

Matthew 16:24

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	2
DENY SELF	6
CARRY YOUR CROSS	13
FOLLOW ME	18

Matthew 16:24

Introduction

Matthew 16:24

¶ Then Jesus said to His disciples, "*If anyone wishes to come after Me, he **must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.***"

Luke 9:23

And He was saying to [them] all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he **must deny himself, and take up his cross *daily* and follow Me.**"

Jesus gives three *commands* to those who desire to follow Him. They are First, Deny yourself, Second, Take up your cross daily, and Third, Follow Jesus. Two of the three commands do not sound very attractive nor sit well with many of today's professing Christians. Consequently, most churches have dropped the first two commands of Jesus and teach only a "follow Me" command. The contemporary Christian of today seems more preoccupied with POWER, MIRACLES, HEALING, SIGNS and WONDERS on the one hand, and BLESSINGS, COMFORT, and PRE-TRIBULATION RAPTURE on the other. Both of these are two variations of a false gospel.

These false gospels go under various pseudonyms like "Name it and Claim it," "Blab it and Grab it," "Word Faith," "Health and Wealth" with many hiding behind the apostate theology called Dispensationalism. All the above represent a departure from the true gospel of Jesus. Both have serious repercussions concerning Sanctification and Salvation for both in their own way deny the teachings of Jesus, the author and finisher of our Salvation.

Deny Self? "Why that only inhibits us from reaching our full potential to serve the living God through the *power* and *might* of His Holy Spirit" cries the first. "God wants me to be happy" laments the other. To the carnal mind ... those defenses seem to make sense. It sounds soooooo good because it's soooooo enticing. It has a certain ring that is quite appealing to the desires of the flesh. Well, why shouldn't it ... it's a false doctrine contrived by the flesh to fulfill the desires of the flesh. Too bad that it stands in diametric opposition to the gospel of Jesus our Messiah. To deny self is to *contradict* self and *repent*. Repentance is a turning of the mind away from self and toward God.

Many of today's so-called churches are encourage the lifting up of self and giving pride and greed "spiritual" slants. There are but a few Christians who would accept the "Greed is Good" mantra of Gordon Gekko, the corporate raider played by Michael Douglas in the movie, *Wall Street* ... but look how many millions of *professing* Christians have swallowed "Greed ... *Disguised* as a Wealth and Prosperity Gospel!" There are millions consuming this perversion hook, line and sinker. It disguises itself by twisting and perverting the Scriptures in order to falsely advance the notion that physical wealth is part of the covenant God made with Abraham. What a bald faced *lie!* Abraham was indeed wealthy, but His wealth has *nothing* to do the Covenant blessing God made with him. We'll examine that covenant promise elsewhere in a separate study. Suffice it

Matthew 16:24

for now that these false prophets and teachers scour the Scriptures to see where and how they may pervert and twist God's Holy Word to justify their false "fleece the flock" mentality and pseudo-doctrines of greed and self aggrandizement.

Dispensationalists do not fare much better with their false gospel either. They hatchet, divide and carve up the Word of God beyond recognition. What a travesty. They've carved God's word like a turkey and dish out all the scriptures that speak of trials, suffering, tribulation, persecution, and martyrdom to the Jews while dishing to themselves only blessings, holiness, joy and peace. "After all, God wants us to be happy and He has blessed us for *allowing* Him to be our Savior, right?" This is a quote from a dispensational *bible teacher*, whose name shall remain anonymous. Many dispensationalists believe that God need not be your Lord to be your Savior. They've turned obedience and the denial of self into legalism and teach obedience as contrary to the teachings of Jesus. They proclaim a false gospel.

Carry Your Cross? The dispensationalists wreak havoc with this one. Time to bring out their favorite bible study tools ... WHITE OUT and SCISSORS. "That's not referring to us!" They exclaim. "This is talking about the Jews, and was during a different dispensation. This simply does not apply to us." Somebody ought to enlighten these folks that *EVERYTHING* JESUS SPOKE WAS DIRECTED TO THE JEWS! Jesus being a Jew Himself brought His message **first** to the Jews, **not exclusively** to the Jews. If we eliminate the words of Jesus on the basis of "who was He speaking to?" we'd have to eliminate **ALL** the words and teachings of Jesus for He was always speaking TO THE JEWS!

Matthew 15:24

But He answered and said, "**I was sent *only* to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**"

The earthly ministry of Jesus was to the ***Jews first***. The teachings of Jesus is for ALL His followers, but it was delivered to Israel first. **Israel, as taught in Scripture, is to be understood as the descendants of Jacob and not to be confused with the nation Israel.** God changed Jacob's name to Israel.

Genesis 32:28

He said, "**Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel;** for you have striven with God and with men and have prevailed."

The Old Covenant references to Israel are almost always referring to the descendants of Jacob. **The descendants of Jacob and Israel are one and the same.** Israel and Jacob are interchangeable for they are referring to the same people. To view Israel only in terms of nationhood, like Jordan, Egypt, Syria, United States etc., is to greatly misunderstand biblical teaching and prophesy as it relates to us today. The dispensationalists are forced to twist the meaning of Romans 11:17-19 that state that gentiles, the non ethnic Jews are *grafted* into the house of Israel, the descendants of Jacob and heirs to the promises made to Abraham.

Matthew 16:24

Romans 9:8

That is, it is **not the children of the flesh** who are children of God, but the **children of the promise are regarded as descendants**.

