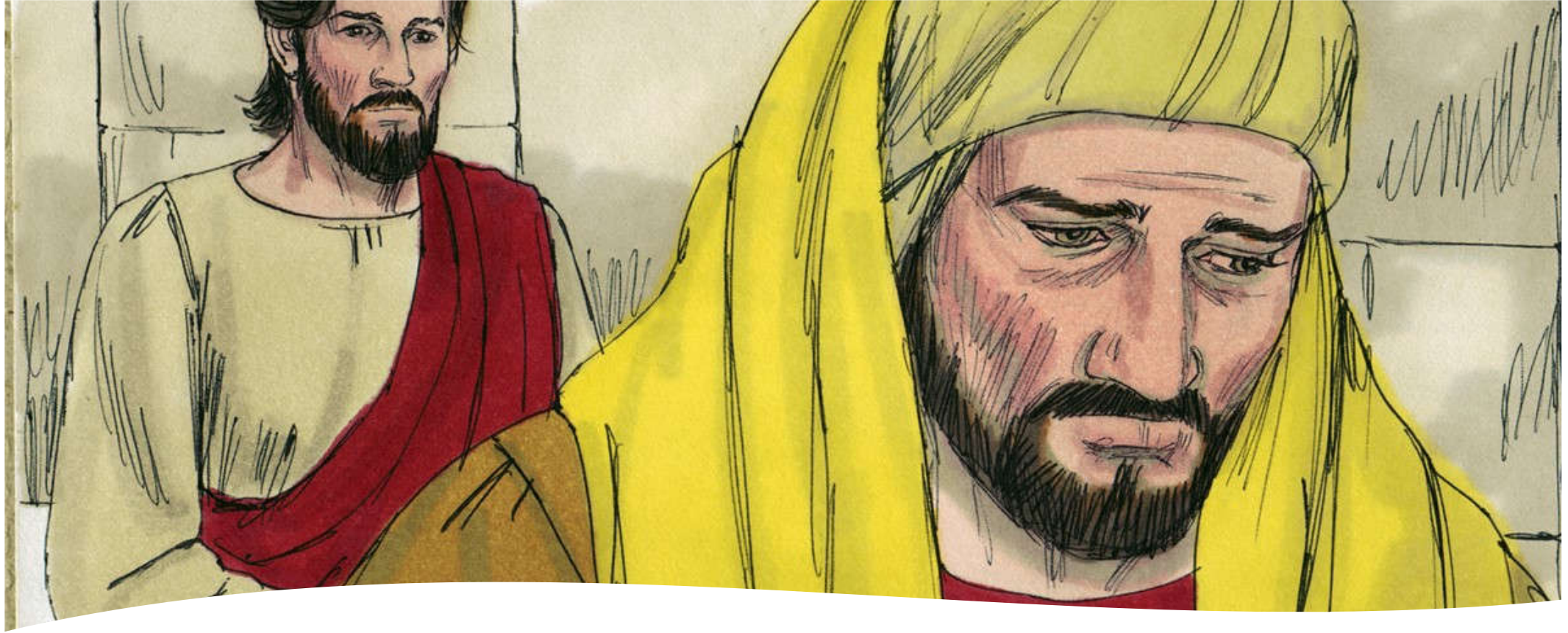


- Discipleship might cost you your comfort. Jesus is approached by a man who offers to follow Jesus anywhere. Again some might think from Jesus' response that he could have 'benefited' from a seminar on being seeker-sensitive.
 - Luke 9:57-58 (NIV) As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."
- Unlike many televangelists today, Jesus and his disciples didn't check into the 5-star hotels with their entourage when they arrived in town. Knowing the man's heart, Jesus knew that comfort was important to him and was making sure that he understood the possible costs of following.

