

# **GULF SHORES CHURCH OF CHRIST**

**Sermon by Ray Reynolds**

**TAKE UP YOUR CROSS**

**Matthew 16:24**

## Introduction :

1. It often seems difficult to follow Jesus.
2. It is true that He expects much from His followers.
3. Can all of His wishes be narrowed down into a few short thoughts?
4. Well, if that were possible, **Matthew 16:24** might be such a passage.

## Discussion :

### I. DESIRE - "*If anyone desires to come after me . . .*"

- A. God wants us to seek His will. - **Matthew 6:33**
- B. God wants us to be mature and complete in Him. - **Matthew 5:48**
- C. When people desire things they will do whatever it takes to get it.
- D. When we realize that we need Jesus we will love Him and others. - **Matthew 37-40**
- E. We need more passion and zeal for the Lord!

### II. DENIAL - "*. . . let him deny himself . . .*"

- A. God provides all the comfort we will ever need. - **II Corinthians 1:3,4**
- B. We need to trust that God will take care of us. - **Romans 8:28, 31**
- C. We need to reflect on those of faith found in **Hebrews 11**.
- D. It's not easy to deny yourself things but it can be for your own good (i.e. when you have to practice fasting before a surgery).

### III. DEDICATION - "*. . . and take up his cross . . .*"

- A. God expects for us to use our talents to His glory. - **Ephesians 4:11-16**
- B. God has always desired for us to have a steadfast spirit. - **I Corinthians 15:58**
- C. We must be willing to offer ourselves as a living sacrifice. - **Romans 12:1-2**
- D. We need more dedicated servant minded disciples in the kingdom.

### IV. DISCIPLESHIP - "*. . . and follow Me.*"

- A. Jesus expects us to forsake all and follow Him. - **Matthew 4:18-22**
- B. We are instructed to fulfill the Great Commission. - **Matthew 28:18-20**
- C. Nothing should come between us again.
- D. If we truly love God we will serve Him. - **John 14:15**

## Conclusion :

1. If you and I do these things, the God of love and peace will bless your lives greater than you can ever imagine.
2. Let's serve God faithfully.
3. Let's serve God with desire, denial, dedication, and true discipleship.
4. Will you take up your cross and follow Him?