

DENY SELF

TEXT: *Matthew 16:24: 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.*

We live in a world of ill will and self-will. Self-will is like a river out of its banks, destructive. But if one sinner destroys much good, as the Word teaches, how much more does one lukewarm backslider? If you are lukewarm concerning the cause of Christ's salvation of the lost, preaching unholiness, you will chill all those around you. What are you doing for Jesus? The disciple is not above his Master. Jesus said, 'Go ye into the highways, byways and hedges everywhere; preaching, teaching and healing.' Discipleship begins with obeying Jesus' word. It ends when we disobey His Word.



John 8:31: Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, if ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed;

The tragic truth is that hosts of people in the church live as Christians in name only, but are dead. This is very obvious, for they bear no fruit. They are still empty. Do you give yourself to the things of God as you do for your own life?

Christianity is following Christ, not a creed or code, but a crusade. A tale of passionless, self-complacent religion is a crying shame and deadly. The duty this text enjoins is not particularly for apostles alone or for the early saints. It no more regards any particular time, class of men, or country. It is universal in nature. As stated in

Matthew 16:24: Jesus said, "If any man. . ." [No matter the rank, station, nation, or age] "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross [daily] and follow Me."

Galatians 2:20: I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me.

Deny self and take up the cross daily (not momentarily, or the result of anything temporary). It is constant. It is indispensable and necessary, either to become or to

continue following Christ. Only to these followers does He promise eternal life. Self-denial is the essence of surrender. It does not mean giving up things but giving up SELF.

What **self** looks like in all of us is pride, hate, wrath, laziness, ease, love of self.

If we do not deny ourselves daily, we cannot learn of Him, come to Him, nor follow Him. If we are not walking in the way of the cross, we are not following Him. It is the lack here that has allowed corruption and worldliness into the Church of every age. It has ruined the churches' testimony and put out its holy fire.

How vainly we follow Christ that was crucified, unless we take up the cross daily. How **self** likes to conceal, generalize, giggle, rest and warp the true meaning of this Scripture in an effort to take the sting out of a condemning heart conscience.



Surely there are a few left who want more of Christ's real victory and spiritual growth! Who will hear what Jesus said, **'Deny thyself and take up thy cross'**?

You cannot do what you do faithfully without understanding His Word. The great enemy of our souls will try to throw clouds of dust, shadows, contempt and even rebellion into you against this victory-giving truth. Satan would keep many away in a fog of total ignorance or prejudice against Jesus' commandments. Too many people want power, but not Godliness.

The cross carries with it the nails that pierce the body, and shame that penetrates the soul. Everywhere in Scripture the cross is contempt to the world.

Galatians 6:12-14:

12 As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the Cross of Christ.

13 For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the Law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.

14 But God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

Geographically, Jesus' Cross may be very far from ours, but its purpose is the same in all. We, as His followers, must be like the Master who opened not His mouth when led to the slaughter. As He was, so we must be; sober, deliberately

refusing all high earthly enjoyments.

Matthew 19:24: And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God.

We must have eternal mortification of self. Jesus learned obedience through the things He suffered. He suffered mocking, persecution, and was despised by the religious. He abased Himself. We see this in the books of **John** and **Philippians**.



John 13:12-17:

12 So after He had washed their feet, and had taken His garments, and was set down again, He said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

13 Ye call Me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.

14 If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

16 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than He that sent Him.

17 If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

Philippians 2:1-5:

1 If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,

2 Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

If we do not deny self, we may be jealous. We may fight modernism, talk righteous

living, but at the same time be guilty of stealing the cream off the coffee by not stirring it. If we profess Christ as our Lord and Savior, let us live Christ day by day, according to the standard of living which Jesus has given us. This will confront us with denying self. Surely we cannot walk long with Jesus without manifesting some of His attributes.

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