

*“PCF Discipleship Series part 7”*

## CONDITIONS OF DISCIPLESHIP : What does Jesus expect?

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## “I’ll say this three times ...”

- Matthew 16:24-26, Mark 8:34-37, Luke 9:23-25

“If any man would come after me, let him **deny himself** and **take up his cross** and **follow me ...**”

- Three conditions (or one?) :

“**Completely rejecting my own way of doing things**, **I choose the path of sacrifice each day** in order to walk along the same road with Jesus.”

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## “Deny self” - what, why, how?

- Take self off the throne (Eden)
- Say “No” to independence
- Choose God’s will first
  
- Romans 6:3-11 :
  - “... baptised into his **death** ... united in a **death** like his ... old self was **crucified** with him ... we have **died** with Christ ... consider yourself **dead** to sin ...”
- Oh dear !! Doom & gloom !!



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## Why is this so hard?

- Because I know I am special to God  
... or do I ???
- “Satan’s most effective weapon is ... **low self esteem** ... because it contradicts the sacred voice that calls me **beloved** ... Being beloved by God is the core truth of our existence.”  
[Brennan Manning, “Abba’s Child”]
- If I am precious to God, why does he want me to deny my self???

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## The nature of sacrifice

- Cost = value
  - “No pain, no gain”
- What can I give God that he wants or needs?
  - my money, time, energy, knowledge, skill ... ???
- All I have to give is **my self**
  - the most precious gift
  - the only worthy sacrifice
  - the true nature of worship
- **Acceptable to him** because **I am valuable**

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## Unselfconscious self-denial

- Self-sacrifice depends on relationship :
  - marriage, parents, heroes ...
- Augustine :
  - *“There can only be two basic loves :  
the **love of God** which leads to **denial of self**, or  
the **love of self** which leads to **denial of God**.”*
- Denying self for God is a mark of love for him
  - positive joyous giving of me to him
- Not optional, Jesus told us to do it
  - but it’s easy because **he loves me!!**

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