The Scripture states quite plainly that when God speaks or prophesies to Israel, He is **not** referring to *ethnic Israel exclusively*, the children of the flesh ... the natural branch by birthright ... but all Israel. **All Israel includes those grafted into Israel** ... spiritual Israel. **Dispensationalists love to draw sharp distinction between ethnic and spiritual Israel, which the Scriptures refute**. They will selectively "cherry pick" all the blessings and smooth things and claim it applies to us today, *spiritual* Israel and conversely take all the hard things like persecution, Great Tribulation, death, martyrdom and say this is for *ethnic* Israel, the Jews, and not for *spiritual* Israel. This distinction is a lie and by doing so they deny Christ. **That's the technique these apostate fellows use to conveniently disregard and deny Jesus while simultaneously professing to follow Him**. My goodness, how far these apostates go to deceive people and teach them only what they want to hear.

2 Timothy 4:3

For the time will come when **they will not endure sound doctrine**; but [wanting] to have their ears tickled, **they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires**,

In accordance to their own desires is in direct opposition to deny self. There is an underlying and prevalent thought in dispensational circles that God sits upon His throne like "Santa" doling out *only* blessings and gifts to His children. None of the above groups are preparing Christians for the return of Jesus nor for the realities of Scripture that describe the events prior to His return. When proven wrong by the Word of God, they arrogantly dismiss the Scriptures as irrelevant to them and state, "the bible must be talking about some *other* saints, because we know the church is raptured before this time." NO ... THE BIBLE IS NOT TALKING ABOUT SOME *OTHER* SAINTS ... because there are no "other" saints and there is **no pre-tribulation rapture** teaching *anywhere* in the bible. It is an invention contrived by the apostate dispensational philosophy. The apostates have even gone so far as to label the saints (God's people) who are martyred during the Great Tribulation as "Tribulation Saints" in order to somehow remove them from the church and their false teaching. The church is present upon the earth during the great tribulation and many of the saints will suffer persecution and death. The fifth seal of Revelation speaks directly to this.

Revelation 6:9, 11

9 ¶ When the **Lamb broke the fifth seal**, I saw underneath the altar **the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God**, and because of the testimony which they had maintained;

11 And there was given to each of them a white robe; and **they were told that they should rest for a little while longer, until [the number of] their fellow**

Matthew 16:24

servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, would be completed also.

The church is present during the great tribulation ... NOT to be confused by the wrath of God against sinful flesh at the seventh trumpet and bowl judgments. The wrath of God is not the great tribulation.

Revelation 7:14

I said to him, "My lord, you know." And he said to me, "**These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.**

Because for many Christians the reality of martyrdom is of such great discomfort, the truth of the great tribulation and the wrath of Satan against the church is twisted, rejected and replaced by a pre-tribulation rapture teaching, thus denying Jesus by rejecting His Truth, and His Scriptures. This false teaching has two returns of Jesus, not one as All the Scriptures clearly reach. (For an in-depth study on this, see the *Pre-Tribulation Rapture* study located under at bible study>topical>eschatology section of The Lord's Children Fellowship website)

1 Timothy 4:1

¶ But the **Spirit explicitly says** that **in later times some will fall away from the faith**, paying attention to **deceitful spirits** and **doctrines of demons**,

Well did Paul prophesy to Timothy. This Scripture is referring to the state of *Christianity* prior to the return of Jesus. Dispensationalism is clearly embraced by the deceitful spirits and the Word Faith is certainly promulgating doctrines of demons. You can put all the remaining cults into this category as well. Jesus Himself prophesies this very same scenario.

Matthew 24:10

"At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another.

The falling away is here now and as the Scripture above testifies, ... and it's going to get worse, not better.

2 Peter 3:17

You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, **be on your guard** so that you **are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness**,

This is a call for Christians to repent and turn their hearts and minds back to the Jesus of Scripture and to believe the Word of God, the bible. Put away the fables and the doctrines of demons. Let's examine Matthew 16:24 and see what three commands Jesus is giving to **US**, those seeking to follow Him.

Matthew 16:24

Luke 9:23

And He was saying to [them] all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, **he must deny himself**, and **take up his cross daily** and **follow Me**.

DENY SELF

Immediately the flesh cringes a bit for this is antithetical to the flesh. The flesh seeks to please itself and all it's desires, for it wants to deny itself nothing! The flesh desires *only* to hear positive, upbeat, and good things. Jesus, however, commands that unless you deny self you cannot be a follower of Christ. So what does Jesus mean when he says to deny self?

Let's begin with an examination of the Greek word translated deny.

533 **απαρνεομαι** **aparneomai** **ap-ar-neh'-om-ahee**

from **575** and **720**; TDNT-1:471, *; v ; to deny:—

NAS-denied (2), deny (9).

AV-deny 13; 13

1) to deny

1a) to affirm that one has **no acquaintance or connection** with someone

1b) to **forget one's self, lose sight of one's self and one's own interests**

Jesus is in essence telling us that we are no longer to be acquainted with the desires of self. We are in essence to become a *stranger* to ourselves and to *disagree* with or be in *contradiction* to self.

2 Corinthians 5:16

¶ Therefore from now on **we recognize no one according to the flesh**; even though **we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know [Him in this way] no longer**.

To deny self is to deny the desires of the flesh. Look how strong the teaching on this point is. How emphatic this Scripture is by stating "we no longer know Christ according to the flesh." WOW, the Spirit is far more superior to the flesh, even when referring to the flesh of Jesus. Many will try to pervert and twist this Scripture as well, to mean to follow Jesus is to deny Jesus in the flesh, but do not be led astray by such deceitful workers. The body and flesh of Jesus was torn and destroyed as an example of how we are to regard this body of flesh ... the veil of separation from the Most Holy to regard the flesh as nothing. Count on others perverting this message to mean something other than what it is teaching. It means to love God more than self, even when confronted with suffering ... even to the point of death.

