



Self-Denial

## THE COST OF COMMITMENT

VERNON BREWER

(Luke 14:25-33)

There is no limit to what God can do through those who are fully committed to Him. By total commitment we ask God to take complete control over our lives. Total commitment, then, means self-denial.

In Luke 14, Jesus described the cost of commitment to Him. He did not say that a person who doesn't meet these demands will be an inconsistent disciple, or an ungrateful disciple, or a half-hearted disciple. He said that "he cannot be My disciple" (Luke 14:26, 27, 33).

### ABOVE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

God's people must love Jesus Christ more than their personal relationships. Jesus said that anyone who wants to follow Him must "hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters" (Luke 14:26). Jesus' love transcends all personal relationships.

These words do not mean that Christians have to literally "hate" their parents. That would go against other parts of God's word where people are told to honor their parents (Ex. 20:12). The word "hate" is used as hyperbole, meaning that people's love for Jesus must transcend their love for family. The reason many people have difficulty with this verse isn't that they love their families too much; it is that they don't love God enough. They have never learned to love the Lord God with all their heart, soul, and mind (Deut. 6:5).

We love our families; we adore our spouse and children; we honor our parents. They are not the most important relationships in our lives, however. Our relationship with Jesus Christ is the most important.

### ABOVE PERSONAL LIFE

God's people must love Jesus Christ more than their personal lives. Jesus continued that anyone who wants to follow Him must "hate . . . his own life also" (Luke 14:26). Jesus' lordship transcends our personal priorities. The disgrace of the Christian church is that more zeal is evident among Communists and cultists than among Christians. There are many non-Christians who are not as concerned about their lives as they are about their commitment to their

Jesus' command does not mean that Christians have to literally "hate" their lives. That would go against other commands in Scripture to be content and joyful. People would not evidence the fruit of the Spirit if they hated their lives. They would be sad, ornery, and critical. Some people are that way, and they would not be held up as models of self-denial and commitment to Christ. Instead, the word "hate" means as it did in the previous section: People's love for Jesus must transcend their love for their own lives.

We enjoy life; we seek to follow God's will and accomplish what He has for us during our time on earth. However, our lives, jobs, reputations, accomplishments are not the most important. We should, at any moment, be willing to die for our faith. Indeed, people all over the world are doing that every single day.

I recently visited a country that is

closed to the  
tians face the  
of us met see  
other believe  
A 34-year-  
church plan  
suffer perse  
humiliated a  
parading her  
in a public g  
hands tied be  
for Jesus Ch  
Christ!"

### ABOVE PER

God's people  
than their p  
"Whoever d  
come after  
(Luke 14:27)  
personal rig  
and plans.

The peop  
stood what  
cross. When  
death by the  
own cross th  
site. This co  
of their sub  
them an o  
Rome's leade

These w  
tians have to  
life on our ba  
contradict the  
we can cast  
55:22). Instea  
Jesus' cross,  
casting aside  
fair, for wha  
sider our "rig

### ABOVE PEP

God's people  
than their pe  
"Whoever of

To Learn More:  
the personality p

closed to the gospel, a country where Christians face the threat of death daily. A group of us met secretly with several pastors and other believers and heard their testimonies. A 34-year-old woman evangelist and church planter told how she continues to suffer persecution. One day, the police humiliated her by tearing off her shirt and parading her through the streets. She stood in a public gathering, half-naked, with her hands tied behind her back and said, "I live for Jesus Christ . . . if I die, I die for Jesus Christ!"

### **ABOVE PERSONAL RIGHTS**

God's people must love Jesus Christ more than their personal rights. Jesus said, "Whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple" (Luke 14:27). Jesus' lordship transcends personal rights, choices, decisions, goals, and plans.

The people of Jesus' day well understood what it meant to carry one's own cross. When a person was sentenced to death by the Romans, he had to carry his own cross through the city to the execution site. This constantly reminded the people of their subjection to Rome, and taught them an object lesson about obeying Rome's leaders.

These words do not mean that Christians have to carry the heavy burdens of life on our backs like a cross. That would contradict the psalmist who assured us that we can cast our burdens on the Lord (Ps. 55:22). Instead, we should proudly "carry Jesus' cross," being identified with Him, casting aside our love for what we think is fair, for what we want, for what we consider our "rights," in order to serve Him.

