

August 15, 2010
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Monday

Luke 9:23 And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, ..."

The success of your Christian walk really turns on your personal desire, your 'want to', your priorities. Jesus said, "if anyone desires..." The clear indication is that many do not and will not genuinely desire to follow Christ. So that is the subject of your contemplation today. What do you want? What do you desire in your relationship with Jesus? Do you want a God who stands as your servant or a God who orders your life? Did you come to Christ because you think that you deserve Him or because you know that He deserves all of you: your life, your obedience, your worship?

Tuesday

Luke 9:24 "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it."

In the book *What Happened to Their Kids*, Malcolm Forbes tells the heartrending stories of the children of the rich and famous. Most lose their way, though they seem to have everything. The news media often reports on the lives of the sports heroes, actors, and politicians who live destroyed lives. Yet we envy them their money, fame, or notoriety. God's word revealed the truth for everyone to see. Those who search for selfish gain lose it all. Those who give their lives to follow Christ gain everything important. Have you learned the lesson?

Wednesday

Luke 9:23 "...he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me."

Too often the Christian life has been soft-pedaled. We preach the blessings of God's offer without the sacrifice of God's plan. But the Christian life is by definition a surrendered-life. You have surrendered your soul to God. I am afraid that there will be many who will not make it into heaven, because they never gave themselves to the Savior. Instead they only planned to take His benefits. Jesus is Lord. He is God. He offers everything, but He also requires surrender. Do not whitewash these words and miss His meaning: "deny himself," "take up his cross daily," "follow me." Think upon these words of Jesus.

Thursday

Luke 9:24 "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it."

I call it the *reverse principle*. It is the principle of scripture that describes the successful life of blessing and abundance. We see it in stewardship of our money. The scriptures say that those who learn to give a tithe of their income to His church will find financial, personal, and spiritual blessings. It is the reverse of what worldly people think. You give away your stuff and you gain what is important. The principle works in all parts of your life. Your life is after all a stewardship, too. Give your life, your priorities, your energies, your purposes to God and He will grant to you more than you could imagine — life eternal and life abundant.

Friday

Luke 9:23 And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me."

Think upon this. Though Jesus' demands are stark — take up your cross and follow — they are issued out of and only out of love. He does not need nor delight in your poverty but knows that the cross is the only way to genuine riches. This call to deny and follow comes from the same Lord who said, "the thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy, but I have come that you might have life (eternal) and live life to the full (right now). Love is God's basis and motivation of His demand. He knows the way to blessing and desires to lead you there. This is His reason: His love for you.