1 John 2:16

For all that is in the world, the **lust of the flesh** and the **lust of the eyes** and the **boastful pride** of life, **is not from the Father**, but is from the world.

Matthew 16:24

To deny self is to contradict what we are in the flesh. We must be willing to become a *new creation*, a **new spiritual creation** in the **Spirit from above** and willing to **contradict or deny the spirit of the flesh**. The old desire that we want as a fleshly human being should no longer remain desires as a new spiritual creation in Jesus. We are not only called upon to deny our desires and motives for pleasing self, but are to deny the totality of our fleshly being, even if it means forfeiting our life.

John 6:63

"It is the **Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing**; the words that I have spoken to you **are spirit and are life**.

The words and teachings of Jesus are Spirit and Life! The words of Jesus applied to His followers when Jesus first uttered the words ... and it applies to His followers now ... tomorrow ... and forever. For when it is all said and done, only the words and teachings of Jesus will continue after all else ceases to exist.

1 Peter 1:25

BUT THE WORD OF THE LORD ENDURES FOREVER." And this is the word which was preached to you.

To deny self means we no longer desire to speak or live by our words but by the Word of God ... We no longer seek to do what is pleasing to us, but that which is pleasing to God ... We no longer seek to fulfill that which the flesh desires, but that which the Spirit of God desires in us.

1 Peter 1:24

¶ For, "**ALL FLESH IS LIKE GRASS, AND ALL ITS GLORY LIKE THE FLOWER OF GRASS. THE GRASS WITHERS, AND THE FLOWER FALLS OFF,**

Do not regard the temporal as more important than the eternal. **All flesh is temporal.**

Romans 13:14

But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and **make no provision for the flesh** in regard to [its] lusts.

Lust is a term commonly associated with sexual sins and sensual desires, but lust is not to be limited to that context alone. Lust means any desire and longings to fulfill and satisfy the flesh, whether it be wealth, power, pleasure, fame, pride or the like.

Galatians 5:19-21

Now the **deeds of the flesh** are evident, which are: *immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these*, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that **those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.**

Matthew 16:24

Galatians 6:8

For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

To satisfy the desires of self reaps corruption and eternal death ... separation from God for all eternity. When we deny self we deny the desires of the old self, the flesh and put on the desires of the new self, the spirit.

Ephesians 2:3

Among them **we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath,** even as the rest.

To not deny self we remain children of wrath, not the children of God. The natural man is sold under sin and therefore the wrath of God abides upon all flesh. To deny self is to be removed from God's wrath through Jesus and the indwelling of God's Holy Spirit. It is God who delivers us from Himself, from His wrath upon all sinful flesh through the work of God on the cross.

Colossians 2:11

and **in Him** you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the **removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ;**

The circumcision of Christ, the circumcision not made with hands is speaking of two things. The destruction of the body/flesh of Jesus upon the cross and the shedding of His blood as the sign of the New Covenant circumcision between God and His people. **Jesus is the circumcision of the New and better covenant much in the same way that the circumcision of flesh (foreskin) made in blood was the sign of the Old Covenant with God and His people.** The purpose of the Old Covenant was to identify the magnitude of sin in the eyes of our holy God and to direct and point us to Messiah, God with us, and the object and purpose of the New Covenant. Both Old and New Covenants are circumcisions of the flesh, a contract made in blood, and both also represent a circumcisions of the heart.

Deuteronomy 30:6

"Moreover the LORD your God will **circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants,** to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live.

Deuteronomy 10:16

"So **circumcise your heart,** and stiffen your neck no longer.

Jeremiah 4:4

"Circumcise yourselves to the LORD And **remove the foreskins of your heart,** Men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, **Or else My wrath will go**

Matthew 16:24

forth like fire And burn with none to quench it, Because of the evil of your deeds."

The second sense of the circumcision not made with hands is by the Spirit of God that indwells the believer, God in us, and circumcises the foreskin of the heart and mind which will cause us to deeply love God and each other in spirit.

Philippians 3:3

for we are the [true] circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and **put no confidence in the flesh**,

Romans 2:29

But **he is a Jew who is one inwardly**; and **circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter**; and his praise is not from men, but from God.

A true Jew is one who has the indwelling of God's Holy Spirit. When we deny self we contradict and disassociate ourselves from our words and thoughts. God's Word now has dominion and rule over our lives. We live by the Word of God, for to follow God is *spiritual sustenance* ... to make God's Word our food and drink.

John 6:51

"I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; **if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever**; and **the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh.**"

John 6:35

Jesus said to them, **"I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst.**

To deny self is to live in contradiction of self. To contradict self is to oppose self, to live in contradiction and in opposition to the desires of the flesh. The problem with the flesh is this: when we become a new creation in the Lord, the flesh still remains alive and is often stimulated to sin when confronted with the law of God.

Romans 7:5

For while we were in the flesh, the **sinful passions, which were [aroused] by the Law**, were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death.

