CHEAP GRACE

Cheap grace is the deadly enemy of the church. We are fighting today for costly grace. “Cheap grace is the grace we bestow on ourselves. Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, communion without confession. Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate.

Costly grace… is the kingly rule of Christ, for whose sake a man will pluck out the eye which causes him to stumble, it is the call of Jesus Christ at which the disciple leaves his nets and follows him.” Dietrich Bonhoeffer in *The Cost of Discipleship*.

It is cheap, not because it cost Jesus so little, but because we value what he did for us so lightly. The Lord knew we would value him so little. It was not only Judas who valued him so lightly, so he used the plural pronoun “them” in the following quote. “I said to them, “If it is good in your sight, give me my wages; but if not, never mind!” So they weighed out thirty shekels of silver as my wages. Then the LORD said to me, “Throw it to the potter, that magnificent price at which I was valued by them.” So I took the thirty shekels of silver and threw them to the potter in the house of the LORD..” (Zechariah 11:12-13). Five Hundred years before it happened, Zechariah knew that “Lordly price”, that “thirty pieces of silver” which Judas took from the Jewish high court to betray Jesus. After such a “high value”, Judas was sick inside his gut because of what he had done. “Then when Judas, who had betrayed Him, saw that He had been condemned, he felt remorse and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, “I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.” (Mat. 27:3-5). Judas was just beginning to understand how little value he had placed upon Jesus. How about we today? Have we begun to see how little we have valued the grace that Jesus offers? We sell Jesus’ grace at auction prices, cut rate. Yet, costly grace will costs a man everything. Jesus said to a man one time, “Looking at him, Jesus felt a love for him and said to him, “One thing you lack: go and sell all you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.” (Mark 10:21). How can Jesus ask this? Is it not because he has already given up heaven to come to earth? He can therefore ask us to give up earth, it’s only earth. Giving up earth for heaven sounds pretty cheap to a man who has given up heaven already. I’m feeling a little sick now, a little like Judas in my gut. How little have I valued him who valued me so much. He gave up heaven for me, but I want earth and Jesus. My hands are not big enough, I must choose. I’m not letting go of Jesus. Good bye earth. Dan Peters