COMFORT

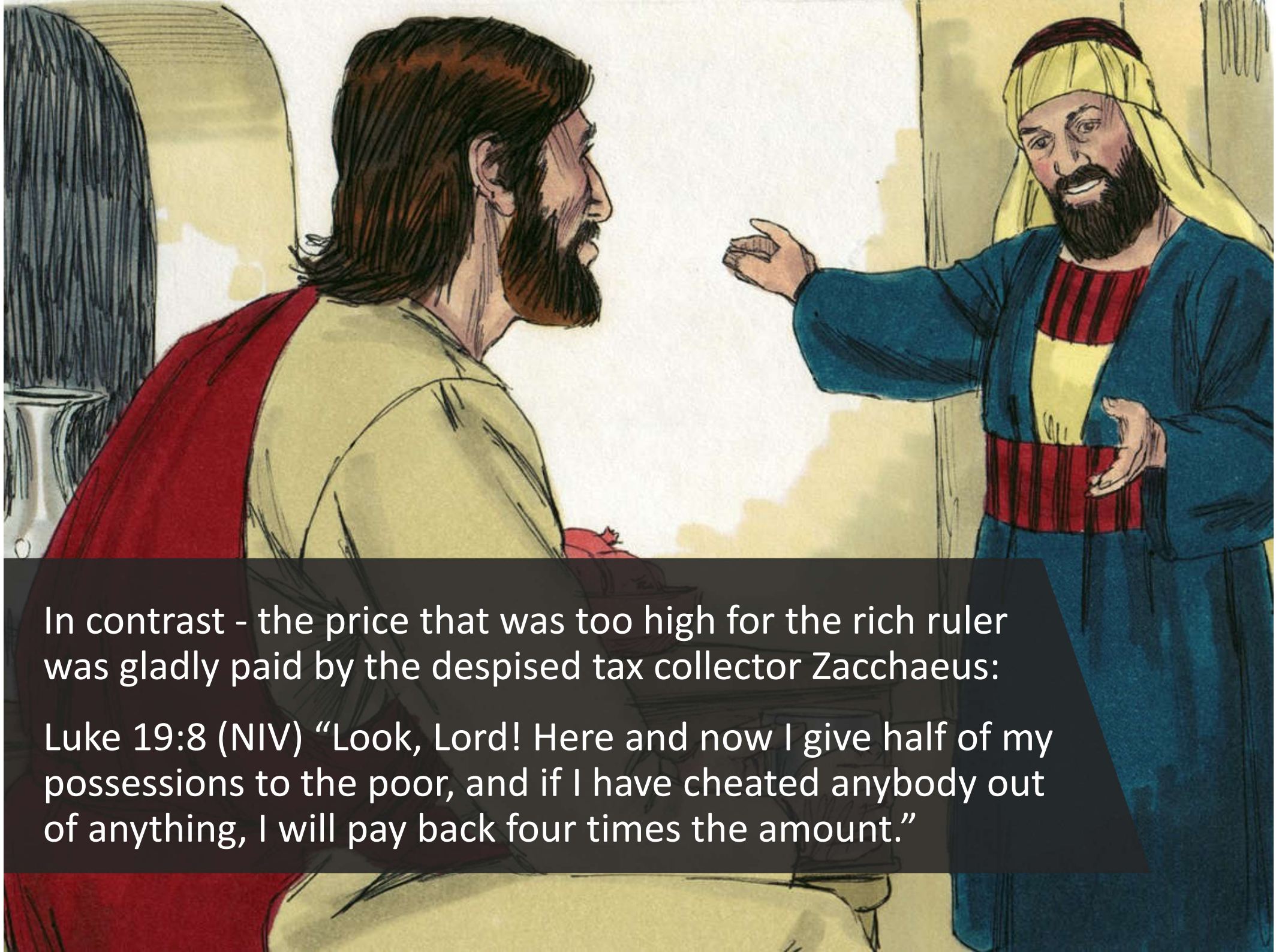
- **Do you put your comfort before serving God?**
- Are you prepared to sacrifice some comfort because of your commitment to Jesus?
- Or do you stay in bed when it's too cold to go to church?
- And you can't find time to pray and read God's Word because of your 'commitment' to your TV schedule.





IS IT WORTH THE COST?

- The rich young ruler counted the cost and wasn't prepared to pay it. The cost of discipleship was his comfort and wealth. The price was too high for him.
- Matt 19:21-22 (NIV) Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth.



In contrast - the price that was too high for the rich ruler was gladly paid by the despised tax collector Zacchaeus:

Luke 19:8 (NIV) “Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.”



IS IT WORTH THE COST?

- What the rich young ruler refused to do, C.T. Studd (1860-1931) did. The famous cricketer forsook his fame and family fortune and went to China, India and Africa as a missionary. One day he said, “I know that cricket would not last, and honour would not last, and nothing in this world would last, but it was worthwhile living for the world to come.”
 - In his famous poem, he wrote, “Only one life 'twill soon be past. Only what’s done for Christ will last.”
- He declared: “If Jesus Christ is God and died for me, then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for Him.”

IS JESUS WORTH IT?

- Nik and Ruth Ripken's lives as missionaries were upended when their 16-year-old son died as a result of a severe asthma attack. His tragic death filled their hearts with a compelling question: Is Jesus worth it?
- Looking for an answer Nik visited 72 countries to interview more than 600 believers who had suffered persecution for their faith in Jesus. "How does faith survive, let alone flourish in the places of the world that are overcome with the darkness of sin, despair and hopelessness?" he asked.



THE INSANITY OF GOD



- Nik Ripken would write a book called “The Insanity of God”. He relates how these persecuted believers taught him “how to follow Jesus, how to love Jesus, and how to walk with Him day by day **even when it doesn’t make sense.**”
- Ripken asked why Christian workers in a Muslim country closed to the Gospel would gather to share communion after a Muslim extremist shot 4 colleagues, killing 3 of them?
- Why would Ripken himself move his family away from the safety and comfort of a Kentucky town in the US to settle in Africa, where they encountered sickness and death and witnessed unspeakable suffering among their neighbours and friends?
Insanity is the only plausible explanation by the world’s standards, he says.

THE INSANITY OF GOD

- Why would a man like Dmitri, imprisoned for leading an illegal house church in Yaroslavl, Russia, insist on singing a praise song for years, even though prison guards beat him and fellow inmates ridiculed him?
- During Communist rule, the Soviet police had arrested Dmitri and put him in a prison filled with hardened criminals. A thousand miles from home, he suffered regular beatings and the jailers demanded he renounce his faith in Christ and confess to being a Western spy.
- They even deceived him into thinking they had arrested his wife and that she had been murdered.



