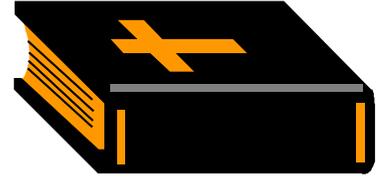

5



Counting the Cost

The decision to become a Christian is the most important choice you will ever make. It should not be a shallow one. It will mean a real change for you. It will effect your whole lifestyle. It will determine your eternal destiny. Be sure that you understand what is involved in this decision. See Luke 14:25-30 (83); Luke 9:57-62 (75); 2 Peter 2:20-21 (255). (Numbers in parentheses are page numbers for the NEW AMERICAN STANDARD NEW TESTAMENT - Paperback edition, published by the International Bible Society.) Consider carefully each point below.

1. Analyze your motives. Is this decision being made just so you can be like your friends? Is someone pressuring you to make this decision against your will? Are you really serious? Are you motivated by the fact that, more than anything else, you want to be right with God? John 6:24-26 (105)

2. Realize that it is not always easy to be a Christian. The Christian life is not passive. You must be active. It is sometimes difficult. There will be resistance to your new life. Sometimes you will be misunderstood. Sometimes you may be falsely accused. Opposition is not the objective but it is often the by-product of following Jesus because there are those who do not like what He stands for. See Matthew 10:34-36 (11); John 15:18-20 (119); 2 Timothy 3:12 (231); 1 Peter 4:3-4 (252); 2 Timothy 2:3-7 (230).

3. Realize that the Christian life is a whole new way of living. You will become a new person with new attitudes and objectives. It starts with repentance and develops into a changed life. See Acts 3:19 (130); Romans 12:1-2 (175). Jesus will have first place in your

life. Your first love will be for Him. When there is a conflict, you deny yourself. See Matthew 10:37-39 (11); Galatians 2:20 (204).

4. Even though it is sometimes hard, being a Christian is worth it. You will be rewarded here and now and in the end you will have eternal life. See Mark 10:28-30 (50).

5. You will not have to do it alone. Jesus promised that He will pull the load with you and that He will go all the way with you. See Matthew 11:28-30 (12); Matthew 28:20 (36); 2 timothy 4:16-18 (231).

6. To help you further consider this important decision, answer these questions:

- a. Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God?
- b. Do you want to have sin out of your life?
- c. Do you understand that baptism is for the forgiveness of your sins and that you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit into your life?
- d. Are you willing for Jesus to be the Lord (Master) of your life?
- e. Do you understand that becoming a Christian adds you to Christ's church and that you will have the responsibilities of a church member? See Acts 2:47 (129)