

"The Mark of the Disciple"

N. Union
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P.M.

Scripture Lesson:- Matthew 16: 21-28

Text:- Matthew 16: 24. "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."

Introduction:- Jesus gives us four marks of discipleship. One of these is a steadfast loyalty to truth. "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. The second mark is love to the brethren. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. The third mark is a fruitful and winsome holiness. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples". But the mark of the disciple, the characteristic Jesus looks for is that we, like him, deny ourselves take up our cross and follow him. We may contend for the truth, we may declare our love for the brethren, if we are not taking up our cross and denying ourselves, we are not disciples of Christ.

I.

Jesus had his thorn, his burden, The burden, what was it. Subjection to his parents, poverty of the home, the carpenter shop, weariness, pain, hunger and thirst, the enduring scorn and contempt of the rich, who were well placed, these were a burden to him.

The thorn. Absence from God; the leprosy of sin;

The cross. He took it up. He might have laid it down, but he laid it upon his shoulder. There was his temptation. In the garden of Gethsemane; he might have laid it down and gone to sit with herod and Pilate and talked with them. But His cross was that life and death for sin came to consummation in his dying hour.

II.

Your cross. You can take it or refuse it. Many do not take their cross at all. It is surely to live chastely in an impure world, to be just and loving to those who scorn you, to care for the glory of God above everything else, to lay your powers on the altar of sacrifice to Christ, and follow him cost ~~xxx~~ what it may.

III.

The cross begins with a definite act. We stand at the parting of two ways. Look along two paths. The rich young ruler.

The cross continues in a daily experience.

The cross can be borne only as we follow Christ. "Follow me".