Dmitri portrayed in the film “The Insanity of God”.

THE INSANITY OF GOD

- But every morning for 17 years, Dmitri stood at attention by his bed, faced the East, lifted his hands to heaven and sang a song (the Heart Song) to Jesus. He often had food and human waste thrown into his cell in attempts by other inmates to stop his singing.



THE INSANITY OF GOD

- Then, one day, after finding a piece of paper on which Dmitri had written every Bible verse, story and song he could recall, his jailers beat him severely and threatened him with execution. When Dmitri made it clear he would neither deny Jesus nor sign a confession, guards dragged him from his cell for execution.
- Outside the cell, however, the guards stopped dead in their tracks. Amazingly the 1,500 hardened criminals who had ridiculed him for nearly 2 decades stood at attention in their cells. They faced the East, raised their arms and began to sing the song they had heard Dmitri sing every morning.
- “Who are you?” a guard demanded Dmitri. “I am a son of the Living God, and Jesus is his name!” he replied.

THE INSANITY OF GOD

- They returned Dmitri to his cell. Some time later, he was released. That's the kind of influence for which Christians should strive, Ripken says. But, it only comes through "insane" obedience to God's commands.¹
- Approximately 9,000 people groups representing nearly 4 billion people live where there are few believers and few, if any, churches. In places hostile to the Gospel, believers share their faith at risk to their and their families' safety. Ripken says, "... take Jesus across the street. If we are fervent in sharing our faith and are rejected for who Christ is, we can certainly experience in America what it's like to be persecuted," he says. "You don't have to get on a plane. The only reason we are not being persecuted in America is that we are not witnessing."¹

¹ <http://www.bpnews.net/42160/insanity-of-obedience-explored-by-ripen>

PERSECUTION

- “About 70 percent of those who practice their faith live in environments of persecution,” Ripken says. “Persecution described normal Christianity in the first century after Christ, and it describes normal Christianity today.” He says the Christians he met suffered for two simple reasons: They chose to follow Jesus, and they chose to not keep silent about his resurrection.”¹
- “One of the men I interviewed, a man who had followed his father into prison and torture, looked at me and said. ‘Nik, don’t you give up in freedom what we never give up in persecution,’ and that is our witness to the resurrection of Jesus Christ.”¹