### **ABOVE PERSONAL RESOURCES**

God's people must love Jesus Christ more than their personal resources. Jesus said, "Whoever of you does not forsake all that

he has cannot be My disciple" (Luke 14:33). Jesus' lordship transcends everything people own, achieve, share, and give. This is perhaps the most unpopular of all of Christ's terms of discipleship and self-denial.

These words do not mean that Christians must become hermits. To "forsake all" does not mean that believers cannot own homes, buy clothing and food, and take vacations. Again, it has to do with our attitudes toward all of our possessions. To "forsake" all means not being so attached to anything we own that we cannot let it go for the sake of God's kingdom.

To truly be Jesus' disciple means to love Him more than our relationships, lives, rights, and resources. What He gives in return is beyond value!

### **FURTHER MEDITATION:**

Other passages to study about the issue of self-denial include:

- > Psalm 119:9
- > Matthew 16:24
- > Romans 12:12
- > Galatians 5:24
- > Philippians 2:2-4
- > 2 Timothy 2:3, 4
- > James 1:12

---

To Learn More: Turn to the key passage note on self-denial at Galatians 2:20 on page 1539. See also the personality profile of John the Baptist on page 1375.

---

'Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third *day* I shall be perfected.'<sup>33</sup> Nevertheless I must journey today, tomorrow, and the *day* following; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem.

#### JESUS LAMENTS OVER JERUSALEM

<sup>34</sup>"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen *gathers* her brood under *her* wings, but you were not willing!<sup>35</sup> See! Your house is left to you desolate; and assuredly,<sup>a</sup> I say to you, you shall not see Me until *the time* comes when you say, '*Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!*'"<sup>b</sup>

#### A MAN WITH DROPSY HEALED ON THE SABBATH

**14** Now it happened, as He went into the house of one of the rulers of the Pharisees to eat bread on the Sabbath, that they watched Him closely.<sup>2</sup> And behold, there was a certain man before Him who had dropsy.<sup>3</sup> And Jesus, answering, spoke to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"<sup>a</sup>

<sup>4</sup>But they kept silent. And He took *him* and healed him, and let him go.<sup>5</sup> Then He answered them, saying, "Which of you, having a donkey<sup>a</sup> or an ox that has fallen into a pit, will not immediately pull him out on the Sabbath day?"<sup>6</sup> And they could not answer Him regarding these things.

#### TAKE THE LOWLY PLACE

<sup>7</sup>So He told a parable to those who were invited, when He noted how they chose the best places, saying to them:<sup>8</sup> "When you are invited by anyone to a wedding feast, do not sit

down in the best place, lest one more honorable than you be invited by him;<sup>9</sup> and he who invited you and him come and say to you, 'Give place to this man,' and then you begin with shame to take the lowest place.<sup>10</sup> But when you are invited, go and sit down in the lowest place, so that when he who invited you comes he may say to you, 'Friend, go up higher.' Then you will have glory in the presence of those who sit at the table with you.<sup>11</sup> For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

<sup>12</sup>Then He also said to him who invited Him, "When you give a dinner or a supper, do not ask your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor rich neighbors, lest they also invite you back, and you be repaid.<sup>13</sup> But when you give a feast, invite *the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind.*<sup>14</sup> And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just."

#### THE PARABLE OF THE GREAT SUPPER

<sup>15</sup>Now when one of those who sat at the table with Him heard these things, he said to Him, "Blessed is he who shall eat bread<sup>a</sup> in the kingdom of God!"

<sup>16</sup>Then He said to him, "A certain man gave a great supper and invited many,<sup>17</sup> and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, 'Come, for all things are now ready.'<sup>18</sup> But they all with one *accord* began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.'<sup>19</sup> And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen,

13:35 <sup>a</sup>NU-Text and M-Text omit *assuredly*. <sup>b</sup>Psalm 118:26 14:3 <sup>a</sup>NU-Text adds *or not*. 14:5 <sup>a</sup>NU-Text and M-Text read *son*. 14:15 <sup>a</sup>M-Text reads *dinner*.



#### SOUL NOTE

**Total Commitment** (14:25-33) To reach a desired goal or to successfully complete a huge task takes planning and total commitment. To be only partially committed to a project usually ends with less than desirable results. Jesus asks for total commitment from His followers. The command to "hate" one's family is not to be taken as an instruction to treat them improperly; instead, it reminds us that human relationships should never hold us back from faith in Christ. The kingdom of God must be central in all we do. The cost may be high, but the rewards are wonderful!