Galatians 5:16-17

16 But I say, **walk by the Spirit**, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.

17 For the **flesh sets its desire against the Spirit**, and the **Spirit against the flesh**; for **these are in opposition to one another**, so that **you may not do the things that you please.**

Matthew 16:24

To deny the flesh is to repent. Repentance is the turning of the mind away from the deeds of the flesh and sin ... and toward God and His Spirit. We no longer walk in the flesh when we are in the Spirit and the Spirit is in us. **The term "Carnal Christian" is an oxymoron and non-biblical concept. There is no such teaching in Scripture to support the notion of "carnal Christian,"** for carnality and Christianity are mutually exclusive terms. They are opposites in meaning. To be carnal is NOT to be Christian ... and to be Christian is not to be carnal, The same holds true for a "backsliding Christian." I've heard people say they were a backsliding Christian for 5, 10, 15 or more years but now have returned to the fold. Nonsense! Scriptures say you never were of the fold to begin with. Such are the silly notions when apostasy becomes the rule of life. Carnality is to not be Christian for carnality does not deny self but elevates self. Though all Christians sin, one does not live a habitual lifestyle of sin. Carnality is evidence of not having the indwelling of God's Holy Spirit. No indwelling of God's Holy Spirit means one is not a Christian and does not have Salvation. That is the teaching of God's Word.

The Apostle Paul under inspiration of God gives an excellent understanding of the conflicts that exists between the Spirit and the flesh. **To be carnal is to be hostile to God.** One who is hostile to God is not a follower of God. The indwelling of God's Holy Spirit is the only way a human being receives the power of God to follow God.

Romans 7:18

For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good [is] not.

The Holy Spirit of God is the determination of the difference between the willingness to do good and the ability to do good. The ability comes *after* conversion through the indwelling of God's Holy Spirit. Without the Holy Spirit one remains a child of wrath and does not have the divine influence to live a life of godliness and holiness.

Romans 8:3-13

- 3 For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, **God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh** and as an **offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh,**

Jesus was fully human and fully God. Jesus was in the *likeness* of sinful flesh, but was *not sinful* in the flesh. Sin was, however, condemned by the flesh of Jesus while He lived in the flesh. Jesus was born sinless and did not inherit or have a sin nature within Him. Jesus did not inherit the sin of Adam for he was not born from man, but from God.

Romans 8

- 4 so that the requirement of the **Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.**
- 5 For **those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.**

Matthew 16:24

This is why there is no such concept in Scripture to justify the term *Carnal Christian*. Those who walk according to the desires in the flesh are not children of God. They are unsaved.

Romans 8

6 For **the mind set on the flesh is death**, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace,

This death is speaking of spiritual death, one who is estranged from God and still a child of wrath. If one dies in this state, they are eternally lost, separated from God for all eternity.

Romans 8

7 because **the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God**; for it does ***not subject*** itself to the law of God, for it is ***not even able to do so***,
8 and **those who are in the flesh *cannot* please God**.

The apostates of dispensationalism twist the meaning of grace ... they teach it to mean that obedience to God nullifies grace. Though not directly stated, they teach obedience as works, and works nullifies grace, therefore Salvation nullifies obedience and obedience nullifies Salvation. These are a greatly confused bunch of carnal minded people. Minds like these are hostile to God and His truth. Obedience is the fruit of Grace and Salvation, obedience does nothing to nullify grace. Those who do not obey God, do not love God for **Jesus teaches that love is obedience (John 14:31)**. One not living a life of obedience to God is the fruit of one not having received the saving grace of God ... there is no Salvation, they remain in their sins.

Romans 8

9 However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, **if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you**. But **if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him**.

The indwelling of God's Holy Spirit is the only proof of Salvation, and will be evidenced by one living a life of obedience to God. This is referred to as progressive sanctification. We continue to grow in our walk and mature in joyful obedience to God. This is the meaning of denying self. Denying the flesh is living by the Spirit.

Romans 8

10 ¶ **If Christ is in you**, though the **body is dead because of sin**, yet the **spirit is alive because of righteousness**.
11 But **if the Spirit of Him** who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead **will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you**.

Matthew 16:24

The body being dead means the body is separated from God. Death is separation. The body is separated from God due to sin. This verse could easily become a separate study but we live in the spirit "if" the Holy Spirit indwells us. The body is dead, separated and therefore cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Jesus will reward those who are His with a new undefiled body, a spiritual body at His return.

- 12 So then, brethren, **we are under obligation**, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—
13 for **if you are living according to the flesh, you must die**; **but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.**

The body is already dead (separated from God) due to sin and we continue to put the body of flesh to death by separating ourselves from the desires of the body (flesh) by not allowing the desires of the flesh to have dominion over our lives.

1 Corinthians 15:31

I affirm, brethren, by the boasting in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, **I die daily.**

God is telling us to deny self, deny the desires and deeds of the flesh and to live a *spiritual* life in accordance to the desires of the Spirit that *indwells* us.

2 Corinthians 7:1

¶ Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us **cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness** in the fear of God.

The spirit in the above verse is speaking of the human spirit, the spirit that is carnal and fleshly oriented. This spirit of flesh is the one that will predominate those living in the last days, ... we are living in the last days. Many of those professing to be followers of Jesus are not ... they follow their flesh giving lip service to Jesus and by succumbing to apostasy, heresy and the doctrines of demons. The spirit of the flesh will be taught as if it is the Spirit of God ... and that will ... is ... deceiving many, for the deceived continue to live according to the flesh.

James 5:1-3

- 1 ¶ **Come now, you rich, weep and howl** for your miseries which are coming upon you.
- 2 **Your riches have rotted** and your garments have become moth-eaten.
- 3 **Your gold and your silver have rusted**; and their rust will be a witness against you and **will consume your flesh like fire**. It is in the last days that you have stored up your treasure!

