

**Access Denied  
"To Self"**

**Introduction:**

Today we conclude this series and our fast ends with Good Friday communion.

Our focus (those areas to which we should deny access)

- Old Man/Adamic nature
- Anxiety
- Fear
- Spiritual Immaturity

Final one today found in those immortal words of Jesus—"...if anyone desires to come after Me, let him DENY HIMSELF..."

Access MUST BE denied to self

(Before we explore this rather bizarre statement, we must look closely at the context)

**Peter's Confession**

*And it happened, as He was alone praying, that His disciples joined Him, and He asked them, saying, "Who do the crowds say that I am?" 19 So they answered and said, "John the Baptist, but some say Elijah; and others say that one of the old prophets has risen again." 20 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered and said, "The Christ of God." Luke 9:18-20 NKJV*

- ✓ In Luke, the prayers of Jesus are always occasions for further clarity from the Father

*When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened. 22 And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased." Luke 3:21-22 NKJV*

(Divine affirmation)

*Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. 13 And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles: Luke 6:12-13 NKJV*

(Associates chosen)

***Now it came to pass, about eight days after these sayings, that He took Peter, John, and James and went up on the mountain to pray. 29 As He prayed, the appearance of His face was altered, and His robe became white and glistening. 30 And behold, two men talked with Him, who were Moses and Elijah, 31 who appeared in glory and spoke of His decease which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Luke 9:28-31 NKJV***

(Father's plan)

- ✓ In the context of Jesus' prayer, Peter receives divine disclosure—"You are the Christ of God" (Messiah)

Jesus' Clarification

***And He strictly warned and commanded them to tell this to no one, 22 saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day." Luke 9:21-22 NKJV***

- ✓ Why not tell anyone yet? More to the story! Jesus must suffer!
- ✓ It's not enough to simply have revelation of who He is—also what He calls us to
- ✓ Like Him-suffering-on a cross

Call to Self-Denial

- ✓ Radical call, even in that day (maybe especially in that day)
- ✓ Deny access to self
- ✓ Identify relationships that make me who I am, give me my identity-he demands, deny it!

***Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." Matthew 4:19 NKJV***

(I will make you to become something)

***Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Matthew 28:19 NKJV***

***I have been crucified with Christ; 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 for me. Galatians 2:20 NKJV***

***Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. 2 Corinthians 5:17 NKJV***

NOTE: If we hear the call of Jesus as anything less than a complete denial of our self-we do not hear rightly the message of Christ.

- ✓ Not spiritual addition or subtraction (adding Him/taking away something)
- ✓ Not spiritual improvement, cleansing
- ✓ The call is the death of old self/radical transformation-new life
- ✓ SELF MUST BE DENIED

What does that look like?

NOTE: Connection between Messiah and what He experiences and His followers

Access denied means:

### **I. Deny access to self-confidence**

***“If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily...”***

NOTE: As dreadful as his destiny as Son of Man might be, those who choose to follow Him may expect nothing other than that same opposition.

- ✓ Not because Jesus is a masochist who loves to suffer
- ✓ He is unreservedly committed to God’s purpose-a purpose that resists and is resisted by, the habits and patterns and powers of the larger world
- ✓ Note also, desiring to come after Jesus is not alone, discipleship. Already learned that hearing the Word, even responding in faith, does not guarantee continued faithfulness

***“Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. 12 Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. 13 But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. 14 Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. Luke 8:11-14 NKJV***

\*Can be choked out!

**A. Taking up cross in Roman context-victim carrying the crossbeam from site of sentencing to the place of crucifixion.**

1. Jesus says “daily” or day by day
2. Living daily as if one had been sentenced to death

**B. This act was an act of complete embarrassment/shame.**

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- C. Any sense of one's superiority or personal pride would be gone.
- D. This what He calls us to. Surrendering to His Lordship!

1. Destruction of pride
2. Counting all self-accomplishment as nothing

E. Paul describes it best

***Though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: 5 circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; 6 concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. 7 But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. 8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; Philippians 3:4-9 NKJV***

### Practical

1. Sincere willingness to lay down anything and abandon all self-boasting.
2. Sincere willingness to make the pursuit of Jesus more important than promotion, acclaim, or reward, not just in confession, but in action.
3. Sincere willingness to refuse and reject the accolades of others that do not clearly identify Christ as the source of my achievement.

## II. Deny access to self-preservation

***"If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.***

- A. Follow (present imperative) which means to keep on following
- B. Point is to follow Jesus-His steps, His plan/hand
- C. Have to entrust my life into His plan/hand

\*Deny access to self-preservation-my plan

***For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. Luke 9:24 NKJV***

1. If I hold on to my agenda/plan-I lose it
2. Rich fool

***Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. 17 And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' 18 So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. 19 And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry." 20 But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?' 21 "So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." Luke 12:16-21 NKJV***

- a. Leaned to his own understanding
- b. Did not acknowledge God
- c. Sought own preservation
- d. Fool he lost it all

#### **D. Practical Examples**

1. I know God's word says I need to honor the Sabbath, but I cannot afford to rest for a day.
2. I know God's word says to honor Him with my firstfruits/tithe, but I cannot afford it.
3. I know God's word says I must forgive the one who hurts me, but they have hurt me too badly.

My Agenda—Self-preservation—Must follow Him and that must go!

### **III. Deny access to self-absorption**

***For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost? 26 For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels. Luke 9:25-26 NKJV***

- A. So absorbed by myself
  1. My stuff
  2. My reputation
- B. Gain whole world-lose soul
- C. I cannot cling to my own life and also serve the redemptive plan of God

#### **D. Practical**

1. When I am more concerned with how others would view me than God-self-absorbed.
2. When I am more concerned with holding on to my rights than surrendering to His will-self-absorbed.

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3. When I am more concerned with my present status than my eternal state-I am self-absorbed.

**Conclusion:** Hard STUFF

Deny Access

Self-Confidence (take shame)

***Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present you faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. Jude 24 NKJV***

Self-preservation (my plan)

***Delight yourself also in the Lord, And He shall give you the desires of your heart. Psalms 37:4 NKJV***

Self-absorption (my stuff)

***But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Matthew 6:33 NKJV***