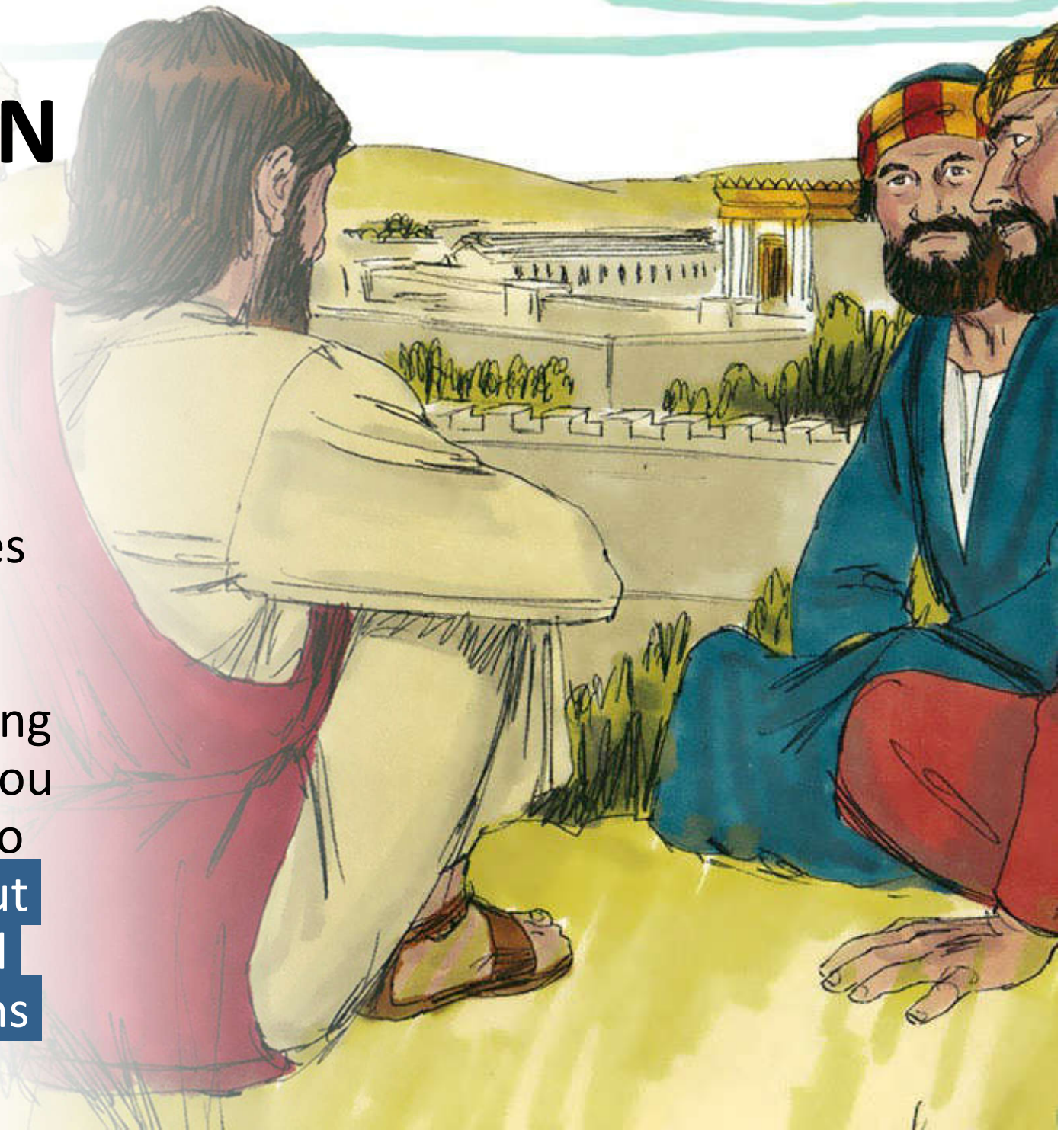
¹ Ibid

PERSECUTION

- Paul had warned the Thessalonians of the cost of discipleship, which included persecution:
 - 1 Thess 3:3-4 (NIV) so that no one would be unsettled by these trials. You know quite well that we were destined for them. In fact, **when we were with you, we kept telling you that we would be persecuted.** And it turned out that way, as you well know.
 - 2 Tim 3:10-12 (NIV) You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions, sufferings - what kinds of things happened to me in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, **the persecutions I endured.** Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them. In fact, **everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted...**

INCREASE IN PERSECUTION

- Jesus prophesied an end-time increase in persecution.
- Matt 24:7-9 (NIV)
“There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth pains. Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me.”



THE 5TH SEAL

- This persecution spoken of by Jesus corresponds to the 5th seal in Revelation (Rev 6:9-11).
- As the Rapture happens at the 6th seal, this is something that Christians will experience before the return of Christ.

Birth Pangs (Matt 24)

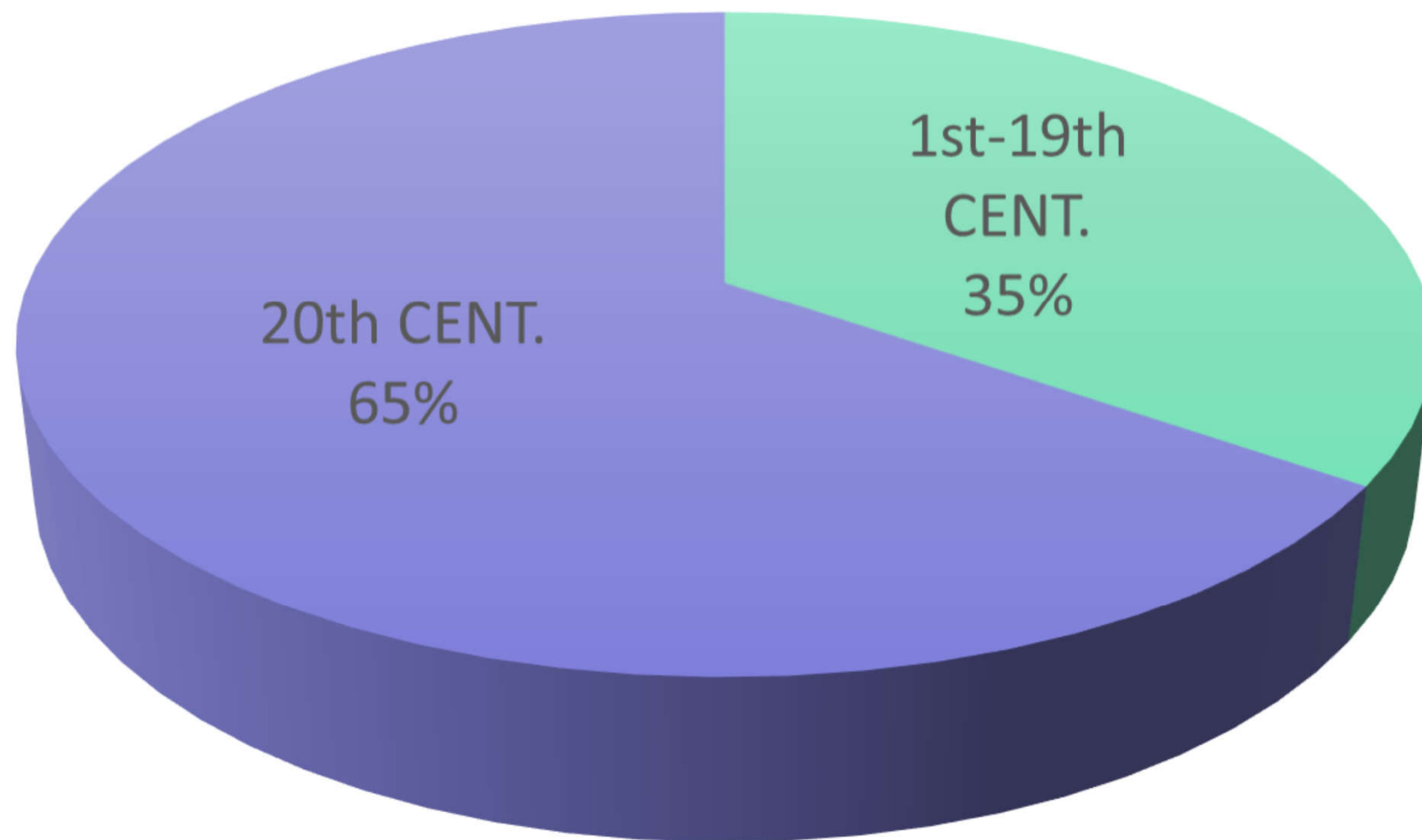
7 SEALS						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
FALSE CHRISTS	WARS	FAMINE	PLAGUE	PERSECUTION	RAPTURE	7 TRUMPETS



