

5-Day Devotional: Counting the Cost of Discipleship

Day 1: The Invitation to Grace

Reading: Matthew 11:28-30

Devotional: Jesus extends an open invitation: "Come to me, all who are weary." This isn't a conditional offer based on your performance or perfection. Before He calls us to surrender everything, He first calls us to rest in His grace. His yoke is easy and His burden is light because He carries the weight with us. Today, pause and remember that discipleship begins not with your effort, but with His welcome. You don't need to clean yourself up before coming to Jesus—you come as you are, and He does the transforming work. The Christian life starts with receiving, not achieving. Have you truly accepted this invitation, or are you still trying to earn what's freely given?

Day 2: Reordering Your Loves

Reading: Luke 14:25-27

Devotional: Jesus's words about "hating" family seem harsh until we understand His point: He must be first. This isn't about loving people less, but about loving Jesus more—so much more that everything else pales in comparison. When Christ takes His rightful place as your highest allegiance, He actually teaches you to love others better than you could without Him. The tension you feel between worldly loyalties and kingdom priorities isn't a sign you're failing—it's evidence that transformation is happening. Today, identify one relationship or possession that competes with Jesus for first place in your heart. Don't condemn yourself; simply confess it and ask Him to help you reorder your loves correctly.

Day 3: Daily Dying, Daily Living

Reading: Luke 9:23-25

Devotional: "Take up your cross daily" means discipleship isn't a one-time decision but a daily surrender. Every morning presents fresh opportunities to choose Jesus over comfort, ego, or control. You will stumble. You will fall short. But the Christian life isn't about perfection—it's about direction. Are you moving toward Jesus or away from Him? The cross isn't just about Jesus's past sacrifice; it represents your present transformation. He's reconstructing your habits, priorities, and character one day at a time. When you face tension between what you want and what God wants, celebrate it—that tension means He's still working on you. Today, what does taking up your cross look like practically? Name it and embrace it.

Day 4: Building on the Right Foundation

Reading: Luke 14:28-32; Matthew 7:24-27

Devotional: Every person is building something with their life. The question is: what foundation are you building on? Jesus warns against half-formed faith—enthusiasm without endurance, emotion without commitment. Counting the cost isn't about discouragement; it's about honest assessment. You cannot complete this tower called discipleship in your own strength. But here's the good news: Jesus doesn't ask you to build alone. When you surrender the construction project of your life to Him, He provides everything needed for completion. Stop trying to be the architect and contractor of your own transformation. Today, assess what you're building. Is it a monument to self or a dwelling place for God? Invite Him to take over the blueprints.

Day 5: The Freedom of Full Surrender

Reading: Luke 14:33-35; Philippians 3:7-11

Devotional: "Renounce all that he has" sounds like losing everything, but it's actually the path to gaining everything that matters. What possesses you? Not what you own, but what owns you—your reputation, your comfort, your plans, your rights. Jesus calls for complete allegiance not because He's a tyrant, but because He's a loving Father who knows that divided hearts lead to broken lives. Full surrender brings freedom, not bondage. When you stop clutching your mud and release it to Jesus, He transforms it into something beautiful. The tension you feel is proof He loves you enough to keep reconstructing you into His image. Today, practice allegiance over perfection. You won't get it right every time, but choose to trust Him anyway. That's what He's asking for.