

Jesus' command to "take up your cross and follow me" signifies a profound call to self-denial, sacrifice, and unwavering commitment to following Him. Jesus used it to illustrate the seriousness and cost of true discipleship. It signifies the depth of commitment and willingness to endure hardships for the sake of following Him. This command is not about self-pity or pride but about a total surrender to God and a commitment to living a life of faith, obedience, and selflessness, even in the face of persecution and hardships.

When a person carried a cross in Jesus' day, the cross meant one thing and one thing only: death by [crucifixion](#).

Jesus predicted His death multiple times during His ministry, emphasizing the necessity of His sacrifice for humanity's redemption. [Matthew 16:21-23](#), [Mark 8:31-32](#),

Denying yourself is an essential part of the Christian life. Jesus called upon those who wish to be His followers to reject the natural human inclination toward selfishness. The Lord Himself exemplified self-denial. [Matthew 16:25-26](#). [Matthew 6:24](#)

The *Dictionary of Bible Themes* defines *self-denial* as "the willingness to deny oneself possessions or status, in order to grow in holiness and commitment to God."

The words Jesus used in the original language for "deny yourself" were strong terms similar that Paul used in [Philippians 3:7-8](#):

Therefore, Jesus' command to "take up your cross and follow Me" is a call to self-abasement and self-sacrifice. One must be willing to die in order to follow Jesus. Dying to self is an absolute surrender to God.

Are you ready to take up your cross and follow Jesus? [Matthew 10:37-39](#)

In some places of the world, these consequences are a reality. But notice the phrasing of the questions: "Are you willing?"

Following Jesus doesn't necessarily mean all these things will happen to you, but the disciple of Christ must be willing to suffer loss.

Are you willing to take up your cross? If faced with a choice—Jesus or the comforts of this life—which will you choose?

Commitment to Christ means taking up your cross daily, giving up your hopes, dreams, possessions, and even your very life if need be for the cause of Christ.

Only if you willingly take up your cross may you be called His disciple ([Luke 14:27](#)). The reward is worth the price.

Remember that, as Jesus called His disciples to "take up your cross and follow Me," He, too, bore a cross. Our Lord led the way.