**Topic:** Self-Denial

and I am g  
me excuse  
ried a wife  
that servan  
his master.  
ing angry,  
into the str  
in here the  
and the blin  
it is done as  
room.'<sup>23</sup> Th  
'Go out in  
compel the  
filled.<sup>24</sup> For  
who were in

#### LEAVING ALL

<sup>25</sup>Now g  
And He tur  
comes to M  
mother, wif  
ters, yes, an  
My disciple.  
cross and co  
ple.<sup>28</sup> For w  
tower, does  
cost, wheth  
<sup>29</sup>lest, after I  
not able to f  
him,<sup>30</sup> sayin  
was not able  
to make war  
down first a  
with ten th  
against him.  
while the cr  
sends a del  
peace.<sup>33</sup> So I  
forsake all th

#### TASTELESS SA

<sup>34</sup>"Salt is g  
vor, how shal  
for the land  
throw it out.  
hear!"

#### THE PARABLE

**15** Then  
ners  
<sup>2</sup>And the Ph  
saying, "This  
with them."  
them, saying

what He has seen and heard, that He testifies; and no one receives His testimony. <sup>33</sup>He who has received His testimony has certified that God is true. <sup>34</sup>For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God does not give the Spirit by measure. <sup>35</sup>The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand. <sup>36</sup>He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

#### A SAMARITAN WOMAN MEETS HER MESSIAH

Therefore, when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John <sup>2</sup>(though Jesus Himself did not baptize, but His disciples), <sup>3</sup>He left Judea and departed again to Galilee. <sup>4</sup>But He needed to go through Samaria.

<sup>5</sup>So He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. <sup>6</sup>Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from

### PERSONALITY PROFILE



Self-Denial

## JOHN THE BAPTIST: EVERYTHING FOR JESUS

(JOHN 3:30)

John the Baptist was completely sold out for Jesus. John had been given a mission since before his birth, and he fulfilled that mission completely and wholeheartedly. John denied himself in order to see to it that people's hearts were prepared for the coming Messiah.

John had an urgent message, and a unique way of presenting it. John did not go to the temple and speak to the leadership; he went into the desert and spoke to the throngs who followed him there, irresistibly drawn by his message. John "was clothed in camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey" (Matt. 3:4). Although John himself was a fulfillment of Scripture (John 1:23), he did not consider himself to be of greater importance than Christ. He understood that his role was to be the messenger, to direct people to Someone else. "I am not the Christ, but I have been sent before Him . . . He must increase, but I must decrease," he said. When the time came for Christ to begin His ministry, John willingly stepped aside, sending his own followers to follow "the Lamb of God" (John 1:35, 36).

Self-denial is not refusing to enjoy life or have fulfillment. It's a willingness to set aside our own agenda in favor of following the Lamb of God. Self-denial means finding complete gratification in life, for we are only denying ourselves some activities, possessions, or honors in order for God to give us greater opportunities to serve Him—and greater joy in the end.

To Learn More: Turn to the article about self-denial on pages 1346, 1347. See also the key passage note at Galatians 2:20 on page 1539.

### SOUL NOTE



**Why Believe?** (3:36) John the Baptist pointed people to Jesus as the Messiah. John made it clear that people have only two options when it comes to making a decision about Christ. Those who believe in the Son have everlasting life. The moment they believe, they begin eternal life. Those who do not believe the Son, however, face the wrath of God. They have rejected God, and in the end He will reject them. The choice is clear. To not accept Christ is to reject Him. There is no middle ground.

**Topic: Eternal Life**

our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage), <sup>5</sup>to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

<sup>6</sup>But from those who seemed to be something—whatever they were, it makes no difference to me; God shows personal favoritism to no man—for those who seemed to be something added nothing to me. <sup>7</sup>But on the contrary, when they saw that the gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me, as the gospel for the circumcised was to Peter <sup>8</sup>(for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles), <sup>9</sup>and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. <sup>10</sup>They desired only that we should remember the poor, the very thing which I also was eager to do.

