

DENY YOURSELF

Luke 9:23

**In order for us to be successful Christians and a thriving church,
we need a spirit of selflessness and self-denial.**

I. WE CAN SEE ... - Luke 9:23, 57-62

A. CHRIST'S REQUIREMENT - Luke 9:23

1. Jesus indicates that followers must deny themselves
2. Discipleship requires a selfish turning away from our sin and self-interest

B. MAN'S RESPONSE - Luke 9:57-62

1. Unwilling to deny comfort (57-58)
2. Unwilling to deny finances (59-60)
3. Unwilling to deny recognition (61-62)

II. WE CAN SIN

A. THE CONDITION

1. Enjoying the shallow and seasonal joy of selfish indulgence
- See Heb. 11:25 and note that Moses turned away from such
2. Refusing to acknowledge our slave relationship and Christ's Lordship

B. SOME EXAMPLES

1. The Pharisees wouldn't deny self-righteousness - Matt. 6:1-2, 5, 16
2. A rich farmer wouldn't deny his self-sufficiency - Luke 12:16-21
3. The prodigal son's brother wouldn't deny his bitterness - Luke 15:25-32
4. An arrogant Pharisee wouldn't deny pride - Luke 18:9-14
5. A rich seeker wouldn't deny wealth - Matt. 19:16-22
6. Judas wouldn't deny self-interests - John 12:1-8
7. One of the thieves on the cross wouldn't deny irreverence - Luke 23:39-41
8. Ananias and Sapphira would deny their safety net - Acts 5:1-2
9. John Mark wouldn't deny comfort - Acts 13:13
10. Diotrophes wouldn't deny power - III John 9-10

C. A QUESTION

1. Ask: How did things work out for these selfish sinners?
2. Answer: These are all infamous for their selfishness

III. WE CAN SURRENDER

A. CHRIST'S INSTRUCTIONS - Luke 14:25-33

1. Consider the requirements (25-27)
 - a. Your priorities ... a choice
 - b. Your identity ... a cross
2. Count the cost (28-32) > Can you complete that to which you commit?
3. Commit completely (33) > Giving up everything is the demand of true discipleship

B. CHRISTIAN AUTHORS

- Consider some recent books dealing with discipleship, commitment and self-denial

1. John MacArthur > "Slave: The hidden truth about your identity in Christ"
2. David Platt > "Radical: Taking back your faith from the American dream"
3. Kyle Idleman > "Not a Fan: Becoming a completely committed follower of Jesus"

C. CHRISTIAN EXAMPLES

1. Mary and Joseph gave up respect - Matt. 1:18-24
2. James and John gave up their livelihood - Luke 5:1-11
3. Matthew (Levi) gave up a prominent position - Luke 5:27-28
4. The women at the well gave up her questions - John 4:39-45
5. A child gave up his lunch! - John 6:1-12
6. Mary (sister of Martha) gave up her time - Luke 10:38-42
7. John the Baptist gave up his head! - Matt. 14:3-12
8. A widow gave up her last coin - Mark 12:41-44 (se also Luke 21:1-4)
9. Zacchaeus gave up his dignity - Luke 19:1-10
10. Nicodemus gave up his popularity - John 19:38-42

IV. WE CAN SUFFER

A. CONCLUSION

1. If we won't collectively deny ourselves our church will suffer.
2. Money, ministries and members suffer

B. CONSIDER

1. Lukewarm Christianity - Rev. 3:15-17
2. Disappointing Christianity - Galatians 6:7-8 > being forced to reap what we've sowed
3. Carnal Christianity - I Cor. 1:10-12 and 3:1-3
4. Corrective Christianity - I Cor. 11:27-32
 - a. Their "unworthy manner" involved selfishness (see 17-22).
 - b. God can and will discipline the self-centered Christian who refuses to deny themselves

CONCLUSION

GIVE UP! We are not our own and dare not do our own thing - I Corinthians 6:19-20

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