

# AFTER CHURCH DEVO

BY REBUILD

## Topic: Follow Me - New Priorities

### Opening Prayer:

“Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!” (Psalm 139:23-24). Lord, search our hearts and help us to lay down anything that keeps us from fully following You. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

### Read: Matthew 16:24

In Matthew 16:24, Jesus lays out a challenging path for those who would follow Him: “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.” This invitation, spoken directly to His disciples, highlights the depth of commitment Jesus calls us to—one that involves a complete reordering of our priorities. To “deny oneself” and “take up his cross” was a radical call in Jesus’ day, and it remains radical today. It signals a move away from self-centered living to a life that embraces sacrifice and surrender.

The phrase “take up his cross” in this context is profound. To the disciples, the cross symbolizes death and shame. Yet Jesus was redefining the meaning of the cross, calling His followers to see it as a sign of dedication, of embracing God’s will over personal comfort. Here, Jesus emphasizes that following Him means setting aside our own agendas, comforts, and even our identities for the sake of His kingdom.

For us, “taking up the cross” might not mean physical suffering, but it certainly involves daily choices that prioritize God’s purpose over our own desires. It’s about letting go of our plans, trusting that what Jesus offers in return—life with Him—is far greater than anything we could pursue on our own. This daily act of surrender involves trading our own wants for His will and trusting Him to reshape our lives to reflect His purpose. Our priorities shift as we realize that a life centered on Jesus is richer, more meaningful, and eternally valuable.

## **Conclusion:**

Choosing to follow Jesus means embracing His call to put aside self-interest, take on the mindset of a servant, and live each day with a kingdom-first perspective. As we commit to this path, we find that our lives are transformed—no longer centered on us but on Him. This is where true purpose and fulfillment are found.

## **Discussion Questions:**

### **For Students:**

What does it mean to “deny yourself” in your daily choices? How can you put Jesus first at school or among friends?

### **For Parents:**

How can we show our families what it looks like to take up our cross and follow Jesus? What examples can we set?

### **For Professionals:**

In what areas of work or career might Jesus be calling you to “deny yourself”? How might this impact your decisions or priorities?

**This week, identify one area where you can “deny yourself” and “take up your cross” in following Jesus. Pray for strength to set aside your desires in favor of what would honor Him most in that area.**