

The Way of the Cross

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I. Introduction. Text: Mark 8:34-38.

II. The process of discipleship.

A. One must deny himself.

1. Denying oneself is not hating oneself nor is it self-abandonment.
2. Denying oneself is not denying oneself *something* necessarily. Jesus is not so much concerned about what we do as what we are.
3. Denying self is repudiating natural feelings about oneself—that we own ourselves.
 - a. If we are going to follow Jesus, we no longer belong to ourselves.
 - b. Jesus must make those final decisions about our lives.
 - c. Idolatry of self is the national religion of hell.
 - d. There can be no Lordship without discipleship.

B. One must take up his cross.

1. This was not merely a handicap or difficulty.
2. The cross includes those degrading events that expose us.
3. Therefore, we are to cling to the cross because it is something that is valuable to us.

C. One must follow Jesus.

1. This is obedience to Him.
2. The Christian life is following Jesus and doing what He says like forgiving and loving our enemies regardless of feeling.

III. There are two attitudes: losing one's life or saving it.

IV. There are two results. Losing one's life trying to save it or saving one's life being willing to lose it.

A. The way to fulfillment is death.

B. Discipleship ends with satisfaction.

C. A man can be a Christian and not a disciple, but the Christian who is not a disciple lives his life in vain.

D. Becoming a Christian is a radical thing, but it is the only way to life.

Application questions:

1. What does it mean to deny oneself?

2. Why is the cross so important for following Jesus? What does this mean?

3. How would you assess your walk with Jesus at this point? What can you take away from this message to strengthen your walk?
