

Desire for Devotion to Christ

Part II

February 17, 2019

Luke 9:23

Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.

Introduction

On January 27 we looked at:

**I. DESIRE “If anyone desires to come after me”-
God satisfies the desire He creates”
Oswald Chambers**

II. DEVOTION “come after me”- I thought I was coming after Him, only to come to realize He was coming after me (pursuing me). Today too pick up where I left off.

III. DENY HIMSELF

To deny self is to subject ourselves entirely to the Lordship and resources of Jesus Christ, in utter rejection of self-will and self-sufficiency.

John 15:4-5

Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

To deny self is to confess with Paul.

Romans 7:18

For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find.

Arthur Pink wrote,

“Growth in grace is growth downward; it is the forming of a lower estimate of ourselves; it is a deepening realization of our nothingness; it is a heartfelt recognition that we are not worthy of the least of God’s mercies.”

The challenge of denying myself is the resistance of self-centeredness or PRIDE.

Like a drug, pride is addictive and impairs good judgement. If I could be packaged as a pill in a prescription bottle the label would read, “Warning, taken too often in large doses may lead to a great fall, even death...”

Wisdom Hunters

The old flesh does not give in easily it wishes to control you still.

2 Corinthians 5:15

And He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.

1 Peter 4:3

For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles—when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.

Major Problem

We hate weakness because we long to be independent and self-sufficient, not needing God's moment by moment sustaining grace.

Paul David Tripp

The very realization that we are unable to satisfy the demands of God's law by our own efforts have always been what drives us to the Lord.

With that said, our need is repentance which is at the heart of the gospel.

Jesus called sinners to repentance.

Jesus preached the necessity of repentance.

Jesus commanded that His followers do the same.

The New Testament uses 3 different words to describe repentance. They deal with the mental, emotional, and intellectual aspects.

1. It involves a reversal of one's thinking; a change of mind, a helplessness to save themselves.
2. The regret and sorrow that the change of mind produces.
3. The act of the will in changing one's direction in life; turning to God from sin (1 Thessalonians 1:9)
Intellectually - repentance is a recognition of sin's vileness.

Emotionally - it produces a sense of sorrow/remorse.

Volitionally - results in a change of direction in life away from sin to Christ.

IV. DEATH

“take up his cross” – this is not the common trials and hardships that all persons experience sometime in life. A cross is not having an unsaved spouse, a nagging wife, or a domineering mother-in-law.

To take up one's cross is simply to be willing to pay any price for Christ sake. It is a willingness to endure shame, embarrassment, reproof, rejection, persecution, and even martyrdom For His sake.

The cross represents suffering that is ours because of our relationship to Christ. Christ does not call disciples to Himself to make their lives easy and prosperous, but to make them holy and productive.

To take up the cross means to identify with Him in surrender, suffering, and sacrifice. You cannot crucify yourself; you can only yield your body and let God do the rest.

Romans 12:1-2

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Jesus did not stop with the declaration of His own cross (death), He made a declaration about a cross for every disciple. It is amazing to think of how Peter attempted to protect Jesus from suffering, and we have the same tendency.

Many people want a “no cost” (no cross) discipleship, but Christ offers no such option.

Galatians 2:20

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Earthly life is temporary, it's something that you cannot possibly keep. However, in the process, he forfeits the eternal that he cannot lose.

Matthew 10:38-39 And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.

Wherever He Leads I'll Go

Take up thy cross and follow me,
I heard my Master say;
I gave me life to ransom thee,
Surrender your all today.

Wherever He leads I'll go,
Wherever He leads I'll go,
I'll follow my Christ who loves me so,
Wherever He leads I'll go.

He drew me closer to His side,
I sought His will to know,
And in that will I now abide,
Wherever He leads I'll go.

It may be through the shadows dim,
Or o'er the stormy sea,
I take my cross and follow Him,
Wherever He leadeth me.

Wherever He leads I'll go,
Wherever He leads I'll go,
I'll follow my Christ who loves me so,
Wherever He leads I'll go.

B.B. McKinney 1886-1952

Written 1936

R.S. Jones, a missionary, was speaking at a Sunday School convention in Clanton, Alabama after many years of missionary service in Brazil, he had forced to return home; doctors said he could not return to the mission field. B.B. was leading music that night, after service, B.B. asked Jones about his plans for the future.

Jones said he didn't know what God has in store for him, but said, "wherever He leads I'll go." B.B. couldn't get the words out of his mind. He went to his room to write down the words and music for this hymn.

The next day Jones spoke again, then B.B. sang this hymn.

V. DISCIPLESHIP

"follow me" – continual pattern of obedience characterizing a true disciple of Jesus Christ.

Matthew 7:21

Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.

Luke 6:46

But why do you call Me Lord, Lord, and do not do the things which I say?

John 12:26

If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.

The true disciple is willing to pay whatever price faithfulness to the Lord requires.

Different for Most:

Epaphroditus - Health exhausted

John the Apostle - Life in exile

Paul the Apostle - Life executed