INCREASE IN PERSECUTION

- In line with Jesus' prophecy in Matthew 24, persecution will increase – in frequency and intensity – as his Second Coming draws near. According to the Guardian and Open Doors:
 - Persecution of Christians around the world has increased during the Covid pandemic, with followers being refused aid in many countries, authoritarian governments stepping up surveillance, and Islamic militants exploiting the crisis. *
 - There was a 60% increase over the previous year in the number of Christians killed for their faith. *
 - More than 340 million Christians – 1 in 8 – face high levels of persecution and discrimination because of their faith, according to the 2021 World Watch List compiled by the Christian advocacy group Open Doors. *

* [https:// www.theguardian.com/ world/ 2021/ jan/ 13/ christian-persecution-rises-as-people-refused-aid-in-covid-crisis-report](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jan/13/christian-persecution-rises-as-people-refused-aid-in-covid-crisis-report)



- But surely in our enlightened age, persecution is decreasing as people become more tolerant of each other?
 - There were more 20th Century martyrs (45.4 million of the total 70 million) ¹ than the previous 19 centuries combined (65%).

¹ Source: World Christian Encyclopedia (2001) ² <https://opendoorsusa.org/persecution>

WORLD WATCH LIST 2021

- Since 2002, Open Doors has compiled a World Watch List of the worst countries in regards to Christian Persecution. Here are the Top 20 (highlighting the ones in Africa).

1) North Korea	8) Iran	15) Maldives
2) Afghanistan	9) Nigeria	16) Egypt
3) Somalia	10) India	17) China
4) Libya	11) Iraq	18) Myanmar
5) Pakistan	12) Syria	19) Vietnam
6) Eritrea	13) Sudan	20) Mauritania
7) Yemen	14) Saudi Arabia	

