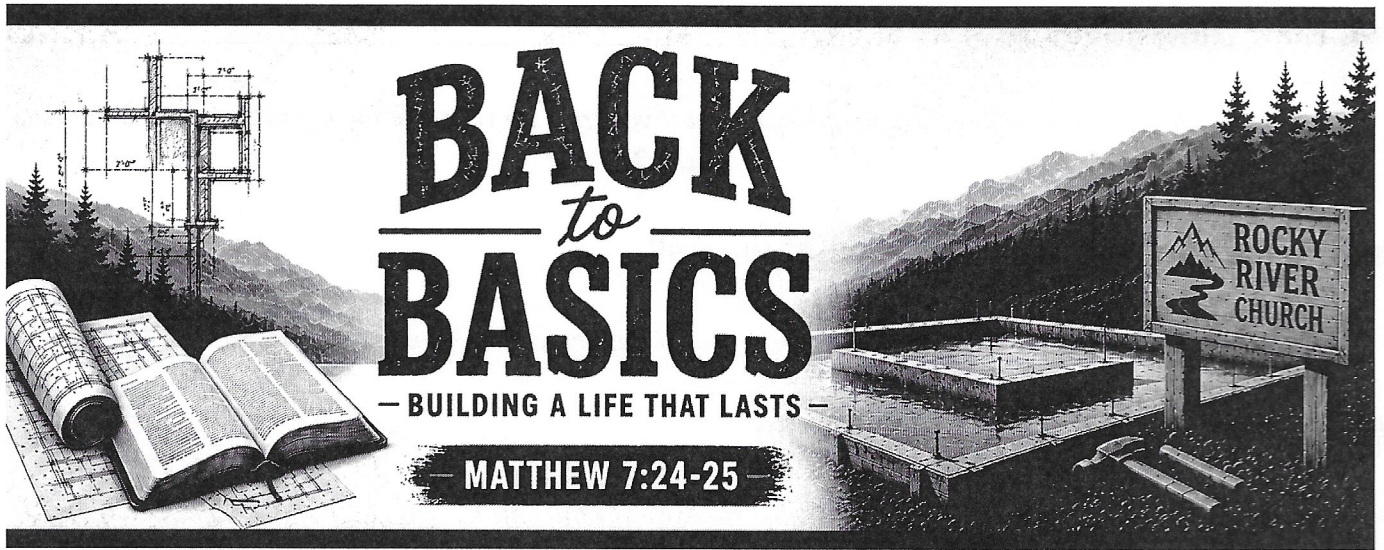




WHAT IT REALLY MEANS TO BE A FOLLOWER OF JESUS

ROCKY RIVER CHURCH – AUGUST 23, 2026

JIMMY BRITT, LEAD PASTOR

FOCUS TEXT – LUKE 9:23-27

²³ Then he said to the crowd, “If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross daily, and follow me. ²⁴ If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it. ²⁵ And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but are yourself lost or destroyed? ²⁶ If anyone is ashamed of me and my message, the Son of Man will be ashamed of that person when he returns in his glory and in the glory of the Father and the holy angels. ²⁷ I tell you the truth, some standing here right now will not die before they see the Kingdom of God.”

FIVE ESSENTIALS OF WHAT IT REALLY MEANS TO BE A FOLLOW OF JESUS:

#1. Following Jesus begins with _____.

MEMORY VERSE:

“If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross daily, and follow me.” -Luke 9:23

To “give up your own way” means to deny yourself. It means surrendering your right to be the ultimate authority over your own life. It's saying, “Jesus, I'm no longer in charge of my life – You are.”

#2. Following Jesus is a _____.

“...take up your cross daily...” -Luke 9:23b

“My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.”

-Galatians 2:20

#3. Following Jesus requires _____.

"If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it."

-Luke 9:24

#4. Following Jesus changes what we call _____.

"And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but are yourself lost or destroyed?" **-Luke 9:25**

#5. Following Jesus means living an _____.

"If anyone is ashamed of me and my message, the Son of Man will be ashamed of that person when he returns in his glory and in the glory of the Father and the holy angels." **-Luke 9:26**

MY NEXT STEPS:

☐ Memorize this week's **Memory Verse – Luke 9:23**

☐ I will spend **10 minutes** each day in God's Word – by reading one chapter of the **Gospel of Matthew** each day.

- Monday – Matthew 7
- Tuesday – Matthew 8
- Wednesday – Matthew 9
- Thursday – Matthew 10
- Friday – Matthew 11
- Saturday – Matthew 12

☐ This week I will spend some time this week with the following evaluation questions:

1. **What do I need to surrender?** What am I holding onto – my plans, finances, relationships, habits, future, pride? What would happen if you simply opened your hands and said, "*Jesus, this belongs to You?*"
2. **What is Jesus asking me to do?** I will not only hear from Jesus, but I will also obey Him.
3. **Who am I really following?** Everyone follows something – success, money, comfort, approval, self...or Jesus. I can't follow Jesus while insisting on choosing the direction.

NEXT WEEK @ ROCKY RIVER CHURCH:

BACK TO BASICS: FEEING YOUR SOUL ON THE WORD OF GOD

