

The Cross of Discipleship

Scripture Reading — Luke 9:23-27

*Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.
— Luke 9:23*

It's not easy to be a follower of Jesus. Often we think about the benefits and blessings of following Jesus. But there's a significant cost in following him too.

Jesus said that being a disciple means denying ourselves and taking up our cross. Being a disciple is about more than denying ourselves things. It may include that, but Jesus said we need to deny ourselves. We need to reject anything that pleases ourselves more than him. Along with that, we need to take up our cross. The cross means suffering and rejection, and that's what Jesus calls us to endure. Sometimes we talk about a problem as our "cross to bear," but Jesus is talking about suffering for being his followers, his disciples.

The cost of discipleship is radical. It involves daily sacrifice and denial. Following Jesus is not a one day a week discipline. It's not simply devoting a part of each day to Bible reading and prayer. It means living for Christ twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week—at home, at work, at school, and in our neighborhoods. It involves letting him control our thoughts, words, and actions. And it includes everyone who claims to be a disciple.

Why would anyone consider carrying a cross for Jesus? Because he carried his cross and suffered for us. Jesus gave his life to save us. Can we live our life for him?

Prayer

Lord Jesus, your love for us is amazing. Help us to love you by denying ourselves and being willing to sacrifice all for you. In your name, Amen.

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