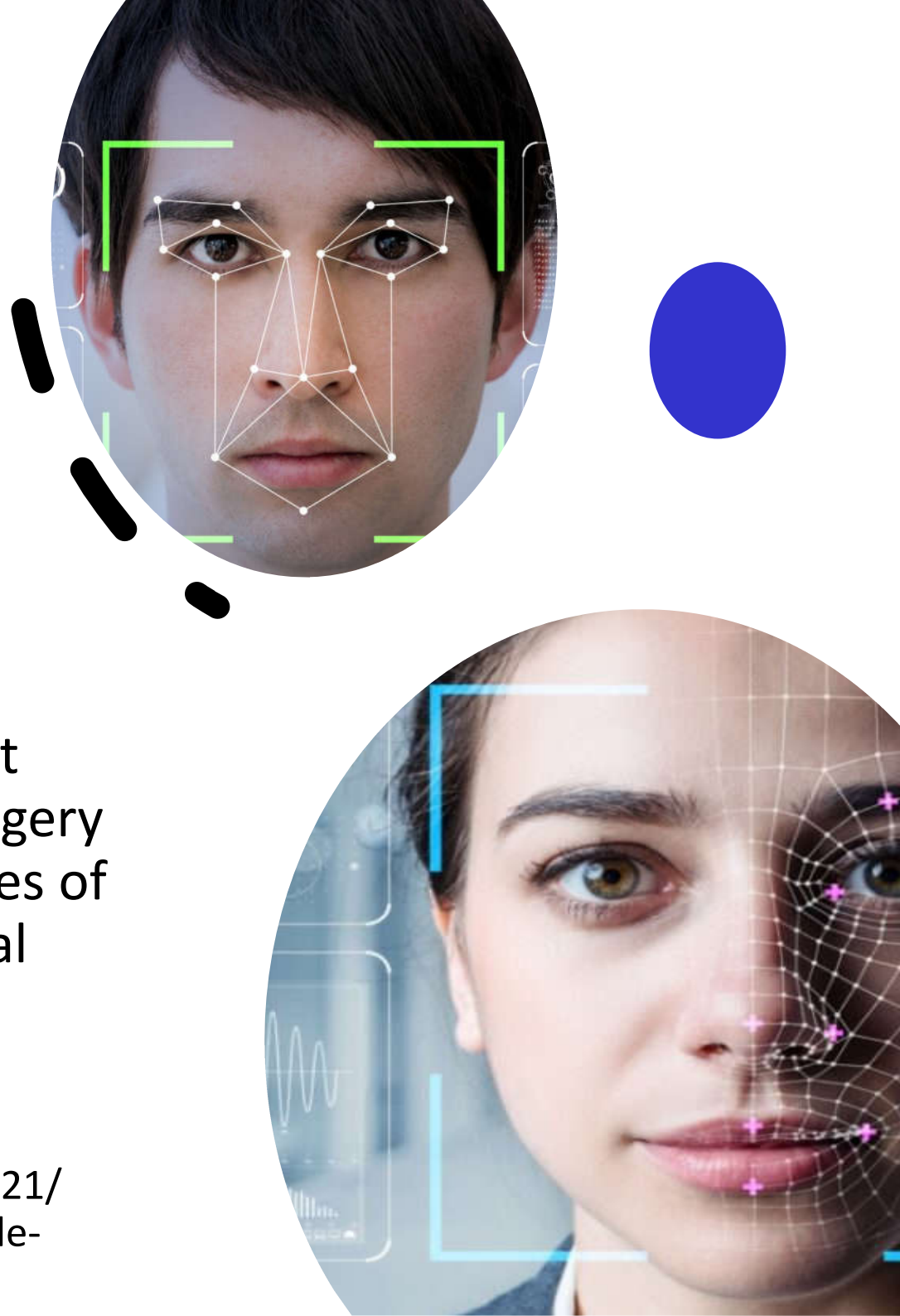
FACTS ON PERSECUTION

- A woman in India watches as her sister is dragged off by Hindu nationalists. She doesn't know if her sister is alive or dead. *
- A man in a North Korean prison camp is shaken awake after being beaten unconscious; the beatings begin again. *
- A woman in Nigeria runs for her life. She has escaped from Boko Haram, who kidnapped her. She is pregnant, and when she returns home, her community will reject her and her baby. *
- A group of children are laughing and talking as they come down to their church's sanctuary after eating together. Instantly, many of them are killed by a bomb blast. It's Easter Sunday in Sri Lanka. *

* <https://www.opendoorsusa.org/christian-persecution/>

- China has re-entered the World Watch List Top 20 for the first time in a decade. The government has increased surveillance, with **facial recognition systems installed in state-approved churches in some areas and online services monitored.**
- The government's campaign to "sinicise" Christianity has meant crosses and other Christian imagery have been replaced with pictures of President Xi Jinping and national flags, and Communist officials selecting church leaders. *

* [https:// www.theguardian.com/ world/ 2021/ jan/ 13/ christian-persecution-rises-as-people-refused-aid-in-covid-crisis-report](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jan/13/christian-persecution-rises-as-people-refused-aid-in-covid-crisis-report)



PERSECUTION IN AFRICA

- More than 9 out of 10 of the global total of 4,761 deaths were in Africa.
- Across sub-Saharan Africa, Christians have faced 30% higher levels of violence than last year at the hands of Islamist militant groups who took advantage of lockdowns and governments weakened by the crisis, the report says. In Nigeria, the number of Christians killed has nearly tripled to 3,800 recorded deaths.
- Christians in numerous countries in Africa and Asia have been refused Covid-related aid – at times by government officials, but more often by village heads or committees. In Kaduna, Nigeria, families from several villages reported receiving one-sixth of the rations allocated to Muslim families. *

* [https:// www.theguardian.com/ world/ 2021/ jan/ 13/ christian-persecution-rises-as-people-refused-aid-in-covid-crisis-report](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jan/13/christian-persecution-rises-as-people-refused-aid-in-covid-crisis-report)

WHAT IF SERVING JESUS COST YOUR LIFE?



- Most often persecution takes the form of imprisonment, abuse, and hostilities. In some cases, however, Christians are asked to face more than scorn, prison, or the loss of health – they are asked to face death.¹
- So while modern seeker-sensitive evangelists might say: Follow Jesus and you'll get guaranteed wealth, health and prosperity...
... the Scriptures teach: Follow Jesus and you may lose everything and everyone you have – yes, even your own life (see Luke 14:27).

¹ Ibid.

The bloody aftermath on Palm Sunday (2017) after a suicide bomber murdered worshippers at the Saint Mark's Coptic Cathedral in Alexandria, Egypt.

Price
YOUR
LIFE

Matt 10:28
(ESV) And do
not fear those
who kill the
body but cannot
kill the soul.

WHAT IF SERVING JESUS COST YOUR LIFE?

YOUR LIFE

- A Muslim group in Somalia with allegiance to Al Qaeda has sworn to rid their country of all Christians. So, certain death will come even if a piece of Christian literature is found associated with a person. ¹
- in April 2014 Sufia, ² a young African Christian woman was killed in Mogadishu (Somalia). She was dragged from her home by armed men who shot her and fled. Her only offence was her Christian faith.

