



Rise Ministry, Inc.

www.RiseMinistry.Org

(515)739-1211 Pin:730575

Thursday Bible Study Call 8:00 – 8:45 p.m

“Take Up your cross”

Dear Beautiful child of God;

Have you ever felt as if your relationship with Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior has become stagnate, a standstill or that your walk has become dull and the fire that once burned for the Love of Christ is slowly dying? Or better yet; have you ever felt as if you want to build a relationship with Christ, but don't know exactly where, how, why or what to do to start and build this relationship that these “crazy Christians” are talking about?

Don't worry! I've been there, that feeling is very familiar to me.

Often, I feel as if I'm 1. Walking this walk of Faith on my own. 2. Feel like there's more I should be doing and 3. Am what I am doing real or worth it, like who is this God anyway?

The beautiful thing about God is that He allows us to ask those questions, He allows us to wonder He allows us to doubt. – but he does not require us to stay there.

In the Midst of our confusion, our searching, our wondering, our doubts, Jesus reveals His glory in us and through us. But first we must desire Him, in order to see His glory.

One thing about Jesus, is that if you ask; if it's honoring the Father and if it's in His will; it will be given to you. **Matthew 7:7**

Desiring to know more about the Father, The Creator of the universe, is a Holy conviction. A conviction that the Lord allows us to explore and journey, in our own pace, which is commonly known as your “Walk”. {Note} if I ask how's your walk? I'm am asking how is your journey with the Lord, what are new things that you are exploring about yourself and about God during your “Walk”

- Everyone's relationship with the Father is different. As each person is given a different measure of Faith, so I pray that in the midst of your journey you never compare yourself with the neighbor to the left, nor to the right of you. - **Romans 12:3**

This past Thursday for bible study, we spoke about the desire of God.

Naturally, we are born with the desire of God, just like we naturally desire some level of affection. – God is our maker, the creator of our soul, so our spirit is drawn to His Spirit. His Blood is in our veins so that connection is what draws that desire...

Before I get into desiring God I want you all to understand that this is a full blown spiritual war, **Ephesians 6:12** tells us that “we wrestle not against flesh and blood but against the rulers of the darkness of the age, against spiritual host of wickedness in the heavenly places” as a result – If we are desiring a relationship with Jesus, we must FIGHT!!

We as believers find so many reasons why not to “get on our face” before the Lord, we make up soooo many excuses why we are not fully committed to the Lord Jesus – but the reality is, those reasons are traps. The enemy wants to you believe those lies, called excuses as to why you are not building a



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relationship with the Father or even trying to know Him personally. You see the enemy knows how important you are in the Kingdom of God so he will throw so many excuses, so many blocks and so many “life issues” your way to prevent you from reaching the greatness that God has called in your life.

In **Matthew 16:24**, Jesus was speaking to His disciples when He said, “if anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me.”

When I’m reading the Word of God I like to replace some words to match my situation so that I can relate a little better. So, let’s try it.

Jesus is speaking to you! – you are a disciple of Jesus Christ. – let’s re-read this scripture this time with your name:

{Your name}, if you desire to come after me, {your name} deny yourself, {your name} take up your cross, {your name} FOLLOW ME!

Now, how did it feel to hear Jesus call your name? – there’s so much mercy and grace at the other side of submitting to the Lord, there’s something on the other side of your obedience. Trust Him.

Now let’s break this scripture down a bit.

To Deny Yourself:

Deny has many meanings, a few meaning that stood out to me were;

1. To reject as having no authority or binding force (came from the word repudiate which means deny)
2. To refrain from satisfying one’s desires or needs – *the practice of self-denial*

When following Jesus, denying ourselves is so important, the scriptures tells us that we cannot serve God and mammon, for we will love one and hate the other. **Matthew 6:24**. – The same goes for us and our relationship for Christ. If we are living for Him and desiring a move a God in our lives we must deny ourselves.

Denying ourselves will look different to everyone, it’s God who brings us Holy convictions and show us what He desires of us. But for an example, denying oneself may look like this;

- Refraining from over indulging in social media.
- Removing yourself from your old relationship
- Denying your flesh, so that you can sit before the Lord for prayer and worship
- Waking up early so that you can have a home cook breakfast meal to eat vs. rushing out of the house as a result, of being late – yes that’s a form of denying yourself when it comes to the Lord

*** there is no blueprint, cookie cutter script when it comes to denying yourself. To deny yourself is simply putting your wants, your needs, your desires aside and seeking the will of the Father and



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seeking what He wants of you. – in the beginning, I’m not going to lie, its hard differentiating the voice of God from yours, His and the enemy’s, but it is possible. The more you seek Him the clearer His voice will be to you.

