



Daily Verse and Comment

[Luke 14:26-33](#)

(26) "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. (27) And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. (28) "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? (29) For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, (30) saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.' (31) "Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Will he not first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? (32) 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. (33) In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.

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[Jesus](#) draws attention to the disciple's closest relatives, those a person would normally expect would be those most likely to give comfort and aid in a time of need. Yet, in this case, the irritants were differences regarding deeply held religious beliefs and practices. To many of the new converts, the realities of the pains to which the church was exposed came “home” in an uncomfortable way. Their unconverted family members sincerely believed that the Judaism they practiced, delivered to the Jews through the great [Moses](#), was the only true, God-given religion on earth.

Many new converts' unconverted family members did not graciously accept the unexpected changes that had entered their relationship, and they reacted emotionally. The converts soon found themselves living with enemies in their households. As one can imagine, these family persecutions were quite personal. The converts, caught in divided families, may not have been

treated violently, but they were considered traitors to what all the other family members believed the Temple, priesthood, and sacrificing stood for.

This reaction happened because the Jewish religion was, in reality, spiritually corrupt and almost thoroughly anti-[God](#). Had not the Jewish religious leadership just proved that by sending God in the flesh to an agonizing death because they failed to recognize God when they saw and heard Him? The anti-God attitude that the Jewish religious leadership tapped into and stirred against Jesus as He was tried before Pilate was more widespread and deeper than it may have seemed on the surface. Animosity toward the converts spread quickly through the communities of Judea.

It was not long before the Jews excluded the converts from any activities that involved the revered Temple. Though most of the converts may not have had to endure violent persecution at the hands of someone like Saul, they did endure emotional persecutions within their own families—it must have felt as if they were living in an alien world. The personal, emotional cost to those in this situation may have been quite high.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:

[Why Hebrews Was Written \(Part Four\)](#)

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