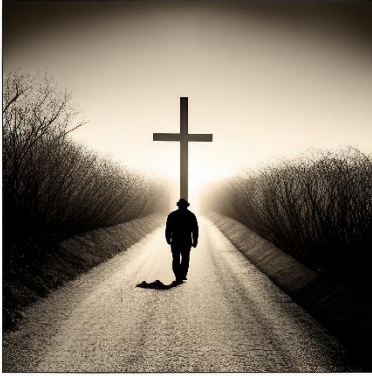


A True Disciple of Jesus Christ



To be a true disciple of Jesus Christ requires dedication and sacrifice. We must deny ourselves and make room for Him in our lives, no matter what it costs us. To bear our cross means to accept hardship, put aside our selfish desires, and show love and compassion. We must also be willing to give up all material possessions if He asks it of us. Anyone who does not prioritize Jesus in their life and puts other things in His place cannot be His disciple. Being a disciple isn't easy, but it is worth the effort, for it is through obedience that we can become closer to our Heavenly Father. Dedication and faith can make anyone a faithful follower of Jesus Christ.

Matthew 16:24 (KJV): "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." This scripture is an essential guidepost for being a true disciple of Jesus Christ.

Mark 8:34 (KJV): "And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."

Luke 9:23 (KJV): "And he said to them all If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."

If anyone wanted to be a disciple of Jesus, he made it clear that there were three things they must do: Deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow him. Doing these things was so crucial to the life of discipleship that it is recorded in three of the gospels: Matthew 16:24, Mark 8:34, and Luke 9:23. By denying themselves, Jesus was teaching his disciples to put God and His will first in their lives and reject the world's values. Taking up one's cross meant living a life of sacrificial love and obedience, even if it cost them much or led to suffering or persecution. And following Jesus meant walking with Him and His teachings as the primary guide in life and decision-making.

In other words, Jesus was calling his disciples to a new way of living, one focused on courage, self-sacrifice, and obedience to God's will rather than following the world's ways. What an incredible call to holiness and faithfulness! As we strive to follow Jesus, may we be reminded of these words and strive to deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow Him.

Luke 14:26-27 (KJV): "If any man comes to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple."

In Luke 14, Jesus does not say we should hate ourselves or our loved ones. Instead, He asks us to love Him more than anything else and even more than our families. For example, suppose your family members are trying to take you away from living a life of faith in Jesus Christ. In that case, you must choose to follow Jesus instead of them. We must look past our earthly attachments and relationships and prioritize our relationship with God.

Matthew 10:37-38 (KJV): "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me."

Matthew 10:37-38 further clarifies Jesus' point by saying that if someone loves their father or mother more than him, then they are not worthy of being His disciple. Jesus wants us to love him more than anything else, and that's what we should strive for. We must put Him first before anyone or anything else.

Then, and only then, can we truly follow Him faithfully and humbly bear our crosses with joy. Taking up one's cross means embracing the challenges and difficulties associated with walking with Jesus on the path of righteousness. As followers of Christ, we are expected to make sacrifices for His sake. It can be difficult at times to make such an intense commitment, but those who do so out of love for Jesus will reap great rewards now and in eternity.

Let us all strive to be faithful disciples of Christ and bear our crosses with joy and perseverance!

Luke 14:33 (KJV): "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."

The word forsaketh used in Luke 14:33 comes from the Greek word *ajpotavssw* (ap-ot-as'-som-ahee), which translates to set apart or separate from.

The call to forsake all we have is difficult. Still, we must be faithful followers of Jesus, which means we must be willing to let go of anything and everything that might stand between us and our relationship with Him. We must put aside our desires, opinions, and even our own families if they cause a division between us and the Lord.

In Luke 14:33, Jesus asks us to separate ourselves from anything that might draw us away from His will and free us up to serve Him with all our hearts. When we do this, we say yes to a life of obedience, joy, and true discipleship, which is not a life of deprivation but one filled with the rewards of serving our Lord. We can find strength in knowing that God Himself understands how hard it is for us to sacrifice everything for Him, and He will give us grace when we need it most. Ultimately, we should want to be faithful followers of Jesus Christ. In that case, we must be willing to forsake everything to become His humble disciples.

Luke 18:18-23 (KJV): "And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? None is good, save one, that is, God. Thou knowest the commandments: Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother. And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up. Now, when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me. And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful, for he was very rich."

Matthew 19:16-22 (KJV): "And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which?"

Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother: and Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions."

Mark 10:17-22 (KJV): "And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one that is, God. Thou knowest the commandments: Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother. And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth. Then Jesus, beholding him, loved him and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions."

In the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, Jesus tells a parable about a rich young ruler who followed all the laws but placed his possessions above following Jesus. In response, Jesus told him to sell all his possessions and distribute them to the poor to show that he was genuinely willing to put God first.

However, this request was too much for the rich ruler, and he became sad and went away grieving because he did not want to give up all that he had acquired. This parable does not mean we cannot own possessions or be wealthy. Still, it serves as a reminder that our relationship with God should precede material things. We must be willing to be generous and put God at the center of our lives.

Jesus asks us to give up our attachments to material things and follow him with love and generosity. He wants us to remember that everything we have comes from him, so if we are truly devoted to Him, then giving away what we have is a small price to pay for an eternity in His presence. The ultimate goal should be following the law and building a real relationship with God through obedience, humility, and sacrifice. That is how we will find true peace and joy in this life and eternal life beyond it.

This parable also reminds us that wealth should never become an end in itself but always a means to an end. We should use our wealth and resources to serve God with humility and compassion to exemplify His love. Jesus asks us to prioritize Him and seek true faith rather than clinging to material possessions. He wants us to trust Him and never be afraid to give up what we have for His sake.

Ultimately, this parable teaches us that if we surrender our attachments and follow Christ with open hearts, we will find true joy, peace, and eternal life. Though it may seem difficult or impossible at first, once you follow his path, you will understand how much richer your life can become when you place God first, which is a true blessing.

X Tweets:

1. **Luke 18:22 (KJV):** Sell all that thou hast and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me. Let go of what holds you back and embrace the journey ahead! Your sacrifice will lead to true joy and peace. #FaithOverFear #EternalLife
2. We must learn to surrender our attachments in our search for a deeper relationship with God. The rich young ruler faced a challenging choice that many of us encounter. Are we ready to seek true faith by putting God first? #SpiritualGrowth #LetGoAndFollow