The Lesson Of Self-Denial

Dan Petty · Matthew 16:24

INTRODUCTION

- The general simply suggested to him teach him to deny himself. Teach him to deny himself.
- It was great advice and a basic and fundamental principle about a person's character. And particularly in an unprincipled world.
- This principle stated by Robert E. Lee to teach him to deny himself was not original with him. In fact, it lies at the very heart of the teachings of the gospel in the New Testament.

1 The Idea of Discipleship

Matthew 16:24; Luke 14:26–27

- If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.
- If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, even his own life, he cannot be my disciple.
- And whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.
- It's an absolute necessity, it's an imperative.
- Jesus is talking about something that's absolutely essential to being a disciple.

2 Rooted in an Exalted View of Self

1 John 2:16; 2 Timothy 3:2–4

- The lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life. He says, all these things are not from the Father, they are from the world.
- They all have their roots in an exalted view of self.
- The self-centered attitude is the greatest obstacle to living lives that will prepare us for heaven.
- For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving.
- As disciples of Christ, we should be noted above all else as people who are concerned for the welfare of others.
- Such selflessness advances the kingdom. Now I tell you that because that is the essence of discipleship.

3 The Mind of Christ

Philippians 2:5–8; 1 Peter 2:21; Philippians 2:3–4

- Have this attitude or this mind in yourselves, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself.

- I don’t know of any higher calling as disciples of the Lord than striving to do what Jesus would do.
- Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit. But with humility of mind, regard one another as more important than yourselves.
- Have this mind, he says. The mind of striving to imitate perfect self denial.
- Instead of being full of ourselves, we need to empty ourselves just as our Lord emptied himself.

4 Crucified With Christ: Cross-Shaped Discipleship

Galatians 2:20; Luke 9:23

- I have been crucified with Christ. And it is no longer I who live. But Christ lives in me.
- The people understood what carrying the cross meant. It meant death.
- True discipleship is a cross-shaped discipleship.
- That we must die to self so that we can live in Christ. That we must empty self so that we can be filled up to all the fullness of Christ.
- If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.
- We must do this daily. It is a way of life.

THE CHALLENGE

We need to teach it and model it in our homes in front of our children. It is the most important lesson our children can learn from us. Teach him to deny himself.

MY NOTES