#### NO RETURN TO THE LAW

<sup>11</sup>Now when Peter<sup>a</sup> had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; <sup>12</sup>for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the

circumcision. <sup>13</sup>And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy.

<sup>14</sup>But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, "If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you<sup>a</sup> compel Gentiles to live as Jews?<sup>b</sup> <sup>15</sup>We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, <sup>16</sup>knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

<sup>17</sup>"But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not! <sup>18</sup>For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. <sup>19</sup>For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. <sup>20</sup>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. <sup>21</sup>I do not

2:11 <sup>a</sup>NU-Text reads *Cephas*. 2:14 <sup>a</sup>NU-Text reads *how can you*. <sup>b</sup>Some interpreters stop the quotation here.

#### KEY PASSAGE



Self-Denial

### WORTH GIVING UP

(2:20)

The wonder of the Christian life is captured in these words. Becoming a believer is more than saying a prayer or committing oneself to a new way of living—it is an entirely new life! When Christ was crucified, He died in the place of all believers. Thus, the believer has been "crucified with Christ," which means that the sinful self is dead. Now, Christ lives in that person. In a glorious, incomprehensible transaction, Christ lives His life through each believer. Each remains an individual, but each is recreated by Christ. Each believer has the ability to deny sin's hold on their life and to live to please Christ.

What do believers have to give up? Selfishness, a life that is headed nowhere, sin and its consequences. Such self-denial can hardly compare with what God offers. When we are crucified with Christ, our lives are lived "by faith in the Son of God" who loved us and gave Himself for us. That's the best way to live!

To Learn More: Turn to the article about self-denial on pages 1346, 1347. See also the personality profile of John the Baptist on page 1375.



<sup>8</sup>Do I say these things as a *mere* man? Or does not the law say the same also? <sup>9</sup>For it is written in the law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain."<sup>a</sup> Is it oxen God is concerned about? <sup>10</sup>Or does He say it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, *this* is written, that he who plows should plow in hope, and he who threshes in hope should be partaker of his hope. <sup>11</sup>If we have sown spiritual things for you, *is it* a great thing if we reap your material things? <sup>12</sup>If others are partakers of *this* right over you, *are* we not even more?

Nevertheless we have not used this right, but endure all things lest we hinder the gospel of Christ. <sup>13</sup>Do you not know that those who minister the holy things eat *of the things* of the temple, and those who serve at the altar partake of *the offerings* of the altar? <sup>14</sup>Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel.

<sup>15</sup>But I have used none of these things, nor have I written these things that it should be done so to me; for it *would be* better for me to die than that anyone should make my boasting void. <sup>16</sup>For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel! <sup>17</sup>For if I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have been entrusted with a stewardship. <sup>18</sup>What is my reward then? That when I preach the gospel, I may present the gospel of Christ<sup>a</sup> without charge, that I may not abuse my authority in the gospel.

#### SERVING ALL MEN

<sup>19</sup>For though I am free from all *men*, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more; <sup>20</sup>and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those *who are* under

the law, as under the law,<sup>a</sup> that I might win those *who are* under the law; <sup>21</sup>to those *who are* without law, as without law (not being without law toward God,<sup>a</sup> but under law toward Christ<sup>b</sup>), that I might win those *who are* without law; <sup>22</sup>to the weak I became as<sup>a</sup> weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all *men*, that I might by all means save some. <sup>23</sup>Now this I do for the gospel's sake, that I may be partaker of it with you.

#### STRIVING FOR A CROWN

<sup>24</sup>Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. <sup>25</sup>And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they *do it* to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. <sup>26</sup>Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as *one who* beats the air. <sup>27</sup>But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.

#### OLD TESTAMENT EXAMPLES

**10** Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, <sup>2</sup>all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, <sup>3</sup>all ate the same spiritual food, <sup>4</sup>and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. <sup>5</sup>But with most of them God was not well pleased, for *their bodies* were scattered in the wilderness.

