



CLASS TWO: SELF-DENIAL AND CROSS BEARING

SELF-DENIAL

One fruit of a surrendered life is self-denial. Self-denial is for all believers who have chosen to follow Jesus.

[Luke 9:23–24].

One mark of a true disciple is self-denial. Many people want to follow Jesus but do not want any form of commitment. Following Jesus would require us to leave our comfort zones. It would require us to do things He expects of us even when we do not feel like it. Jesus commands us in the above verse to deny ourselves daily. Self-denial is for every season of our lives.

****To follow Jesus is to deny ourselves of who we are in the flesh each day****

We must die to who we are in the flesh each day. To be a disciple would mean a daily denial of who we are so we can look more like our master and standard – Jesus. The more we look like Jesus, the more it is required that we deny ourselves even when it is hard and it looks like we cannot bear the pain.

Self-denial is hard, but the more we deny ourselves, the easier it becomes to deny ourselves. We must deny ourselves so we can pray more, spend more time reading his word and also fast more. We must deny ourselves so we can obey God. To deny ourselves is to choose what the Spirit of God wants over what the flesh wants at each point in time.

A true disciple must beat his body and bring it under subjection (surrender) always. We must be able to deny our bodies pleasure so that we can obey God always.

[1 Corinthians 9:25–27].

CROSS BEARING

The call to discipleship is a call to carry a cross. Each believer has a cross to carry. There is no Christianity without the cross.

"Then He said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me" [Luke 9:23].

The cross speaks of persecution, labour or sufferings we have to bear because we are followers of Jesus. In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, **[2 Timothy 3:12]**. Jesus carried His cross to fulfil His assignment. We must also carry our crosses individually if we are going to fulfil our assignments. **[Matthew 10:38]**.

We cannot call ourselves disciples if we do not carry our cross. The cross is a must for every believer. We must not stop following Jesus because of the cross. God would give us the grace to carry every cross that comes our way. There are some sufferings a believer is permitted to go through. This suffering comes about because we choose to obey God.



We do not suffer because we have sinned but because we are on the path of obedience. [**1 Peter 2:19–20**].

****Christ Jesus suffered leaving an example for us****

“To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.” [**1 Peter 2:21**]. The cross is never a pleasant thing to carry, but it has eternal rewards.

“If we endure, we will also reign with him. If we disown him, he will also disown us;” [**2 Timothy 2:12**].

One day Jesus would reward all believers who suffered for His namesake.