

# First Things

Priorities in the Christian Life

## **01.14.18 | Discipleship**

### **Mark 8:31-37**

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31 He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again. 32 He spoke plainly about this, and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. 33 But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. “Get behind me, Satan!” he said. “You do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.”

34 Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said:

“Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. 35 For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it. 36 What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? 37 Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?”

What we know not, may You teach us  
What we have not, may You give us  
What we are not, may You make us  
In Christ’s name,  
Amen

“You called, shouted, broke through my deafness;  
you flared, blazed, banished my blindness;  
you lavished your fragrance,  
I gasped, and now I pant for you;  
I tasted you, and I hunger and thirst;  
you touched me, and I burned for your peace.”  
- St. Augustine

### **Mark 8:34**

Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: “Whoever wants to be my disciple **must deny themselves and take up their cross** and follow me.”

The cruciform life is a countercultural life of fidelity and love, generosity and justice, purity and promise-keeping, nonviolence and peacemaking.

The denial of self is the denial of a false self so the true self can emerge.

“Your soul is what integrates your will (your intentions), your mind (your thoughts and feelings, your values and conscience) and your body (your face, body language, and actions) into a single life.”

- John Ortberg, *Soul Keeping*

“You have to give to receive. You have to surrender to something outside yourself to gain the strength within yourself. You have to conquer your desires to get what you crave. Success leads to the greatest failure, which is pride. Failure leads to the greatest success, which is humility and learning. In order to fulfill yourself you have to forget yourself. In order to find yourself you have to lose yourself. That inverse logic is the moral logic. There is no other.”

- David Brooks, Lecture: “How to Be Religious in the Public Square”

“Your real, new self will not come as long as you are looking for it. It will come when you are looking for Him. Does that sound strange? The principle runs through all life from top to bottom. Give up yourself, and you will find your real self. Lose your life and you will save it. Submit to death, death of your ambitions and favorite wishes every day and death of your whole body in the end: submit with every fiber on your being, and you will find eternal life.”

C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

“A commitment is falling in love with something and then building a structure of behavior around it for those moments when love falters.”

David Brooks, Lecture: “The Next Big Challenge in Your Life”

Knowing Jesus, learning to follow Him, taking in our life His life, practices, teachings. Meditating on them. Building a personal, intimate relationship with Jesus.

Obedying Jesus, bringing your life into conformity with all that Jesus taught. This is keeping your moral lives in line with Jesus’ teachings. Practicing justice and charity in your life.