

# Self-Denial

## I. Introduction

- A. Jesus taught that being His true disciple involves self-denial. Consider some things in this passage and elsewhere in Scripture that are connected to this theme. **Luke 9:23**

## II. The Example

- A. Jesus' statement in Luke 9:23 begins with the words, "If any man would come after me..." To understand self-denial, we must understand the One Christians follow. **Luke 9:23a**
- B. Jesus' life on earth was not guided by what would please *Himself*, but by what pleased the *Father*. As a result, He willfully accepted much suffering. **Luke 9:22; Luke 9:57-58**

## III. The Commitment

- A. Jesus' commitment to the Father's will exemplifies what self-denial is about. Denying oneself involves forsaking whatever pleasures, ambitions, goals, etc. we must in order to please the Father. It involves changing our aim in life from pleasing self to pleasing God. **Luke 9:23b; Galatians 2:20; 2 Corinthians 5:9**
- B. The lifestyle of self-denial is one of presenting one's entire being to God as a "living sacrifice." **Romans 12:1**

## IV. The Sacrifice

- A. Jesus continues His command in Luke 9:23 by exhorting those who want to follow Him to take up our crosses. **Luke 9:23c**
- B. This statement alludes to the sacrifices one must make to truly be Jesus' disciple. Just as Jesus accepted much hardship by choosing to submit to the Father's will, *we* must choose to accept the sufferings that coincide with living faithfully. **2 Timothy 3:12 (verse 11); 1 Peter 4:4**

## V. The Frequency

- A. Luke's account of Jesus' statement about self-denial notes that taking up of one's cross is something that we must do *daily*. Being Jesus' disciple is not just a one-time event or a weekly event, but a *permanent, ongoing* lifestyle commitment. **Luke 9:23d; Galatians 2:20; Acts 17:11**

## VI. The Worth

- A. While the depth of the commitment Jesus calls for must not be under-valued, neither should the *worth* of choosing this lifestyle. No matter what we must give up to please God, it is more than worth it. **Luke 9:24-25**

## VII. Conclusion

- A. May we look to Jesus' example of self-denial, and choose to deny ourselves, take up our crosses daily, and follow Him. **Luke 9:23**