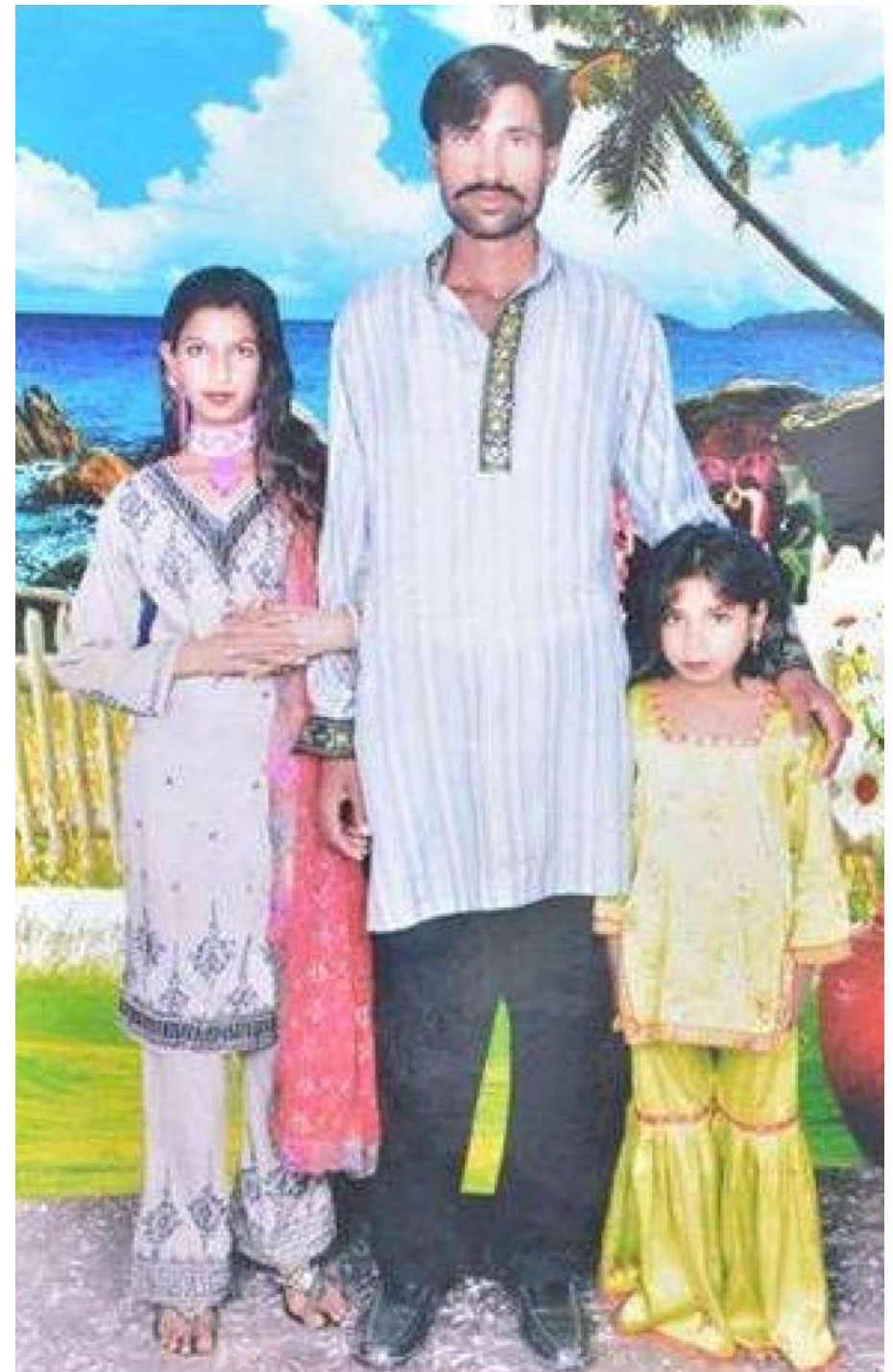
¹ <http://sharefaith.com/blog/2016/01/20-christian-woman-died-martyrs>

² Name changed to protect those associated with her



4 Nov 2014 - Shahzad Masih and his pregnant wife Shama, Pakistani Christians, were murdered after being falsely accused of blasphemy. The couple was beaten and then lynched by a mob who first paraded them naked and then set them on fire. They left behind 3 orphaned children. ¹

¹ [https:// www.dawn.com/ news/ 1456442](https://www.dawn.com/news/1456442)



YOUR LIFE

Guinea in Africa is an 85% Muslim nation. For 2 weeks missionary Michael Loua , 47, of Jacksonville, Texas, was held without warrant or trial in a filthy prison cell in Conakry, Guinea. On 14 November 2010, under cover of night, soldiers went to the prison where he was chained like an animal. They tortured him and shot him dead.





