

What does it mean to follow One who must suffer, be rejected, be killed, and on the third day be raised (v. 22)?

- To follow Jesus means to desire Christ above all else (v. 23).
 - Desire Christ—"If anyone would come after Me"; the pursuit is to know Christ, to be conformed to Christ, to be found in Christ
 - Above All Else—"let him deny himself"; denying all competing desires/ambitions—This doesn't mean that there are not other "pursuits," such as family, friendships, vocation, and such. It means that each of these is pursued for the sake of Christ, not as an end in itself.
 - "take up his cross daily"—Progressive sanctification is a process.
 - "and follow Me"—Following to death and to resurrection. Jesus didn't just carry the cross; He died upon it (Romans 6:10-11). The mortification of sin/self is a daily necessity that is fueled by living unto God.

How can we learn to desire Christ above all else?

- **You must learn that:**
 - 1) A priority of "self-preservation" is death, but a priority of Christ is true life (v. 24).**
 - a) "whoever would save his life/soul will lose/destroy it"—the life/soul is anything that we love for its own sake and not for the sake of Christ; such love will only bring death into the soul, although it may seem invigorating for a time
 - b) "whoever loses/destroys his life/soul for My sake will save it"—the key words are "for My sake"; to the outward senses pursuing Jesus may seem like a painful dying, but it is eternal life (Philippians 3:8-15)
 - 2) All is loss without Christ (v. 25).**
 - a) "What does it profit?"
 - i) The Whole World—What's your "world"?
 - ii) Himself—True humanity/self is only found in Christ.
 - b) "Loses or forfeits"—must have an eternal perspective
 - 3) Temporal shame/glory does not compare with Divine shame/glory (v. 26).**
 - a) "whoever is ashamed of Me and of My words"
 - i) You can distinguish between the Person of Christ and His teaching, but You can never separate them as some would do, saying, I love Jesus, but I'm not interested in what he says about my marriage, my divorce, my lust, my greed, my hatred, etc.
 - ii) Honor and Shame—"Honor refers to the public acknowledgment of a person's worth, granted on the basis of how fully that individual embodies the qualities and behaviors valued by the group." (David A. deSilva, "Honor and Shame," *DNTB*) Dishonor or shame is attached to extra-societal values. Example of contest between John and Herod. "Turn the other cheek"
 - (1) "Ashamed" means avoiding "dishonor" from the world (the enemies of Christ) by not publicly identifying with Jesus and His teaching.
 - (2) Ultimate glory is the antidote for the lure of worldly honor—"when the Son of Man comes in His glory and the glory of the father and of the holy angels." Jesus said that He "must . . . be raised;" therefore, His people also must be raised to share in His glory.

- b) The comfort of a nominally Christian culture is fast becoming a thing of the past in America. To identify with Christ and His words will increasingly invite the hostility of society. Whose honor/shame do you hold in higher esteem?
 - c) Romans 8:18 "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to/in us."
- 4) The Kingdom of Christ's glory is already breaking into the present gloom (v. 27).**
- a) "there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God"
 - i) The Transfiguration
 - ii) The Resurrection
 - iii) The Destruction of the Temple
 - b) The Presence of the Future; Already/Not Yet
 - c) 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 "So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal."