



Message Reflections

September 29, 2019

The Cost of Discipleship

Read *Luke 9:18-26*.

“Then he said to them all: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.” Luke 9:23

“As we embark upon discipleship, we surrender ourselves to Christ in union with his death – we give over our lives to death. Thus it begins; the cross is not the terrible end to an otherwise god-fearing and happy life, but it meets us at the beginning of our communion with Christ. When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die.

The call to discipleship, the baptism in the name of Jesus Christ means both death and life. The call of Christ, his baptism, sets the Christian in the middle of the daily arena against sin and the devil. Every day he encounters new temptations, and every day he must suffer anew for Jesus Christ's sake. The wounds and scars he receives in the fray are living tokens of this participation in the cross of his Lord.” -- Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*

- What exactly does it mean to “take up our cross”?

“To take up the cross is to put up with a personal challenge. God, we think, passes out crosses the way a warden hands out shovels to the chain gang. No one wants one. Each one gets one. Everybody has a cross to bear, and we might as well get used to it.

But really. Is Jesus reducing the cross to hassles and headaches? Calling us to quit complaining about the fly in the ointment or the pain in the neck? The cross means so much more. It is God's tool of redemption, instrument of salvation—

proof of his love for people. To take up the cross, then, is to take up Christ's burden for the people of the world. Though our crosses are similar, none are identical. *'If any of you want to be my followers, you must forget about yourself. You must take up your cross each day and follow me'* (Luke 9:23 CEV).

We each have our own cross to carry—our individual callings. . . . It's a . . . sweet day when you discover your God-designed task. It fits. It matches your passions and enlists your gifts and talents. Want to blow the cloud cover off your gray day? Accept God's direction." — Max Lucado, *Live Loved: Experiencing God's Presence in Everyday Life / EVERY DAY DESERVES A CHANCE*

We have learned that disciples making more disciples is a principle of the Scripture. To have one person who preaches the gospel is not the biblical model; rather, all of God's people should be preaching the gospel through their words and lives as obedient disciples.

- What are your reasons for not being involved in discipling?

- What next step can you take on the discipleship pathway toward spiritual maturity?

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