

Biblical Study Insights

A Weekly Compilation by Rodney "Roc" Foreman

"The Necessity for Self-Denial"

"...Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple...."

Luke 14:27

All of us might conclude that one of the most painful, yet rewarding lessons to endure learning within the Christian experience is the lesson of **"bearing your Cross."** After we have bumped our (personal and collective) heads against every seemingly difficult obstacle and have stumbled over every apparent hindrance in our lives, we finally come the understanding that an AUTHENTIC Christian experience is one that calls for us to follow Christ in every way and in everything.

The problem, however, is that we tend to follow Jesus Christ on our own terms – within our own understanding of life & living, relying upon our own experiences to find solutions to all that causes us pain. Oh, but if we would dare follow Jesus on **HIS TERMS**, then we will learn to hold fast to a reality that is **NOT** so simple – a responsibility that presupposes our deepest desires: That reality is the DENIAL of my "SELF!"

What am I saying, you ask? Well, to understand this, we call our attention to the above text: **Luke 14**. Here in this passage, we find (among other things) a great fight of spiritual significance. It is really the fight of our lives with the Shepherding of Christ at stake! Jesus not only requires that I **"...come after him...."**, but He also requires that I bring something with me: **My OWN Cross!**

I'm sure we'll agree that the Cross of Christ represents the deepest suffering, humiliation and anguish, but in addition, it represents the greatest sacrifice that one can ever make in fulfilling a divine purpose: **The Denial of Self!** Within the application of Self-Denial is the realization and experience of spiritual separation from what you have always (humanly) known and/or relied upon.

The word translated **"Carry"** is the word **"Bastazo" (bas-tad-zo)**, which means *to take up with your hands; to walk with; to bear up upon your entire being something specific and burdensome; to fully and willingly support*. In other words, I must fully support, work with, walk [live] with, as well as allow upon my entire being that which is burdensome (or heavy) to me! Yes! This is something difficult, seemingly hard to bear and could be viewed by others as utterly stupid, but if I am to know Christ and be His **"Disciple"** then it is an extreme must!

The word translated **"Disciple"** here is the Greek word, **"Mathetes" (Math-ay-tes)**, which is *a learner, pupil and supporter!* Wait a minute... What Jesus is essentially saying in this passage is for His Followers to **"support"** something that may very well become increasingly hard for me. It may down-right hurt to **"support"** Jesus (as His pupil). WOW! Please think about this. It is IN THIS that I am truly a Christian! It is this "Christian experience" that I must **"hold up"** Christ in support of Him – Bearing MY OWN Cross, although it appears very heavy, difficult and even painful! This is how we truly identify with Jesus Christ and, as The Apostle Paul well said,

"...to KNOW HIM in The Power of His Resurrection, and The Fellowship of His Suffering, becoming like Him in His Death...." **Philippians 3:10**

**Much Love,
Roc**

Questions & Comments can be directed to Roc by
Roc4You2@gmail.com