A major reason for this is the shepherds entrusted to preserve and teach the Word of God have abandoned God and His Spirit for the spirit of flesh. **There is no firm root in contemporary Christianity** as the teaching of Jesus prophesies of those receiving the Word of God.

Matthew 16:24

Mark 4:17

and they have no [firm] root in themselves, but are [only] temporary; then, **when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately they fall away.**

CARRY YOUR CROSS

To carry one's cross is to joyfully endure affliction, hardship and yes, even death for the name of Jesus. Our very strongest and most basest need ... self preservation, life itself ... is to be denied to follow God.

To carry our cross is to *spiritually* crucify the flesh.

Galatians 5:24

Now **those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires**

Those who follow Jesus *have already* (past tense) put do death ... separated themselves ... from the desires and drives of the flesh. Christians *have already* crucified the flesh when they committed their lives to follow Jesus. The flesh is dead, the Spirit is alive.

To carry our cross is to physically endure tribulation, suffering and death.

Revelation 12:11

"And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and **they did not love their life even when faced with death.**

The Christian is called to *die* for the name of Christ. To crumble and fall if confronted with physical death for the name of Jesus is to **deny Christ** and confirm we never had Salvation. I don't know about you, but that sends chills up my spine. When I think of how easily I crumble when tempted by the desires of the flesh, I shudder to think where I am when confronted with the ultimate test of faith ... martyrdom ... cruel and painful death!

I don't believe I'm alone when saying I have great fear of my conviction and constitution to follow the Lord no matter what. Though my heart and mind is committed to stand firm, the reality is I've failed when confronted with so much less. Sin is to crumble, fail and miss the mark. The truth of Christianity is humbling indeed. The cost of Christianity is high indeed. If we love our temporal life more than spiritual life in Christ Jesus, we are not worthy, nor fit, to claim the name of Christ ... Christian. To deny Jesus if and when confronted with death is to deny Jesus. If we deny Jesus we are not following Jesus, and were NOT granted Salvation, the gift of eternal life.

Matthew 16:24

Matthew 10:39

"He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it.

Matthew 16:25

"For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.

Mark 8:35

"For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it.

Luke 9:24

"For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it.

Luke 17:33

"Whoever seeks to keep his life will lose it, and whoever loses [his life] will preserve it.

1 John 3:16

We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

This is what it means in Philippians 2:12 when God says to work out your Salvation with fear and trembling.

Philippians 2:12

¶ So then, my beloved, just as you have **always obeyed**, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your salvation with fear and trembling;**

To "work out your Salvation" does not have the meaning of losing a Salvation once given, but to be ever cognizant of our weakness and failing in "**obedience**" to the Lord as one redeemed by God. Obedience has to do with our walk of faith ... our progressive sanctification ... drawing closer to the Lord in mind, action and deed. Are we living the fullness of the commands of Jesus to deny self and endure affliction even to the point of death? I think most of us who answer this honestly in the admonition of the Lord are forced to conclude ... NO, we are not. This is the healthy type of fear of the Lord we should all have when we realize we have not lived up to the demands of God concerning holiness, purity, and perfection in love. Now we see why Jesus needed to die in our stead through His perfect atonement.

Jesus suffered to reconcile us to The Father and to release us from the bondage of sin. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit imparts truth and understanding to the words of God

Matthew 16:24

with strength and the power to act upon that which is revealed ... faith. **Faith is the gift from God given to all saved people that grants action to belief.** Faith without action is non-existent ... it is dead. Faith is acting upon our belief.

James 2:17-26

17 Even so **faith, if it has no works, is dead**, being by itself.

Faith without works is *intellectual assent* ... belief. Belief with action (works) is faith.

James 2

18 But someone may well say, "You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works."

19 **You believe that God is one.** You do well; **the demons also believe, and shudder.**

Even the demons believe that God is the Triune God ... One God. Demons believe but they are not saved, are they? **To believe in God is not a sufficient evidence of Salvation.** Those who do not demonstrate faith by acting upon their belief probably do not have Salvation. Works is the fruit of Salvation. Works include obedience to God, the denial of self and the carrying of your cross.

James 2

20 But **are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow**, that **faith without works is useless?**

21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar?

22 You see that **faith was working with his works**, and **as a result of the works, faith was perfected;**

23 and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "AND ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS," and he was called the friend of God.

24 You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone.

25 In the same way, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way?

26 For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also **faith without works is dead.**

Faith, the workings of belief and trust in God is the fruit of, or put another way, the evidence of Salvation and not the means to Salvation. Those who have received the indwelling of God's Holy Spirit are empowered to act upon their belief and serve the living God. **Lack of works is evidence of lack of Saving grace** ... there is no Salvation if it does not produce works. Put another way, the absence of works is evidence of the absence of Salvation. Many try to fool themselves, others and even God through good works. The works produced in the regenerate Christian is the works of God indwelling the Christian and not of the superficial sort common with the flesh.

Matthew 16:24

It is the work of God indwelling the believer that is the fruit of Salvation. Those living in denial of self and those carrying their cross of Christ are those who are indwelt by God the Holy Spirit and His sanctified children.

2 Corinthians 4:11

For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

2 Corinthians 7:5

¶ For even when we came into Macedonia **our flesh had no rest, but we were afflicted on every side:** conflicts without, fears within.

2 Corinthians 12:7

Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, **to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me—to keep me from exalting myself!**

Some who are repulsed by this very notion say, "Surely you're not saying that God expects all those who follow Him to suffer and die for Him. Isn't the Christian life one of grace, peace and love?"

