

Study Notes: Building in Babylon: The Cost of Following Christ - Ps Bevan Kay

Message Summary

The world's culture, represented by Babylon, demands our devotion by offering counterfeit promises like freedom, belonging, and success. However, it hides the true cost of these compromises until the price has already been paid.

In contrast, Jesus makes the cost of following Him completely clear upfront. He invites us to deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow Him, recognising that discipleship requires laying down our own desires to embrace His will.

Though the cost of following Jesus is absolute surrender, the cost of settling for Babylon's counterfeit is far greater. By holding true to God's word and living out genuine faith in a culture that does not honour Him, we expose the hollowness of the world's promises.

Key Points

1. **Babylon hides the fine print.** The world offers appealing counterfeits like belonging and pleasure, but hides the true, hollow cost until after we have already compromised.
2. **Jesus tells us the cost up front.** Discipleship is an open invitation that explicitly requires us to completely renounce our old selves, willingly take up our cross, and continually follow Him.
3. **Jesus asks us to count the cost.** We must evaluate what we are building our lives upon, knowing that gaining the whole world is worthless if it costs us our soul.
4. **In Babylon, we expose the counterfeit by living the real thing.** We overcome culture not by arguing with it, but by standing out and living genuine, uncompromising faith right in the midst of it.
5. **It's worth it.** Even when we fail or bow to pressure, Jesus graciously offers restoration, and choosing to walk in His purposes is always worth the price.

Discussion Questions

1. The message highlighted that Babylon hides its true cost in the fine print, offering a counterfeit reality that looks better than it is. In what areas of life do you find the culture's promises most tempting to compromise with?
2. Jesus explicitly calls His disciples to deny themselves and take up their cross. What does it practically look like for you to lay down your own desires to follow Jesus this week?
3. We expose the counterfeit of Babylon not by shouting at it, but by living the real thing amongst it. How can our Small Group support one another in shining our light and standing out in our daily environments?