

LIVE *for a* C·H·A·N·G·E

Part A – Actively Practices Spiritual Disciplines
Matthew 16:24-26

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INTRODUCTION

- A. *Philippians 1:6 “...Being confident of this, that God who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.” (NIV)*
- B. *Romans 12:2 “Do not conform yourselves to be like the people of this world, but be **changed within** by a new way of thinking. Then you will be able to see what God wants for you; you will know what is good and pleasing and perfect to Him.”*
- C. The word "**changed**" means – metamorpho-sized by God's grace.
- D. Life Change Indicator online assessment: <http://sugarcreek.net/lifechange>.
- E. *Matthew 16:24 “Then Jesus said to his disciples, “If anyone would come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.”*

1. A SPIRITUAL WALK WITH CHRIST REQUIRES A **DENIAL** OF SELF.

- A. “Deny” means to disown, to no longer count as important. The “self” Jesus is talking about is that part of our nature that seeks its own way **apart** from God.
- B. Jesus is actually calling us to give up the throne of our life and allow **God** to be in charge.

2. A SPIRITUAL WALK WITH CHRIST REQUIRES TAKING UP A **CROSS**.

- A. A call to the cross is a call to **suffer** any thing anyone brings against you because of your connection to Jesus.
- B. To take up your cross means that we “die” to the world’s definition of **success**.

3. A SPIRITUAL WALK WITH CHRIST REQUIRES **FOLLOWING** HIM.

*1 Peter 2:21 “To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should **follow in his steps**.”*

4. FOLLOWING IN JESUS’ STEPS IS NOT EMOTION, IT IS DISCIPLINE AND REQUIRES DEVELOPING TWO SPECIFIC SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES.

- A. *1 Timothy 4:7 “...**train** yourself to be godly.” (NIV)*
- B. Discipline # 1 – Incorporate the **Bible** into your everyday life.
 - 1. *2 Timothy 3:16-17 “All Scripture is **God-breathed** and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”*
 - 2. The Bible is **THE** tool God uses to totally transform our life.
 - 3. Bible Apps: Bible.Is; You Version.
 - 4. *Isaiah 66:2 “But to this one I will look, to him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who **trembles** at My word.”*
 - 5. The proof we are following Christ is that we love and **obey** God’s Word.
 - 6. What does it mean to love and obey the Bible?

- a. Take it in. **Read** the Bible every day.
- b. Personalize it. “God, what do you want **me** to do with this Word?”
- c. Put it into practice. Do what it tells you to do.
- d. **Consistency**. Do all of this over a long period of time.

C. Spiritual Discipline # 2 – Have a prayer time every day.

1. Basics about prayer:

- a. Prayer aligns us with God’s **will** and **purpose**.
- b. Prayer activates the **power** of God.

James 4:2 “You do not have because you do not ask.”

- c. Prayer is designed to be a **familiar conversation** with God, not a formal string of “thee’s” and “thou’s.”

Matthew 6:7 “And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition, as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words.” (Jesus)

- d. Prayer is to be a **continuous attitude** of our life.

1 Thessalonians 5:17 “...pray without ceasing...”

- e. The more you pray, the more **comfortable** it becomes.

2. When you think of prayer think of A-C-T-S.

- a. Prayer involves **adoration**.
- b. Prayer involves confession.
- c. Prayer involves **thanksgiving**.
- d. Prayer involves supplication. Supplication is asking God for what we need and trusting Him with His wisdom about what and when.

