

## The Price of Discipleship

### Int.

1. Aim: To Discuss the three things required of being a disciple taught in this text, and then show that it is not as costly as not being a disciple.
2. Mt. 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."
  - a. V. 21 - Jesus had started telling them about his death and resurrection
  - b. V. 22 - Peter did not like to hear the Lord say these things
  - c. V. 23 - Jesus explained that Peter did not understand what was involved.
  - d. Then he tells them what is required in being a disciple.
3. Disciple
  - a. The word means = learner, pupil, follower
  - b. Pupil - a person who is taught by another
  - c. It is an honor to be a disciple = a follower of Christ
  - d. A disciple of Christ comes after him, as the sheep after the shepherd, the servant after his master, the soldiers after their captain;
4. If any man will come
  - a. It denotes a deliberate choice, and cheerfulness and resolution in that choice.
  - b. Many are disciples more by chance or the will of others than by any act of their own will; but Christ will have his people volunteers,
5. But in order to be a disciple a price must be paid. What is the price? What are the terms for following Jesus?

Discussion**I. SELF RESTRAINT**

- A. "Let him deny himself"
  - 1. Note, All the disciples and followers of Jesus Christ must deny themselves.
  - 2. It is the fundamental law of admission into Christ's school, and the first and great lesson to be learned in this school, to deny ourselves; [MHC]
  - 3. Let him be prepared to say "no" to many of the strongest cravings of his nature,
- B. This does not mean:
  - 1. One should torture his body
  - 2. One should refuse the joy's of life.
- C. But it does mean he must exercise self control
- D. He denies himself of evil - Ungodliness and worldly lusts
  - 1. Tit. 2:11-12 "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, 12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age,"
  - 2. I Jn. 2:15,16 "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world--the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life--is not of the Father but is of the world."
- E. Self control is a law of development and protection.
  - 1. Without self control we will not grow
  - 2. Without self control we are exposed to injury

3. I Cor. 9:27 "But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified."

F. Jesus teaches us as his disciples to deny "ungodliness and worldly lusts" for the same reason that a mother denies her child unwholesome food or poisons.

G. By self-denial is meant, that we should be willing to part with all our earthly comforts, and quit all our temporal enjoyments, for the sake of Christ and his holy religion.

## **II. SELF SACRIFICE** "take up his cross, and follow me."

A. Context

1. Jesus used this figure because he knew that he would He would be crucified on a cross - yet future
2. Romans and many others used crucifixion as a means of punishment
3. Many times the criminals to be crucified were made to carry their own crosses to the place of execution.

B. What does it means to "take up his cross"?

1. It is not old age, poverty, taxes, sickness, bad weather or any other discomfort of life.
2. It is not correct to say that all sorrows are crosses take up because the wicked have many sorrows also.

3. The troubles of Christians are fitly called crosses, in allusion to the death of the cross, which Christ was obedient to; and it should reconcile us to troubles, and take off the terror of them, that they are what we bear in common with Christ, and such as he hath borne before us. [MHC]
  4. The cross is that suffering which results from our faithful connection with Christ !
  5. The cross refers to all sufferings for righteousness sake, every trouble that befalls us either for doing well or for not doing ill.
  6. Matt. 5:10-12
  7. When we rejoice in our afflictions and glory in them, then we take up the cross.
- C. Luke adds, "daily" [Luke 9:23]; not once, but all the time.
1. The cross is the pain of the self-denial required in living for Christ
  2. The cross is the symbol of doing our duty, even at the cost of the most painful death.
  3. A person condemned to this mode of punishment, was also compelled to carry his cross to the place of execution. To take up the cross, then, is to go forth to severe and ignominious sufferings, even to the enduring of death in most painful and shameful forms.
- D. Our own cross
1. Every disciple of Christ has his cross, and must count upon it; as each has his special duty to be done, so each hath his special trouble to be borne, and everyone feels most from his own burdens

2. Crosses are the common lot of God's children, but of this common lot of God's children, but of this common lot each hath his particular share.
  3. Every disciple of Christ must take up that which the wise God hath made his cross. It is an allusion to the Roman custom of compelling those that were condemned to be crucified, to carry their cross: when Simon carried Christ's cross after him, this phrase was illustrated.
  4. We must so manage an affliction, that it may not be a stumbling-block or hindrance to us in any service we have to do for God.
  5. We must take it up out of our way, by getting over the offence of the cross; None of these things move me; and we must then go on with it in our way, though it lie heavy.
- E. Not a literal Cross - some carry crosses around on wheels to get attention.

### **III. SELF EXPRESSION** "And Follow Me"

- A. Follow me
1. Suffering saints must look unto Jesus, and take from him both direction and encouragement in suffering.
  2. We therein follow Christ, who bears it before us, bears it for us, and so bears it from us.
  3. He bore the heavy end of the cross, the end that had the curse upon it, that was a heavy end, and so made the other light and easy for us. [MHC]
  4. The disciples of Christ must study to imitate their Master, and conform themselves in every thing to his example, and continue in well-doing, whatever crosses lie in their way. To do well and to suffer ill, is to follow Christ.

B. The life of a disciple

1. Is not merely restraint or repression
2. But is a life of activity and expression.
3. A disciple is to be very active and aggressive.

C. We must not:

1. Go before Christ - that would be presumption
2. Turn aside from Christ - that would be worldliness
3. Follow from afar - that would be cowardly and result in denial.

D. But we must:

1. Follow the Master in nearness
2. That means we obey His word and follow his steps
3. 1 Peter 2:21-23

E. To follow Christ is to take him for our master, our teacher, our example; to believe his doctrines, to uphold his cause, to obey his precepts, and to do it though it leads to heaven by the way of the cross.

F. Present tense. Keep on following. Not just one time but for a life time.

## CONCLUSION

1. Some view the price of Discipleship too high. Consider the reverse - What is the cost for not following Christ
  - a. Psalms 32:10 "Many sorrows shall be to the wicked; But he who trusts in the LORD, mercy shall surround him."
  - b. Romans 6:23 " For the wages of sin is death"
  - c. "The way of transgressors is hard" Prov. 13:15b
  - d. It costs far more not to follow Christ than it does to follow him.
  - e. Matt. 25:41 "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."
2. The price for discipleship is:
  - a. Self restraint "Let him deny himself"
  - b. Self sacrifice "And take up his cross"
  - c. Self expression "And follow me"
3. It will cost to be a Christian.
  - a. For a cause which he considers worthy, man is willing to sacrifice.
  - b. To some the Christian life has been presented as a sissified type of thing that demands nothing and brings little. Such is a perversion of Christ's teaching.
  - c. Men need to understand that although the blessings of the Christian life far outweigh its costs, yet one is called to a life of service.
4. Matt. 16:24. ""Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."
5. Are you willing to pay the price for being a disciple?

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Sources

101 Sermon Outlines by Frank L. Cox

Adam Clarkes Commentary

Matthew Henry Commentary

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Sermon by Arthur Pigman - Sunday Evening April 18, 2010

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