Oh how well the false prophets and teachers have trained their disciples. **The false teachers have taught their students to connect grace, peace and love with fulfilling the desires of the flesh.** The first part of that objection stated above is absolutely true. Our Lord indeed expects each one of His followers to willingly choose death over denying or contradicting God and His Word. Much of the New Covenant writings, gospels and Revelation is centered upon preparing the Christian to endure suffering, tribulation and yes, even death for the name of Jesus and the gospel.

Acts 5:41

So they went on their way from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they had been **considered worthy to suffer shame for [His] name.**

Romans 8:17-18

17 ¶ and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, **if indeed we suffer with [Him] so that we may also be glorified with [Him.]**

18 For I consider that the **sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.**

We are His children and His heirs to eternal life and the promises made to Abraham and Israel **"IF"** we agree to **suffer** with Jesus so we may be glorified with Him as well. This is a *conditional promise*. The false teachings of the apostates promote a **false gospel** by claiming to accept Jesus as your Savior (they purposefully avoid Lord) is the way to **"avoid" suffering, tribulation and death.** The true gospel teaches that with Salvation comes the willingness and the ability through the indwelling of God the Holy Spirit to

Matthew 16:24

endure suffering, affliction and death. The spiritual peace from the Spirit overwhelms the carnal peace from satisfying the flesh.

Our Salvation and Eternal Life is evidenced upon our acceptance and willingness to suffer with Christ. The many evils of dispensational theology, accepted by many conservative groups who adhere to the apostate doctrines of that philosophy teach a *different gospel*. The dispensational gospel stands in direct opposition to the true gospel and teachings of Jesus. **The capstone heresy of dispensationalism is the lie of pre-tribulation rapture ... the bible teaches NO SUCH OCCURRENCE!**

2 Corinthians 1:5-7

- 5 For just as the **sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance**, so also **our comfort is abundant through Christ**.
- 6 But **if we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation**; or if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which is effective in the **patient enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer**;
- 7 and our hope for you is **firmly grounded, knowing that as you are sharers of our sufferings, so also you are sharers of our comfort**.

The comfort of enduring afflictions for the testimony of Christ is the knowledge that our sufferings for His name's sake approves us as His Children and heirs of the promises. Despite what many Christians have been maliciously taught, sufferings are not reserved for the Jews alone. **Spiritual Israel suffers and will endure tribulation, the Great Tribulation and death prophesied to Israel ... Israel is both ethnic and spiritual Israel.**

Philippians 1:29

For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,

Not very appealing to the carnal mind focused upon the flesh ... but to the spiritual mind, it is a privilege granted to us by Christ.

Philippians 3:8

More than that, **I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ,**

The loss of all things will include the loss of Paul's life as well. All the apostles (except for John) and the prophets were martyred for the name of God.

Philippians 3:10

that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;

Matthew 16:24

Colossians 1:24

Now **I rejoice in my sufferings** for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions.

1 Thessalonians 3:4

For indeed when we were with you, **we [kept] telling you in advance that we were going to suffer affliction**; and so it came to pass, as you know.

Not only is it the call of the Apostles to suffer with Christ, but that is the call for all who follow Jesus as well.

2 Thessalonians 1:5

¶ [This is] a plain indication of God's righteous judgment **so that you will be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which indeed you are suffering.**

2 Timothy 2:3

Suffer hardship with [me,] as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

1 Peter 2:19-23

19 **For this finds favor**, if for the sake of conscience toward God a person **bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly.**

20 For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if **when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God.**

21 **For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps,**

22 WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH;

23 and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept **entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously;**

FOLLOW ME

To follow Jesus is to obey Jesus ... to be in complete and absolute agreement with Jesus ... and to live as he commands us to live. This is what it means to *confess* Jesus. Confession means to be in lockstep agreement ... the very opposite of deny.

Matthew 19:21

Jesus said to him, "**If** you wish to be complete, go [and] **sell your possessions** and **give to [the] poor**, and **you will have treasure in heaven**; and **come, follow Me.**"

Matthew 16:24

We see again how we must deny self to follow Jesus. Money and possessions are looked upon with great importance by the flesh ... but Jesus teaches that the true treasures are spiritual and in heaven.

Matthew 8:21-22

21 Another of the disciples said to Him, "Lord, permit me **first** to go and bury my father."

22 But Jesus *said to him, "**Follow Me**, and **allow the dead to bury their own dead.**"

To follow Jesus is the put God first. God must always remain the most important and the most essential thing in life. Nothing should come before or get in the way of our following the Lord.

Matthew 6:33

"But **seek first** His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

If a conflict arises between performing a deed of the flesh with a deed of the spirit, the Spirit shall prevail. The phrase, "let the dead bury their own dead" in Matthew 8:22 is speaking of letting those who are spiritually dead tend to matters of the flesh which is also dead. It is more important to follow God whenever God may call than to follow the carnal aspects of life, even if there is no sin associated with doing so. Certainly there is no sin with handling funeral arrangements for a deceased father, unless it interferes with following God at the moment He commands us to follow Him. Jesus was illustrating to the man a lesson in priorities much in the same manner that He taught Martha, Mary's sister a lesson in seeking God first.

Luke 10:38-42

38 ¶ Now as they were traveling along, He entered a village; and a woman named **Martha welcomed Him into her home.**

39 She had a sister called Mary, who was seated at the Lord's feet, listening to His word.

40 But **Martha was distracted with all her preparations**; and she came up to Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me."