So about last week I was literally struggling with lust.. (*gasp*) lol – Ya’ll I’ve been walking this walk for a while and I’ve been abstinence longer (you do the math).

On my own strength, I could not shake off the spirit of lust for the life of me. I was simply weak. The more I tried to fight the spirit of lust, the more I kept failing. But I made it up in my mind, in my heart and in my soul, I knew the person I was lusting after, was NOT my husband, so I began to sit before the Lord, repented and literally BEGGED God for help. – I had to deny myself in the sense of realizing that alone, I am weak. Alone I cannot fight this spirit. And knowing that, with God on my side I was able to conquer that spirit. I denied myself, I took a step back from taking charge in my own hands. I recognize that I had no binding force (refer to that definition). I recognize that I needed the Spirit of authority to bind that demonic force. Glory to the Lamb! I sing and do a praise dance because I literally just found out I was freed from that lustful desire. – Amen-

To Take Up Your Cross:

To take up your cross goes hand in hand with denying yourself. If we refer back to **John 19:17**, Jesus took up His own cross as He was being crucified, despite Him being God, He still denied Himself in the flesh, bore the burdens of carrying His cross so that He can be crucified for all salvation. – to take up your cross is to bare the burdens that comes with following Jesus. The beauty of it all is that we don’t have to do it alone, when Jesus praying (denying himself) as He was getting ready to get crucified, angles ministered to Him. **Luke 22:43**. Like the angels with Jesus, we have His Holy Spirit ministering to us as we hold our burdens and give them to Christ to be crucified. – Yes, we must give the burden we carry to Christ. We must lift it up and bring it onto the altar. Literally as Christ did we are to take up our cross head over to Calvary lay it down before the Lord and allow Him to have it way.

- Part of my testimony of taking up my cross is when I deny myself and be fully honest with what it is that I may be dealing or struggling with, when I am able to identify with that burden that’s on my life, I carry it to the altar and give it to God. I completely surrender and allow Him to take over and fill the voids.
- Taking up your cross could also be you literally taking up your cross, to complete a task that God has set before you. Burdens are not always a bad thing. Burdens can be a blessing, when God places burdens on us, His is preparing us for a next stop towards our finale destination. The destination of His glory.

So come on Sis, lets take up our cross bare the burdens that Christ is requiring us, and laid it at His feet and surrender to His will. He is waiting!



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To Follow Him:

As Jesus is speaking to His disciples, He starts off by saying “if anyone desires to come after Me” And ends off by saying “Follow Me”. To follow Jesus is to do just as He says, from the beginning to end. Jesus is the perfect example and I praise God for Him. Through the examination of His life He literally shows and tells us what it means to 1. Deny ourselves and 2. Take up our cross. Through this perfect example, He is leading us on the path of following Him. Leading us on the path of righteousness. Not only is He leading us on the path of following Him, that leads to righteousness, He is also giving us promises, and hope as we continue this “walk” – *there goes that saying again*. In Matthew 16:25 it says “...Whoever loses his life for My (Jesus) sake will find it.” – that is a God given promise, when we are fully committed to Jesus, when we lay down our lives and live a life of full surrender and sacrifice our desires. We are literally dying to flesh, dying to self. And the beauty of it all is that when dying to flesh, for Jesus’ sake, God is going to give us a new life, God is going to allow our Spirit man to resurrect – just like Jesus – we rise from the dead as well. And it’s a beautiful promise that we all must look forward to as we deny ourselves, and carry our burdens.

My Prayer:

Dear Heavenly Father:

Right now I would like to pray for my sister in Jesus’ name, Lord I ask that you bring her into full understanding of how much you love her. Father I pray that you take her into a higher level of knowledge and understanding of who you are and who she is in you. Lord I ask that you keep her safe from all spiritual attacks. Father I ask that you give her a Holy conviction, on that will lead her running to you and surrendering her life to you. Father I thank you for my beautiful sister Lord I pray that you continue to mold and shape her into your image. Lord continue to prosper her, continue to bless her, continue to anoint her household, father show he was it means to be a woman of God and in due to prepare her for her next step and journey in life.

In Jesus’ name I pray, Amen.

Sis you are loved. I pray that you seek after Christ like never before. I pray that you experience Him in such a way that there will be no ounce of doubt running in your bones.



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Until next Thursday.

Speak to you all soon!

Love ya!