

Christ and the Cross

“Who we are as disciples” is a question of “Who is Christ?” Christ’s question, “Who do you say that I am?” is timeless. You can stand before Christ today, tomorrow, next year, ten, twenty, thirty, or even a hundred years from now, and He will still ask you, “Who do you say I am?”

For those who accept Christ’s choice of us as His disciples, the answer is inescapable. Yet, few have truly and honestly answered the question.

The answer does not come from within us, answering the question to our soul’s satisfaction. The answer lies beyond us in Christ. Had we accepted Christ’s answer to His question, “Who do you say I am?” we would know our human soul’s dilemma in the impossibility of the answer.

When Christ asked the question to his disciples, He answered by commanding them to “Deny yourself, take up your cross and follow me.” He commanded them to lose their life to gain their life. Confronted by this Divine Truth, most believers are unwilling to accept the cost of His discipleship.

Human knowledge and experience cannot prepare us for the Divine Truth of Christ’s answer to his question. There is no one born who gives up willingly their soul to Christ. Those who state the ease of such a choice are stating the hypocrisy of their lives. The true meaning of Christ’s answer will bear out their human hypocrisy.

When Christ commanded his disciples to “Deny yourself,” he was commanding them to stand before humanity and proclaim, “I stand before you as false, unworthy of praise or merit. While I live in the flesh, I am untrue without Christ.”

A careful examination of your life reveals the untruth of your soul’s desires to be “true to yourself,” through thought, word and deed. Your soul’s desire is to be “true instead of false, right instead of wrong, righteous instead of unrighteous.” Your soul demands the conditions of desire not the unconditionality of need. Look into your life and your possessions and tell me you need all that you possess. Conditions of desire demand you seek to fulfill and satisfy for the “good” of your “self” only, not because you need, but because you desire. Your soul is “self” seeking, not “self-less.”

Christ does not demand you to judge, condemn or forbid your life based upon the moral and ethical judgment of your soul. Your soul desires either to punish or exonerate you for the things you ought to do but do not do, or for the things you ought not to do but do. He came to free you from the constant and relentless cycle of pain and suffering, violence and destruction your souls demand by desire. The Divine Truth He reveals to you is that you will never discover freedom, a release from desire, while your soul governs your life.

Christ’s command is the emphatic direction to give up on your “human way of life,” and turn toward a “Divine way of life”

that leads to release from your soul’s desires. He is not asking your opinion whether you are willing to acknowledge this Divine Truth. He knows through his own human life where the soul’s desire will lead - to brokenness. A life filled with human desire that remains unfulfilled and unsatisfied by the conditions of your soul. Your soul’s desire seeks “more and more” that leads to your human brokenness of “less and less.”

Christ knew you could never willingly give up your soul to Divine brokenness by His command, “Deny yourself.” He knew you would not accept and do His command by your own willing choice. You need proof of your own human futility before you will accept His command. Divine permissive Will allows you the privilege of breaking your own life by the desires of your soul until you discover the human futility of pain and suffering, violence and destruction. Christ waits for your moment to cry out, “Save me from myself !”

It is only when you know and accept the truth that you cannot save yourself from your desires that lead to destruction, that you will be able to turn from and give up on your own human devices to save yourself. It is only when you can proclaim, “My humanity is false and untrue. If I continue my way of life, then I continue in the human brokenness of my life until I die.”

It is only in that moment of “denying yourself,” that you are willingly able to accept Christ’s command to “Take up your cross.” It is your soul’s desire to believe this

means “to carry” the burden of the cross. But Christ does not command you to carry the cross, for He has carried it for you. He did not command you to die upon the cross as payment for your soul’s desire. He died, once and for all time, for the sin, for the desires of every soul that will live upon the earth. The choice to carry the burden of your soul’s desires is yours only. Just as it will be your choice to accept release from your soul’s desires by the “taking up of your cross.” When Christ commands you to “Take up your cross, he is commanding you to accept, to “take up” the Way, the Truth, and the Life that is in Him only, not in you.