41 But the Lord answered and said to her, "**Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things;**

42 **but only one thing is necessary, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.**"

Martha was instructed in priorities. She was being a gracious hostess and doing what is "carnally correct." However, her carnal correctness neglected "God with us" as being more important. She elevated the deeds of the flesh to be more important than the needs of the spirit. Jesus rewarded Mary for her wisdom is seeking first that which is truly important ... God and His wisdom, teaching and presence. Martha reduced that

Matthew 16:24

which is greater to the lesser. She chose the carnal over the spiritual. A fleshly desire need not always be a sinful desire, just a poor choice in priorities.

To follow Jesus is to confess Jesus. There is a great deal of false teaching concerning what it means to **confess** Jesus. Some state the mere utterance of the words is all the power one needs to invoke Salvation, a la' the Word Faith cult and dispensationalism. Both have two variations of the same false theme. Let's examine the Word of God and determine what the Scriptures teach on the subject by illustrating the contrast between confess and deny.

John 1:20

And he **confessed** <3670 **homologeō**> and did not **deny** <arneomai>, but **confessed** <3670 **homologeō**>, "I am not the Christ."

Confess and deny are opposites in meaning. To deny is to be *unacquainted* with and *disassociated* from that which you deny. When we confess we promise and profess to be at one with and identify ourselves with the object of our confession. (see Appendix A for all the Scriptures that compare and contrast deny and confess)

The Greek word for confess is *homologeō* and literally means to be **one in word**. Homo=one, the same and logeo=word. To confess is to be one with that which we profess. It means to live, act and think in perfect harmony and agreement with whatever is confessed.

To deny yourself is to disassociate yourself from your carnal and fleshly desires and to stand in contradiction to the words of the flesh. When we confess God, we claim to be at one with the Word of God by agreeing with God and embracing all He says. Let's examine a few verses where this contrast in meaning is brought to light.

Titus 1:16

They **profess** <homologeō> to know God, **but by their deeds** they **deny** <arneomai> Him, **being detestable and disobedient and worthless** for any good deed.

This verse in Titus is extremely important for all Christians to understand. **The mere speaking of the words is not the confession of the followers of Christ ... but the living of the words is our confession.** Let's repeat that. To confess Jesus is to live by the word of God. It is far more than a mere intellectual assent and verbal babble.

God is revealing to us that those who confess with their lips to know God, profess to be at one with Him, yet continue to live in a manner that is unacquainted with and disassociated from godliness ... are denying God. They deny God by their actions even though they confess God with their lips. One living like this is contradictory, detestable, disobedient and worthless in the eyes of God. We deny God in deed.

Matthew 16:24

False teachers whom proclaim "power" in the mere speaking of God's words are liars. This is a false religion and contradictory to the true Words and teaching of God. The teaching that there is power through the mere utterance of certain words is witchcraft and demonic in origin. Any religion that proclaims *power* given to *anyone* who merely speaks certain words, or recites incantations or chants is a demonic religion. What make it demonic is It matters not whether you believe or not, for the power is in the words. The power is God, not a combination of syllables. That teaching is the doctrine of demons and opposite to the truth and power of God for it denies God and His Word.

Let's examine some Scriptures that the false teachers twist to mean the mere utterance of words or the mere recital of a rote prayer is all a Christian need do for Salvation.

Romans 10:9-10

- 9 that if you **confess <homologeō> with your mouth Jesus as Lord**, and **believe in your heart** that God raised Him from the dead, **you will be saved**;
10 for **with the heart a person believes**, resulting in righteousness, and **with the mouth he confesses <homologeō> resulting in salvation**.

Philippians 2:11

and that **every tongue will confess <exomologeō>** that **Jesus Christ is Lord**, to the glory of God the Father.

1 John 2:22-23

- 22 Who is the liar but the one who **denies <arneōmai>** that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who **denies <arneōmai>** the Father and the Son.
23 Whoever **denies <arneōmai>** the Son does not have the Father; the one who **confesses <homologeō>** the Son has the Father also.

1 John 4:2-3

- 2 By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that **confesses <homologeō>** that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God;
3 and every spirit that does not **confess <homologeō>** Jesus is not from God; this is the *spirit* of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.

1 John 4:15

Whoever **confesses <homologeō>** that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.

These verses could easily become a separate study in and of itself to refute the Lordship controversy, as well as the rote utterance of words or prayers for Salvation. Such confusion and controversy is the natural result of apostate doctrines and philosophies masquerading as theology and biblical truth.

To confess Jesus as **LORD** "with the mouth" for Salvation means to make a **public profession or proclamation of our subservience and obedience to Messiah Jesus**,

Matthew 16:24

God in the flesh, and that we will live, obey and serve God in one accord, in full agreement with what God has declared through Jesus, God with us; His Holy Spirit, God in us; and all the Scriptures, God over us.

Acts 24:14

"But this I **admit <homologeo>** to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect I **do serve the God of our fathers, believing everything that is in accordance with the Law and that is written in the Prophets;**

While the scripture above certainly negates a rote "lip service utterance" for Salvation, the teaching of Jesus and the Apostles show **obedience to our confession is the substance of our confession.**

2 Corinthians 9:13

Because of the proof given by this ministry, they will glorify God for *your* **obedience to your confession <homologia>** of the gospel of Christ and for the liberality of your contribution to them and to all,

1 Timothy 6:12

Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you **made <homologeo>** the good **confession <homologia>** in the presence of many witnesses.

