

Follow the Lamb

By Steve Pruitt

Then Jesus told his disciples, If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

Matthew 16:24 ESV

Jesus made it plain what is required of those who desire to follow him. The requirement of a follower is to take up his cross. What does it mean to take up your cross? The answer is most likely found as we explore what the cross meant in the life and death of Jesus.

One meaning of the cross in the life of Jesus was the total abandonment of self to the obedience of the Father's will. Jesus' life was centered in the Father's will. He always did what he saw the Father doing. He always said what he heard from the Father. His teaching focused on the heart of the Father and his kingdom. Jesus came to show the world what the Father is like, and he did it all the way to the cross where he was obedient to death. His love for the Father compelled him to be obedient. That love became the perfect sacrifice for sin.

True worshipers have a deep desire to do the will of the Father. The desire to do the Father's will is a motivating force in their lives. Their lives are centered in the Father's will. All of their hopes and dreams have been placed in the Father's hands and their lives given to his service. They go where the Father says to go and say what he commands them to say. They love what he loves and hate what he hates. True worshipers know the Father's will because they have his heart. They have a willingness to lay down their lives in obedience to the Father which means death to self and sin.

Paul wrote to the Galatians, *But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.* (Galatians 6:14) Those who would follow the Lamb have died to the passing pleasures of sin. They are not enslaved to the world's system. They have been nailed to the cross with Jesus where, *knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.* (Romans 6:6)

The 144,000 standing with the Lamb on Mount Zion have this testimony; *they follow the Lamb wherever he goes.* To follow the Lamb one must go where to Lamb went. The Lamb went to the slaughter (Isaiah 53:7). Those people who stand with Jesus in the place of worship deny themselves and take up their cross daily. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. These are the true worshipers.

Have you been crucified with Christ? Do you follow the Lamb wherever he goes? Ask the Father to give you grace to follow the Lamb?

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Scriptures for meditation:

Galatians 2:20

Matthew 10:38

Galatians 5:24