



Counting the Cost

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Matthew 16:24-26

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Introduction



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What does it mean to be a Christian?



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What does it mean to be a Christian?

1. "Personal relationship" with God.
2. Person who "believes" in God.
3. The writers of Scripture uses one specific word to describe our new nature in Christ...**DISCIPLE**: learner; one who imitates their teacher/master
FOLLOWER of Jesus Christ.



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- Jesus talked about cost of discipleship before:



Introduction

a. Matt.10:37-39

³⁷ “He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. ³⁸ And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. ³⁹ He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it.



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a. Matt.10:37-39

b. Matt. 19:21

²¹ Jesus said to him, “If you wish to be complete, go and sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.”



Introduction

- a. Matt.10:37-39
- b. Matt. 19:21
- c. I Cor.7:15

¹⁵ Yet if the unbelieving one leaves, let him leave; the brother or the sister is not under bondage in such cases, but God has called us to peace.



I. Self-denial



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 1. Denying one's personal identity as a distinct person (eg. cults).



I. Self-denial

- It means to deny any confidence of the flesh. Being a Christian is not about self-fulfillment, but self-denial.
 - A. It does not mean:
 1. Denying one's personal identity as a distinct person (eg. cults).
 2. To deny yourself of things (eg. gnosticism).



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B. It does mean: (“deny”—completely disown; disassociate (ie. Peter “denied” Christ 3x in Mark 14:30,31, 71,72)



I. Self-denial

- Philippians 3:4-8

⁴ although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more: ⁵ circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; ⁶ as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness



I. Self-denial

- Philippians 3:4-8

which is in the Law, found blameless.

⁷ But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸ More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ,



I. Self-denial

a. race--Jewish



I. Self-denial

- a. race--Jewish
- b. ritual--circumcism



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- a. race--Jewish
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- c. rank--tribe of Benjamin was one of the highest ranking tribes.



I. Self-denial

- a. race--Jewish
- b. ritual--circumcism
- c. rank--tribe of Benjamin was one of the highest ranking tribes.
- d. "Hebrew of Hebrews"--born of Hebrew parents who kept traditions of Old Covenant.



I. Self-denial

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- *These are not bad in themselves, but when you trust them for salvation it will damn your soul.*



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A broken and a contrite heart, O God,
You will not despise.* Psalms 51:17



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¹³ *But the tax collector, standing some
distance away, was even unwilling to lift
up his eyes to heaven, but was beating
his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to
me, the sinner!'* Luke 18 :13



II. Take up one's cross



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A. It is not:



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1. some mystical level of "deeper spiritual life," that only the religious elite can achieve.



II. Take up one's cross

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1. some mystical level of "deeper spiritual life," that only the religious elite can achieve.

2. The common trials and hardships that everyone experiences sometimes in life.



II. Take up one's cross

B. It is willing to sacrifice it all for Christ, even your own life. It is willing to pay any price for Christ's sake.



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¹² Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

II Timothy 3:12



II. Take up one's cross



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III. "Follow Me"--loyal obedience.





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- This is not the perfection of your life, but the direction.

Conclusion





Conclusion

Matthew 16: 25-26

²⁵ For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. ²⁶ For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?



Conclusion

II Corinthians 5:21

21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.