Hebrews 10:23

Let us **hold fast** the **confession <homologia>** of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful;

Hebrews 13:15

Through Him then, **let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God**, that is, the **fruit of lips** that **give thanks <homologeo>** to His name.

We see that good works and the offering of ourselves as a sacrifice to God is the fruit of the lips of our confession to His name. Let's go to one final verse and passage of Scripture that by far is the weightiest and most compelling passage to refute this rote "lip service alone" apostasy.

Matthew 7:23

"And then I will **declare <homologeo>** to them, **'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'**

Jesus confesses condemnation and eternal hell to whom? This is preached by God in the flesh ... Jesus ... warning us about **FALSE PROPHETS.**

Matthew 7:15

¶ "Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves.

Matthew 16:24

When we see the works of these false prophets, this may confound many a person, especially those of the Word Faith cult and the Pentecostal/Charismatic movement.

Matthew 7:21

¶ **"Not everyone who says to Me,** 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, **but he who does the will of My Father** who is in heaven will enter.

So much for the power in the words themselves hypocrisy. We are called to obedience and service as the fruit of Salvation. Jesus directly rebukes the notion Salvation via rote recitation in verse 21 above. Not those who say, but those who do are saved. The doing is the fruit of Salvation. The saying is the fruit of doing. Our Lord is not done yet. He continues ...

Matthew 7:22-23

22 "Many will **say** to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, **did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?**'

23 "And **then I will declare to them,** 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'

So much for this pseudo revival movement with its false signs and wonders road show. God calls this lawlessness. Those who claim prophesy, exorcism and miracles in the name of Jesus are not necessarily acting from God. The purported physical healing is also part of this deceptive move of Satan to focus the minds of millions of people upon the flesh and the desires of the flesh. There are those when confronted with Scripture that refute their beliefs and false notions will simply and glibly dismiss the Scripture with, "well, that's your opinion" or some other non-believers cliché. Those of this mindset are DENYING JESUS, the very opposite of confessing Jesus as Lord.

Why a public confession? The Scriptures answer that best. Because there would be an immediate cost leveled against those doing this at the time the gospels were written.

John 9:22

His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone **confessed <homologeo>** Him to be Christ, **he was to be put out of the synagogue.**

John 12:42

Nevertheless **many even of the rulers believed in Him,** but because of the Pharisees they were **not confessing <3670 homologeo> Him, for fear that they would be put out of the synagogue;**

Jesus knew this when he declared to the Jews that He would confess them before God and the angels of God all those who would confess Jesus before men in spite of sure persecution.

Matthew 16:24

Matthew 10:32

"Therefore everyone who **confesses <homologeo>** Me before men, I will also **confess <homologeo>** him before My Father who is in heaven.

Luke 12:8

"And I say to you, everyone who **confesses <homologeo>** Me before men, the Son of Man will **confess <homologeo>** him also before the angels of God;

Revelation 3:5

'He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will **confess <homologeo>** his name before My Father and before His angels.

What is it we confess to? All declarations about our being the children of wrath apart from God's saving grace, our sin, our need for a Savior; to His doctrines about His own nature, holiness, and law; about the Savior and the Holy Spirit; about the necessity of a change of heart and holiness of life; about spiritual death and final judgment; about heaven and hell. The single most important teaching, however, is the assent and public proclamation of our agreement with God on all His truths concerning our Messiah Jesus as Lord and Redeemer, His virgin birth, death and resurrection to life, that he is God in the flesh.

God is our power. The Christian is one who lives in denial of self, the flesh, and in subjection to God. The power of God "in" the regenerate Christian leads and empowers the individual to lead a humble life, yielded in obedience to God. When the Christian follows Jesus, he lives in accordance to and at one with the words of Jesus ... and the words of Scripture ... they are one in the same.

Matthew 4:4

But He answered and said, "It is written, '**MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.**'"

Not living by bread alone is to deny self ... food is essential for living but is not to be regarded as the essential for true life ... eternal life. *Living* by the word of God is to confess Christ. The words of God are spirit and the Spirit is life. We are to live by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God ... the living word ... Jesus ... and the words of life ... the bible.

Galatians 6:8

For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

We Walk by Faith in the Spirit. We can only do this by crucifying the flesh.

Matthew 16:24

Galatians 2:20

"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the [life] which **I now live in the flesh I live by faith** in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

The life we live in the flesh is referring to our earthly existence as a flesh and blood human. Paul is not referring to living in according to the desires of the flesh for we are living by faith in the Spirit, not the flesh. To follow Jesus is to deny the flesh and earthly desires of the flesh *while* we remain alive in this body of flesh.

Galatians 5:13

¶ For you were called to freedom, brethren; **only [do] not [turn] your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh**, but through love serve one another.

Colossians 1:24

Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and **in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church**, in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions.

2 Corinthians 10:3-4

3 For **though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh**,
4 for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.

The spiritual warfare that Paul is referring to is the war between the natural fleshly desires with those of the spiritual desires manifesting from the indwelling of God's Holy Spirit. The flesh and the Spirit are mutually exclusive and always in conflict with one another. The natural desires of man are hostile to God.

Romans 8:7

because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able [to do so,]

The carnal mind is incapable of pleasing God. It is impossible to be a God-pleaser without the indwelling of God's Holy Spirit.

1 Peter 4:1-2

1 ¶ Therefore, **since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose**, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,
2 so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.

The fruits of Salvation include denial of Self with the strength and courage to endure suffering, persecution, tribulation and death for our confession of Messiah Jesus. True peace is the Spirit above, not the flesh below. Grace to you in the name of Jesus.