



(If you missed Hannah's talk here it is <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FlXafzYilbA>)

In the following passage, Jesus states three key things to becoming his disciple:

1. Deny yourself
2. Take up your cross daily
3. Follow me

Luke 9:21-25 Jesus strictly warned them not to tell this to anyone. ²² And he said, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life." ²³ Then he said to them all: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must *deny themselves* and *take up their cross daily* and *follow me*. ²⁴ For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it. ²⁵ What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self?"

D E N Y Y O U R S E L F

Leviticus 16:29-31 This is to be a lasting ordinance for you: On the tenth day of the seventh month you must *deny yourselves* and not do any work—whether native-born or a foreigner residing among you— ³⁰ because on this day atonement will be made for you, to cleanse you. Then, before the Lord, you will be clean from all your sins. ³¹ It is a day of sabbath rest, and you must *deny yourselves*; it is a lasting ordinance.

Leviticus 23:26-32 The Lord said to Moses, ²⁷ "The tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. Hold a sacred assembly and *deny yourselves*, and present a food offering to the Lord. ²⁸ Do not do any work on that day, because it is the Day of Atonement, when atonement is made for you before the Lord your God. ²⁹ Those who do not *deny themselves* on that day must be cut off from their people. ³⁰ I will destroy from among their people anyone who does any work on that day. ³¹ You shall do no work at all. This is to be a lasting ordinance for the generations to come, wherever you live. ³² It is a day of sabbath rest for you, and you must *deny yourselves*. From the evening of the ninth day of the month until the following evening you are to observe your sabbath."

Numbers 29:7 On the tenth day of this seventh month hold a sacred assembly. You must *deny yourselves* and do no work.

Questions

- Is there any common theme you notice in regards to these Old Testament passages about *denying yourself*?
- After reading these passages, has your perspective about *denying yourself* changed in any way?
- Do you think Jesus deliberately named *denying yourself* first in the list he gives about becoming a disciple, and if so why?
- What do you think Jesus meant when he said we must *deny ourselves* to become his disciples?
- In an age of 'be whoever you want to be, and do whatever you want to do', how does this concept of self-denial sit with you?

TAKE UP YOUR CROSS

At the centre of apprenticeship to Jesus is the symbol is the cross. The cross was not a symbol people wore around their neck, or on a church building. It was a symbol of death. This tends to be a sign we have become numb to, unlike in the first century where the cross would be instantly associated with images of the brutal torture it was.

Luke 9:22 And he said, "*The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.*"

Luke 9:22-25 MSG Then he told them what they could expect for themselves: "Anyone who intends to come with me has to let me lead. You're not in the driver's seat—I am. *Don't run from suffering; embrace it.* Follow me and I'll show you how. Self-help is no help at all. Self-sacrifice is the way, my way, to finding yourself, your true self. What good would it do to get everything you want and lose you, the real you?"

Gal 2:20-21 *I have been crucified with Christ* and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.²¹ I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!"

1 Cor 2:2; 5:21 For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except *Jesus Christ and him crucified...* God made *him who had no sin to be sin for us*, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Questions

- What is the relevance of Jesus first going to the *cross* himself before calling his disciples to do the same?
- What do you think it practically looks like for you to be *crucified with Christ*?
- What do you think about John's audacity to call himself *the one whom Jesus loved*, and does observing that he was the only disciple at the foot of the cross change your initial opinion of John's claim?
- How could you your life look different if you identified more like John did, as *the one whom Jesus loved*?

FOLLOW ME

Hannah said that Jesus is asking us to let him make the pathway and calling us to trust him and follow. Go where I go, live how I live, value what I value, say what I say, think what I think, see what I see, feel what I feel. This is how we get life in its fullness. These things are not doing more, or trying harder, but growing in relationship with Jesus, and letting go of the pressure of it being all on our shoulders.

Matt 4:18-20 As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. ¹⁹“Come, *follow me*,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” ²⁰ At once they left their nets and followed him.

Matt 9:9 As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector’s booth. “*Follow me*,” he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him.

Luke 9:57-62 As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, “I will follow you wherever you go.” ⁵⁸ Jesus replied, “Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.” ⁵⁹ He said to another man, “Follow me.” But he replied, “Lord, first let me go and bury my father.” ⁶⁰ Jesus said to him, “Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God.” ⁶¹ Still another said, “I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say goodbye to my family.” ⁶² Jesus replied, “No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.”

Ps 119:105 Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.

Matt 11:28-30 MSG “Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.”

Questions

- Knowing that *following Jesus* is not a one and done task, but a continual decision, do you relate more to the disciples who immediately *followed* Jesus, or the unnamed others who first have other things to do?
- The term *follow* is now commonly used with regards to sports teams, interests, and social media. What does it personally look like for you to *follow* Jesus, and does it differ from other interests you *follow*?
- How can we use God’s Word to help us *follow* Jesus?
- Sometimes we can see following Jesus as an effort, or maybe even burdensome. Is there anything in this passage from the Message translation of Matt 11:28-30 which comforts you or sticks out to you as we learn more about following Jesus?

“My secret is that I want to be relevant and popular. I want my desires fulfilled and pain minimalized for stop I want a manageable relationship with an institution rather than messy relationships with real people. I want to be transformed into the image of Christ by showing up at entertaining events rather than through the hard work of discipline. I want to wear my faith on my sleeve and not look at the darkness in my heart. And above all I want a controllable god. I want a divine commodity to do my will on earth as it is in heaven.” Skye Jethani

Hannah said we want the best of both worlds, and this is the tension we ALL live in

- We want to be generous, yet also really rich
- We want character, but we don't want suffering
- We really want humility, but we don't want humiliation
- We want patience, but we don't want to wait
- We want kindness, but we don't want our lives filled with people who agitate us
- We want to hear God's voice, but we don't want to get up early and spend time in the quiet praying
- We want the life of Jesus, but we don't want to pick up the cross of Jesus

This should cause conviction... NOT CONDEMNATION (Rom 8:1)

Reflection time <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2E4Pdik0wuY>

- Watch this video by Judah Smith about Barabbas and then spend some time reflecting on the video and about everything you have talked about tonight, and think about these questions
- Is there anything specific that has spoken to you tonight?
- Is there any way God has ministered to you and encouraged you tonight?
- Is there anything God has convicted you about that you would like to lay at the foot of the cross?