<sup>9:9</sup> <sup>a</sup>Deuteronomy 25:4 <sup>9:18</sup> <sup>a</sup>NU-Text omits of Christ. <sup>9:20</sup> <sup>a</sup>NU-Text adds *though not being myself under the law.* <sup>9:21</sup> <sup>a</sup>NU-Text reads *God's law.* <sup>b</sup>NU-Text reads *Christ's law.* <sup>9:22</sup> <sup>a</sup>NU-Text omits *as.*

#### SOUL NOTE



**The Way of Love (9:22)** Chapter 8 discusses "weak" believers who would not enjoy certain freedoms of the Christian life because they felt uncomfortable doing so. With these people, Paul "became as weak" in order to help them grow deeper in the faith. Some believers may, for example, not feel comfortable with a certain activity because of past associations. Paul says that when we are with such people, we don't try to convince them to change, nor do we flaunt our freedom. Instead, we avoid that activity and enjoy time with them in other ways. In this way we show the love of Christ.

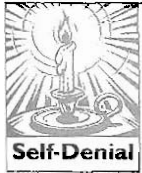
**Topic: Self-Denial**

what He has seen and heard, that He testifies; and no one receives His testimony. <sup>33</sup>He who has received His testimony has certified that God is true. <sup>34</sup>For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God does not give the Spirit by measure. <sup>35</sup>The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand. <sup>36</sup>He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

#### A SAMARITAN WOMAN MEETS HER MESSIAH

**4** Therefore, when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John <sup>2</sup>(though Jesus Himself did not baptize, but His disciples), <sup>3</sup>He left Judea and departed again to Galilee. <sup>4</sup>But He needed to go through Samaria.

<sup>5</sup>So He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. <sup>6</sup>Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from



Self-Denial

## JOHN THE BAPTIST: EVERYTHING FOR JESUS

(JOHN 3:30)

**John the Baptist was completely sold out for Jesus.** John had been given a mission since before his birth, and he fulfilled that mission completely and wholeheartedly. John denied himself in order to see to it that people's hearts were prepared for the coming Messiah.

John had an urgent message, and a unique way of presenting it. John did not go to the temple and speak to the leadership; he went into the desert and spoke to the throngs who followed him there, irresistibly drawn by his message. John "was clothed in camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey" (Matt. 3:4).

Although John himself was a fulfillment of Scripture (John 1:23), he did not consider himself to be of greater importance than Christ. He understood that his role was to be the messenger, to direct people to Someone else. "I am not the Christ, but I have been sent before Him . . . He must increase, but I must decrease," he said. When the time came for Christ to begin His ministry, John willingly stepped aside, sending his own followers to follow "the Lamb of God" (John 1:35, 36).

Self-denial is not refusing to enjoy life or have fulfillment. It's a willingness to set aside our own agenda in favor of following the Lamb of God. Self-denial means finding complete gratification in life, for we are only denying ourselves some activities, possessions, or honors in order for God to give us greater opportunities to serve Him—and greater joy in the end.

To Learn More: Turn to the article about self-denial on pages 1346, 1347. See also the key passage note at Galatians 2:20 on page 1539.

### SOUL NOTE



**Why Believe? (3:36)** John the Baptist pointed people to Jesus as the Messiah. John made it clear that people have only two options when it comes to making a decision about Christ. Those who believe in the Son have everlasting life. The moment they believe, they begin eternal life. Those who do not believe the Son, however, face the wrath of God. They have rejected God, and in the end He will reject them. The choice is clear. To not accept Christ is to reject Him. There is no middle ground.

**Topic: Eternal Life**





<sup>22</sup>But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

**WITH GOD ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE**

<sup>23</sup>Then Jesus looked around and said to His disciples, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!" <sup>24</sup>And the disciples were astonished at His words. But Jesus answered again and said to them, "Children, how hard it is for those who trust in riches<sup>a</sup> to enter the kingdom of God! <sup>25</sup>It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

<sup>26</sup>And they were greatly astonished, saying among themselves, "Who then can be saved?"

<sup>27</sup>But Jesus looked at them and said, "With men *it is impossible*, but not with God; for with God all things are possible."

<sup>28</sup>Then Peter began to say to Him, "See, we have left all and followed You."

<sup>29</sup>So Jesus answered and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife<sup>a</sup> or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, <sup>30</sup>who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life. <sup>31</sup>But many *who are first* will be last, and the last first."

**JESUS A THIRD TIME PREDICTS HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION**

<sup>32</sup>Now they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going before them; and they were amazed. And as they followed they were afraid. Then He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them the things that would happen to Him: <sup>33</sup>"Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man

will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles; <sup>34</sup>and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again."

**GREATNESS IS SERVING**

<sup>35</sup>Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Him, saying, "Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask."

