

Genuine Discipleship

Text: Mark 8:34-38

Context: Immediately after Peter's correct confession of Jesus as the Christ (messiah), Jesus informs the disciples of his coming death on the cross and of his resurrection. Now he calls all who desire to follow him to deny themselves and take up their own cross.

Truly following Jesus as a disciple will require you to...

1. _____ up your life (vs. 34a)

- A. Jesus calls all of his disciples to "deny" themselves. Self-denial means letting go of self-determination (cf. Ps. 49:6–8) and replacing it with obedience to and dependence on the Messiah. (ESV Study Bible)
- B. The call for all who want to follow Christ is radical: they must abandon their own desires, interests and pursuits for those of Jesus.

2. _____ hold of the cross (vs. 34-37)

- A. To take up the cross means to deny yourself to the point of death - if necessary.
- B. When Christ calls a man, He bids him come and die. It may be a death like that of the first disciples who had to leave home and work to follow Him, or it may be a death like Luther's, who had to leave the monastery and go out into the world. But it is the same death every time—death in Jesus Christ, the death of the old man at his call." –Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*
- C. The paradoxical statement of verse 35 reveals an important spiritual truth: those who pursue a life of ease, comfort, and acceptance by the world will not find eternal life. On the other hand, those who give up their lives for the sake of Christ and the gospel will find it. (MacArthur Study Bible)

3. _____ Christ (vs. 38)

- A. The one who is glorifying Christ in this world is truly unashamed of him and his words.
- B. All of us will face the judgment of Christ and give an account of our obedience to him.