

SO YOU WANT TO BE LIKE JESUS?

PASTOR NATHAN ELMS

Mark 8:34–35 — New Living Translation (NLT)

34 Then, calling the crowd to join his disciples, he said, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, and follow

We find Jesus discussing the issue of discipleship...

Having just predicted His own suffering, death, and resurrection - Mk 8:31

[A disciple is a learner, a follower; to be a disciple of Jesus means that we follow Jesus. But as Jesus mentions in our text, such discipleship requires a cost. To be a true disciple of Jesus...]

In the beginning Jesus invited disciples to "Come and See..."

John 1

35 Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. 36 And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!"

37 The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. 38 Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, "What do you seek?"

They said to Him, "Rabbi" (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), "where are You staying?"

Now he is inviting them to die out to their fleshy way of living.

ONE MUST DENY SELF

WHAT IT MEANS...

To deny sinful self, ungodliness, and worldly lusts; and part with them, and his former sinful companions, which were as a part of himself - Gill

To deny righteous self, and renounce all his own works of righteousness, in the business of justification and salvation - *ibid.*

-- To deny self with its self-righteous pride and sinful lust from dominating you

There are two sides to the denial of self. One you hear a lot. The other you don't.

FIRST: DENYING SINFUL SELF, EXPOUNDED BY PETER

1 Peter 2:11–12 — New Living Translation (NLT)

11 Dear friends, I warn you as "temporary residents and foreigners" to keep away from worldly desires that wage war against your very souls. 12 Be careful to live properly among your unbelieving neighbors. Then even if they accuse you of doing wrong, they will see your honorable behavior, and they will give honor to God when he judges the world.

NO LONGER LIVING LIKE THE REST OF THE WORLD -

1 Peter 4:1–4 — New Living Translation (NLT)

1 So then, since Christ suffered physical pain, you must arm yourselves with the same attitude he had, and be ready to suffer, too. For if you have suffered physically for Christ, you have finished with sin. 2 You won't spend the rest of your lives chasing your own desires, but you will be anxious to do the will of God. 3 You have had enough in the past of the evil things that godless people enjoy—their immorality and lust, their feasting and drunkenness and wild parties, and their terrible worship of idols.

4 Of course, your former friends are surprised when you no longer plunge into the flood of wild and destructive things they do. So they slander you.

SECOND: DENYING RIGHTEOUS SELF, EXEMPLIFIED BY PAUL

WHO HAD MUCH ABOUT WHICH HE COULD HAVE BOASTED -

Philippians 3:4–6 — New Living Translation (NLT)

4 though I could have confidence in my own effort if anyone could. Indeed, if others have reason for confidence in their own efforts, I have even more!

5 I was circumcised when I was eight days old. I am a pure-blooded citizen of Israel and a member of the tribe of Benjamin—a real Hebrew if there ever was one! I was a member of the Pharisees, who demand the strictest obedience to the Jewish law. 6 I was so zealous that I harshly persecuted the church. And as for righteousness, I obeyed the law without fault.

BUT CHOSE TO PUT ALL HIS TRUST IN CHRIST -

7 I once thought these things were valuable, but now I consider them worthless because of what Christ has done. 8 Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could gain Christ 9 and become one with him. I no longer count on my own righteousness through obeying the law; rather, I become righteous through faith in Christ.* For God's way of making us right with himself depends on faith. 10 I want to know Christ and experience the mighty power that raised him from the dead. I want to suffer with him, sharing in his death, 11 so that one way or another I will experience the resurrection from the dead!

PRESSING TOWARD THE GOAL

12 I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection. But I press on to possess that perfection for which Christ Jesus first possessed me. 13 No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it;* but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.

THE SELF IS THE ENEMY, WHETHER RELIGIOUS OR SECULAR!

ONE MUST TAKE UP HIS CROSS WHAT IT MEANS...

To voluntarily and decisively accept the pain, shame, and persecution that is going to be one's particular--note: his, not someone else's--lot because of his loyalty to Christ and his cause - Hendriksen

To cheerfully receive, and patiently bear, every affliction and evil, however shameful and painful it may be, which is appointed for him, and he is called unto; which is his peculiar cross, as every Christian has his own; to which he should quietly submit, and carry, with an entire resignation to the will of God, in imitation of his Lord - Gill

The cross is to be born "daily", indicating Jesus was speaking metaphorically - cf. Lk 9:23

-- To gladly endure whatever hardship one may receive in service to Christ!

The cost of discipleship may seem rather high...

One must deny self

One must take up one's cross

One must follow Jesus

But as Jesus explains, there are only two choices... - Mk 8:35

One can try to save his life himself, but will end up losing it - cf. Jn 8:24

One can lose his life for Jesus' sake and the gospel's, and wind up saving it!

For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. - Mk 8:35