YOUR LIFE

- On 22 Sep 2013, two Islamic suicide bombers entered the All Saints Church in Peshawar, Pakistan. 81 Christians were killed in the ensuing attack. The 2 sisters pictured were among the victims. They were new Christians, having accepted Jesus after receiving a copy of “The Story of Jesus”, a booklet that explained the Gospel. ¹

¹Ibid

YOUR LIFE

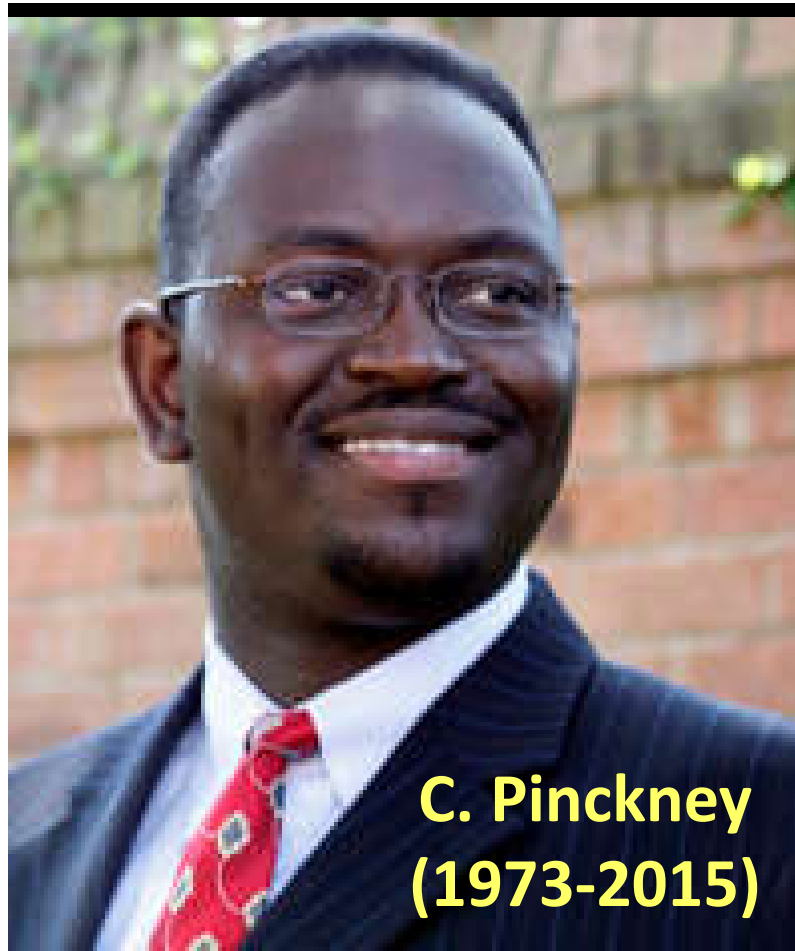
Neima
Abiad Idris
(1965 –
2014)

- Known as the Peace Singer in her Sudanese village of Kadir, Neima led a choir of ladies who sang the songs she wrote about peace, forgiveness, faith and perseverance.
- Even though it would have been easier to run away to a garrison city, she sought reconciliation with the genocidal Islamic warring factions by demonstrating a Christian witness of her word and witness. She died from a bomb that hit her home. ¹

¹ <http://sharefaith.com/blog/2016/01/20-christian-woman-died-martyrs>



On 17 June 2015 the Bible study group in Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina was happy to invite in Dylann Roof into their group. Their white supremacist guest would later return to kill 9 congregants, including these 6 women and the senior pastor, Clementa C. Pinckney. While others might hate the killer, the reaction of the church members was to extend forgiveness.



**C. Pinckney
(1973-2015)**



YOUR LIFE



- On 28 March 2014, 25 year-old Mary Sameh George travelled to Cairo, Egypt, to deliver medicine to a sick, elderly woman. Once some suspected Muslim Brotherhood members “saw that she was a Christian [because of the cross hanging on her rear-view mirror], they jumped on top of the car, to the point that the vehicle was no longer visible,” an eyewitness said. “The roof of the car collapsed.” ¹
- They pulled her out of the car and “kept beating her, kicking her, stabbing her with any object or weapon they could find.” ¹ Mary was shot and her car burned.

IS IT WORTH THE COST?

- Jesus said that some would find the cost (trouble or persecution) too high:
 - Matt 13:20-21 (NIV) “The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. **When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away.**”
- Jesus speaks of those who grow cold because of the peer pressure of a society which has increased in wickedness.
 - Matt 24:10-13 (NIV) At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other... **Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold,** but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.



IS IT WORTH THE COST?

- Nate Saint [1923-56], the missionary pilot to Ecuador who was martyred along with Jim Elliot, said:
 - “People who do not know the Lord ask why in the world we waste our lives as missionaries. They forget that they too are expending their lives... and when the bubble has burst, they will have nothing of eternal significance to show for the years they have wasted.”



**Roger
Youderian**

**Pete
Fleming**

**Jim
Elliot**

**Nate
Saint**

**Ed
McCully**

- 28-year-old Jim Elliot was one of 5 evangelical missionaries to Ecuador who were killed while attempting to bring the gospel to the Waodani people. Jim Elliot said, “He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose.”



COUNT THE COST

Jesus said, “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but **whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it.**” (Mark 8:34-35)

Matt 19:27-29 (ESV) Then Peter said in reply, “See, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have?” Jesus said to them, “Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name’s sake, will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life.”

WORTH THE COST



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