

not a fan.

(3) An Invitation To Follow...

WHAT KIND OF RELATIONSHIP DOES JESUS WANT TO HAVE WITH US?

LUKE 9:23...

*If **ANYONE** would **COME AFTER** me... he must **DENY HIMSELF**...
and **TAKE UP HIS CROSS DAILY**... and **FOLLOW ME**!*

JOHN 3:16 emphasizes **BELIEVING**!

LUKE 9:23 focuses on **FOLLOWING**!

“IF ANYONE...”

ANYONE can **FOLLOW**... But not without **GIVING UP... EVERYTHING**!

*It's vitally important for us to **UNDERSTAND** that the **GRACE** of **GOD** doesn't
simply **INVITE US TO FOLLOW**... **IT ALSO TEACHES US TO FOLLOW**!*

The **INVITATION** to **FOLLOW JESUS**... **BEGINS** with Him saying...
“IF ANYONE...” -- And **ENDS** with you **RESPONDING**!

“COME AFTER...”

Matthew 13:44...

*The Kingdom of Heaven is like a **TREASURE** hidden in a field. When a man
found it... he hid it again... and then in his **JOY**... he went and **SOLD ALL HE
HAD**... and bought that field...*

“DENY HIMSELF...”

*How do you **DENY YOU**... In a world that's always saying...
IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU?*

Matthew 19:16...

Teacher... what good thing must I do to get Eternal Life?

Matthew 19:21...

*Sell your possessions and give to the poor... and you have treasure in heaven.
Then **COME (After) ... FOLLOW ME!***

Jesus Was Saying...

THERE'S NO WAY TO FOLLOW ME... WITHOUT DENYING YOURSELF!

**A FOLLOWER MAKES A DECISION... EVERY DAY... TO DENY HIMSELF...
AND CHOOSES JESUS... EVEN IF IT COSTS HIM EVERYTHING!!**

A COMMITTED LOVE... IS OFTEN BEST DEFINED... BY SACRIFICE!

*If you call yourself a **CHRISTIAN**... by definition...*

**You are COMMITTING to FOLLOWING JESUS...
IN EVERY AREA OF YOUR LIFE!**

*Instead of approaching our faith with a **SPIRIT OF DENIAL** that says...
“**WHAT CAN I DO FOR JESUS...?**”*

*We approach it with a **CONSUMER MENTALITY** that says...
“**WHAT CAN JESUS DO FOR ME...?**”*

The BIBLE describes the word FOLLOWER as a SLAVE!

**YOU CAN'T CALL JESUS LORD...
WITHOUT DECLARING YOURSELF AS A SLAVE!**

Deuteronomy 15:16-17...

*But if your servant says to you... ‘I do not want to leave you’ – because he loves
you and your family and is well off with you... then take an awl and push it
through his ear lobe into the door... and he will become your servant for life.*

**A “SLAVE” realizes... as CrAzY as it might seem to everyone else...
as RiDiCuLoUs as it might appear to those who don't understand...**

**HE'S GOING TO CHOOSE A LIFE OF “SLAVERY” BECAUSE...
HE LOVES HIS MASTER SO MUCH...
THAT HE REALIZES HE'S BETTER OFF AS A “SLAVE!”**

“TAKE UP HIS CROSS DAILY...”

1. The **CROSS** was a **SYMBOL** of **HUMILIATION!**

2. The **CROSS** was also a **SYMBOL** of **SUFFERING!**

YOU CAN'T CARRY A CROSS... WITHOUT SUFFERING!

Luke 6:22...

*Blessed are you when men **hate** you... when they **exclude** you and **insult** you
and **reject** your name as evil... because of the Son of Man.*

2 Timothy 3:12...

*All who live Godly will **SUFFER** persecution!*

Philippians 1:29...

*For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on Him...
but also to **SUFFER** for Him!*

AM I CARRYING A CROSS...

IF I'M NOT EXPERIENCING ANY SUFFERING OR SACRIFICE?

3. The **CROSS** was also a **SYMBOL** of **DEATH!**

*When we become **FOLLOWERS** of **JESUS**... **THAT IS THE END OF US!***

*Jesus didn't come to this earth for **BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION**...*

*He didn't come to this earth to **CHANGE YOU** either...*

*The **TRUTH** of the **GOSPEL** is that **JESUS** came...*

SO THAT YOU WOULD DIE!

**EACH AND EVERY DAY... WE ARE TO MAKE A DECISION...
TO DIE TO OURSELVES... AND TO LIVE FOR CHRIST!**

DYING TO OURSELVES...

IS NOT A ONE-TIME DECISION... IT'S A DAILY DECISION!

Luke 9:24...

*For whoever wants to **SAVE HIS LIFE... WILL LOSE IT...**
but whoever **LOSES HIS LIFE FOR ME... WILL SAVE IT!***

IT'S ONLY BY DYING TO OURSELVES... THAT WE TRULY FIND LIFE!
