

# The Demands of Discipleship

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3/30/2008

## Introduction

Let us consider Matthew 10:37-39, and other parallel and related passages, where Jesus addresses the demands of discipleship (cf. also Matt. 16:24-27; Mark 8:34-38; Luke 9:23-26; 14:25-33).

*Matthew 10:37-39 ... 37 "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. 38 "And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. 39 "He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it. (NASB95)*

*Matthew 16:24-27 ... 24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. 25 "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. 26 "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? 27 "For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and will then repay every man according to his deeds. (NASB95)*

*Mark 8:34-38 ... 34 And He summoned the crowd with His disciples, and said to them, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. 35 "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. 36 "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? 37 "For what will a man give in exchange for his soul? 38 "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." (NASB95)*

*Luke 9:23-26 ... 23 And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. 24 "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it. 25 "For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself? 26 "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He comes in His glory, and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. (NASB95)*

*Luke 14:25-33 ... 25 Now large crowds were going along with Him; and He turned and said to them, 26 "If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be*

*My disciple. 27 “Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. 28 “For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it? 29 “Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who observe it begin to ridicule him, 30 saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish.’ 31 “Or what king, when he sets out to meet another king in battle, will not first sit down and consider whether he is strong enough with ten thousand men to encounter the one coming against him with twenty thousand? 32 “Or else, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. 33 “So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions. (NASB95)*

## **Regarding Family**

We must love Christ more than our own family. Discipleship involves the potential of loss (Matt. 10:37; Luke 14:26; 9:57-62) coupled with the assurance of gain (Matt. 4:18-22; 12:46-50; Mark 10:29-30; Luke 18:29-30).

### **Loss**

*Matthew 10:37 ... 37 “He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. (NASB95)*

*Luke 14:26 ... 26 “If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. (NASB95)*

*Luke 9:57-62 ... 57 As they were going along the road, someone said to Him, “I will follow You wherever You go.” 58 And Jesus said to him, “The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.” 59 And He said to another, “Follow Me.” But he said, “Lord, permit me first to go and bury my father.” 60 But He said to him, “Allow the dead to bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim everywhere the kingdom of God.” 61 Another also said, “I will follow You, Lord; but first permit me to say good-bye to those at home.” 62 But Jesus said to him, “No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.” (NASB95)*

### **Gain**

*Matthew 4:18-22 ... 18 Now as Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon who was called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. 19 And He said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.” 20 Immediately they left their nets and followed Him. 21 Going on from there He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and He called them. 22 Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him. (NASB95)*

*Matthew 12:46-50 ... 46 While He was still speaking to the crowds, behold, His mother and brothers were standing outside, seeking to speak to Him. 47 Someone said to Him, "Behold, your mother and your brothers are standing outside seeking to speak to you." 48 But Jesus answered the one who was telling Him and said, "Who is My mother and who are My brothers?" 49 And stretching out His hand toward His disciples, He said, "Behold My mother and My brothers! 50 "For whoever does the will of My Father who is in heaven, he is My brother and sister and mother." (NASB95)*

*Mark 10:29-30 ... 29 Jesus said, "Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or farms, for My sake and for the gospel's sake, 30 but that he will receive a hundred times as much now in the present age, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms, along with persecutions; and in the age to come, eternal life. (NASB95)*

*Luke 18:29-30 ... 29 And He said to them, "Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, 30 who will not receive many times as much at this time and in the age to come, eternal life." (NASB95)*

## **Regarding Comfort**

We must love Christ more than our own comfort. Discipleship involves the potential of loss (Matt. 10:38; 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23; 14:27) coupled with the assurance of gain (Gal. 6:12-17; 2 Cor. 6:4-10; 1 Pet. 1:6-9).

### **Loss**

*Matthew 10:38 ... 38 "And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. (NASB95)*

*Matthew 16:24 ... 24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. (NASB95)*

*Mark 8:34 ... 34 And He summoned the crowd with His disciples, and said to them, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. (NASB95)*

*Luke 9:23 ... 23 And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. (NASB95)*

*Luke 14:27 ... 27 "Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. (NASB95)*

## **Gain**

*Galatians 6:12-17 ... 12 Those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh try to compel you to be circumcised, simply so that they will not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. 13 For those who are circumcised do not even keep the Law themselves, but they desire to have you circumcised so that they may boast in your flesh. 14 But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. 15 For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. 16 And those who will walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God. 17 From now on let no one cause trouble for me, for I bear on my body the brand-marks of Jesus. (NASB95)*

*2 Corinthians 6:4-10 ... 4 but in everything commending ourselves as servants of God, in much endurance, in afflictions, in hardships, in distresses, 5 in beatings, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in hunger, 6 in purity, in knowledge, in patience, in kindness, in the Holy Spirit, in genuine love, 7 in the word of truth, in the power of God; by the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and the left, 8 by glory and dishonor, by evil report and good report; regarded as deceivers and yet true; 9 as unknown yet well-known, as dying yet behold, we live; as punished yet not put to death, 10 as sorrowful yet always rejoicing, as poor yet making many rich, as having nothing yet possessing all things. (NASB95)*

*1 Peter 1:6-9 ... 6 In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, 7 so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 8 and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, 9 obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls. (NASB95)*

## **Regarding Life**

We must love Christ more than our own life. Discipleship involves the potential of loss (Matt. 10:39; 16:25-26; Mark 8:35-36; Luke 9:24-25) coupled with the assurance of gain (Acts 7:54-60; 2 Tim. 4:6-8; Rev. 2:10-11).

## **Loss**

*Matthew 10:39 ... 39 “He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it. (NASB95)*

*Matthew 16:25-26 ... 25 “For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. 26 “For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? (NASB95)*

*Mark 8:35-36 ... 35 "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. 36 "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? (NASB95)*

*Luke 9:24-25 ... 24 "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it. 25 "For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself? (NASB95)*

*John 12:25 ... 25 "He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal. (NASB95)*

## **Gain**

*Acts 7:54-60 ... 54 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the quick, and they began gnashing their teeth at him. 55 But being full of the Holy Spirit, he gazed intently into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; 56 and he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened up and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." 57 But they cried out with a loud voice, and covered their ears and rushed at him with one impulse. 58 When they had driven him out of the city, they began stoning him; and the witnesses laid aside their robes at the feet of a young man named Saul. 59 They went on stoning Stephen as he called on the Lord and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" 60 Then falling on his knees, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!" Having said this, he fell asleep. (NASB95)*

*2 Timothy 4:6-8 ... 6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. 7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; 8 in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing. (NASB95)*

*Revelation 2:10-11 ... 10 "Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. 11 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death.' (NASB95)*

## **Conclusion**

Are you living in view of the judgment (Matt. 16:27; Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26)? Have you counted the cost (Luke 14:28-33)?

*Matthew 16:27 ... 27 "For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and will then repay every man according to his deeds. (NASB95)*

*Mark 8:38 ... 38 "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." (NASB95)*

*Luke 9:26 ... 26 “For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He comes in His glory, and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. (NASB95)*

*Luke 14:28-33 ... 28 “For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it? 29 “Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who observe it begin to ridicule him, 30 saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish.’ 31 “Or what king, when he sets out to meet another king in battle, will not first sit down and consider whether he is strong enough with ten thousand men to encounter the one coming against him with twenty thousand? 32 “Or else, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. 33 “So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions. (NASB95)*