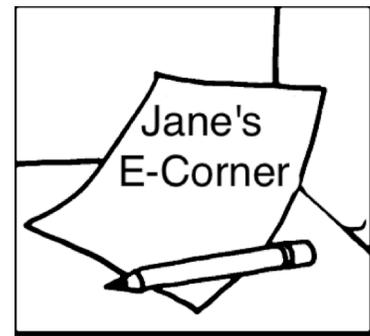


Dear Friends,

Today I am reading Luke 14:25-33

*Now large crowds were traveling with him; and he turned and said to them, "Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a*

*foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him, saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.' Or what king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand? If he cannot, then, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for the terms of peace. So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions.*



I generally eat lunch with my family on Sundays after church. This past Sunday, while we were sitting at a restaurant enjoying family time, our conversation turned to the situation in Syria. I have dear friends whose son-in-law is Syrian and this situation strikes close to home for them. I said to Andy, "You are a member of Congress. How are you going to vote on the issue of Syria?" And we began to talk about



the pros and cons of US military action in Syria. It is a situation with no easy answers--and it seems to be more difficult because the international community hasn't agreed on the response. Many people think that our international friends are not going to be there with us. All that to say, I'm reminded of the parallels with this Scripture--the king must calculate whether the resources he brings into battle are sufficient. Jesus uses this as an illustration of someone who needs to think through his position before going "all in." The stakes are high.

Jesus reminds us that the stakes are high in our discipleship. He wants us to go "all in." And we live in a world of ever-increasing violence. And our friends and our families even might not be there with us. Jesus is asking for our total commitment to follow him and he knows it is not always easy. Jesus does not want to destroy families; Jesus wants to create a new family, built on love. As disciples, committed to being "all in," we learn to give up our need for more stuff, our

yearning for success, our petty jealousies, our denigrating stereotypes, our prejudices, our hatred. Jesus wants us to be fully informed on what it means to be "all in."  
I'm "all in." I hope to see you there!!!

**PRAYER CONCERNS:**

Barbara Treadway, Johnson City Medical Center.

Ava Grace Bowling, NICU, Johnson City Medical Center

Guy Calton has cancer (requested by Johnny Qualls)

Johnny Thomas has leukemia (requested by Johnny Qualls)

All Soldiers home and abroad (requested by Steve Robinson)

Unspoken requests, God knows our hearts and knows the need

**ANNOUNCEMENTS/UPCOMING CALENDAR**

September 7, Tree Street Yard Sale

September 8, District Conference, 2 pm

Churchwide Picnic, Rotary Park, 5 pm

September 10, Church Council, 7 pm

September 15--Confirmation Class Begins for 6th-7th graders

Wednesday Night Fellowship Supper and Bible Study has started. Tonight is the first night of the classes--Love to Pray, Engage the Poor, Radical. Its not too late to sign up!

"Preach the gospel at all times and when necessary use words." St Francis of Assisi

Blessings,  
Jane Taylor  
First United Methodist Church  
Johnson City TN