

ONE-MINUTE DEVOTIONS FOR THE CHURCH MUSICIAN

September 5, 2010

For Sunday, September 5: Luke 14:25-33

The last several weeks we have been encountering in Luke some tough prescriptions for Christian behavior. These are snapshots of Jesus at his counter-cultural best.

In this week's reading we find him going utterly against our cherished notion of family and community. It's almost the antithesis of "It takes a village...." In essence he asks each of us, Are you someone who takes pride in our ancestry and family's social status? If so, you are as foolish in your misplaced priorities as the builder who starts an ambitious project but lacks the funds to complete it.

In other words, we are guilty of investing our energy and resources into that which cannot ensure the successful outcome of the larger picture of true discipleship.

How do we achieve a radical re-orientation of these priorities? Jesus tells us: by discipleship that consists of carrying the cross. Of course, when Jesus said this to the throngs who were traveling with him, he was not referring to his own death. Rather, his exhortation urged them to live from the perspective of one sentenced to crucifixion. What good in such a situation are family ties? All that matters is the quality of one's commitment to Jesus.

In the music we choose and in the texts we sing, let us not shirk from Jesus' uncompromising instructions about how we are to follow him. Our lives depend on it.

*Then let us follow Chris, our Lord,
and take the cross appointed,
and, firmly clinging to his word,
In suffering be undaunted.*

-- Johann Scheffler, "Come Follow Me, the Savior Spake"