<sup>36</sup>And He said to them, "What do you want Me to do for you?"

<sup>37</sup>They said to Him, "Grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory."

<sup>38</sup>But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"

<sup>39</sup>They said to Him, "We are able."

So Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink the cup that I drink, and with the baptism I am baptized with you will be baptized; <sup>40</sup>but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but *it is for those* for whom it is prepared."

<sup>41</sup>And when the ten heard *it*, they began to be greatly displeased with James and John.

<sup>42</sup>But Jesus called them to *Himself* and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. <sup>43</sup>Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. <sup>44</sup>And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. <sup>45</sup>For even the Son of Man did not come to be

10:24 <sup>a</sup>NU-Text omits *for those who trust in riches.*  
10:29 <sup>a</sup>NU-Text omits *or wife.*

served, but to serve  
soms for many."

**JESUS HEALS BLIND**

<sup>46</sup>Now they came out of Jericho with Herod's eunuch, blind Bartimaeus sat by the road begging. And when he saw that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he cried out and said, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

<sup>48</sup>Then many of the people said to him, "Be of good cheer, he is calling you."

<sup>49</sup>So Jesus stood and called him.

Then they called him, "Be of good cheer, he is calling you."

<sup>50</sup>And throwing away his garment, he came to Jesus.

<sup>51</sup>So Jesus asked him, "Do you want Me to do anything for you?"

The blind man said, "Lord, I want to receive my sight."

<sup>52</sup>Then Jesus said to him, "Your faith has made you well. Immediately he received his sight and followed Him on the road."

**THE TRIUMPHAL**

**11** Now when Jesus had finished saying these things, He went on to Bethany, to the Mount of Olives; and He sat down with His disciples. <sup>2</sup>and He said to them, "I am going to the opposite side of you; and you will find me sitting on the ground. Loose it for me, 'Why do you have a Lord who has need of my help? Send it here.'"

**SOUL NOTE**



**Give It Up (10:28-31)** After Jesus' conversation with the rich young ruler, Peter commented that he and the other disciples had done what the rich man could not—"We have left all and followed You." Jesus responded that those who deny themselves and put Christ first will "receive a hundredfold now in this time . . .

and in the age to come, eternal life." Anyone who gives up something valuable for Christ's sake will be blessed both in this life and in the life to come. When we deny ourselves something for Christ's sake, He understands and promises to give us more in return.

**Topic: Self-Denial**



the temp  
need a so  
become s  
worship.

<sup>15</sup>He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"

<sup>16</sup>Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

<sup>17</sup>Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed *this* to you, but My Father who is in heaven. <sup>18</sup>And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will

build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. <sup>19</sup>And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed<sup>a</sup> in heaven."

<sup>20</sup>Then He commanded His disciples that they should tell no one that He was Jesus the Christ.

#### JESUS PREDICTS HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION

<sup>21</sup>From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.

<sup>22</sup>Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!"

<sup>23</sup>But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men."

#### TAKE UP THE CROSS AND FOLLOW HIM

<sup>24</sup>Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.

<sup>25</sup>For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. <sup>26</sup>For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?

"For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

MATTHEW 16:26

Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

<sup>27</sup>For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.

#### JESUS TRANSFIGURED ON THE MOUNT

<sup>28</sup>Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."

**17** Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; <sup>2</sup>and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. <sup>3</sup>And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. <sup>4</sup>Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us<sup>a</sup> make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."

<sup>5</sup>While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!" <sup>6</sup>And when the disciples heard *it*, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid. <sup>7</sup>But Jesus came and touched them and said, "Arise, and do not be afraid." <sup>8</sup>When they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.

**16:19** <sup>a</sup>Or will have been bound . . . will have been loosed **17:4** <sup>a</sup>NU-Text reads I will

#### SOUL NOTE



**Radical Denial (16:24)** Radical discipleship means denying oneself and taking up the cross. Jesus was not promoting self-hatred; instead, He was saying that His followers must put God first and be willing to suffer anything for His sake. If a primary goal is to protect ourselves from embarrassment or discomfort, we are not denying ourselves. If we focus on what we want instead of what God wants for us, we are not denying ourselves. In the end, self-denial actually brings true fulfillment, for it allows God to use us for His purposes. That is the best way to live. **Topic: Self-Denial**