How can you “take up” Christ as the Way, the Truth, and the Life unless you have first “denied” your way, your truth, your life? You cannot serve both your soul and Christ, for you will either hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. All you need do is examine your life to know the truth. If you demand conditions too how you will “deny yourself and take up your cross,” then you remain governed by your soul.

Regardless of your thoughts, words and deeds of righteousness, you will remain alone without the Divine. You will remain living out the outward observance of your human truths, while your soul’s inner pride and prejudice condemns you to be alone, forever, without the Divine.

Christ and the Cross is planted in the midst of humanity to reveal the truth of your humanity and the Truth of the Divine. Your

life through the soul nailed Christ to the cross, but Christ's life lived through the "denial of Himself and the taking up of His cross," to follow the Divine only, is an eternal Hope that will lead you to a release from your soul's governance to a freedom lived through the Divine. Nothing in your human experience prepares you for such an acceptance of astounding Divine Truth.

Your acceptance of the Way, the Truth, and the Life through Christ leads you "to" and "through" His cross. The life of conversion, belief, submission, "denying yourself and taking up your cross," leads you "through" the cross. without your soul being broken by Christ and the cross, you remain living through your soul's conditions of desire, demanding you live at the foot of the cross, fearing the step that will take you through the cross.

Christ's promise of His Divine Kingdom established eternally within the temporal realm of humanity cannot be entered by standing at the foot of the cross. You can enter His Divine Kingdom only by stepping through His cross.

Christ's cross stands between the redemption and salvation of humanity. He has redeemed your humanity by the cost of His life as expiation for your sin, yet your salvation, being saved from your soul and soul's desires awaits your step through His cross. It is a step from conversion, your belief in the Divine, to submission, the cost of your life you give willingly to the Divine, knowing that without the Divine, your life is

futile.

When Christ commands, "Follow me," you do not ask what it means. Your life lived through your soul and your soul's desires has answered that question for you. Your continuance of that life means death, but your acceptance of Christ and the cross means life. Until you know the certainty of death you live to yourself and the certainty of life lived through Christ, you remain a slave, a prisoner to your soul's desires that leads you around the never-ending circle of pain and suffering, violence and destruction. You know that life through the soul's desires leads to death, but life through the Divine Spirit leads to life. While you remain bound to your soul, you await release from your soul's desires.

The greatest proof of your soul's governance over your life is the revelation of your soul's desires that demand: "The right or wrong, righteous or the unrighteousness" of law, government and religion - conditions of human power and authority that lead to oppression and slavery. When Christ commands, "Follow me," He is commanding you to a life lived unconditionally. A life lived without the soul's desire for conditions. A life lived in freedom instead of slavery.

Christ died for the unconditional love and mercy the Divine shares willingly, without condition for the forgiveness of humanity's sin. If He, the Savior, died for conditional forgiveness that leads to conditional salvation, then He is not the Divine Savior,

but only a pretender. The Divine Truth of Jesus Christ's Way, Truth and Life, is that He died for ALL, not only for a few.



The Divine promise of salvation, the hope of saving yourself from yourself, is offered freely to all by the cost of His command to, "Deny yourself, take up your cross and follow me." The cost of your discipleship leads to a Divine peace only He can give you. A cost that has led me to know and live the immeasurable value of His Divine peace. What price would you give for such an eternal and everlasting peace? A cost that means your unconditional surrender of your soul to Christ and the Cross. A cost that makes "Christ the Center" to be the Way, the Truth, and the Life of your life.

Christ's discipleship means nothing less than His Life for your life. Those who have experienced a submission to Christ and the cross know of His abundant Divine Peace. An absolute acceptance of the whole revelation for Christ's command to, "Deny yourself, take up your cross and follow me." Those who do, Christ calls disciples, and those who don't call themselves disciples.



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