

## April 8th – The Cost of Discipleship

*“Then He said to them all, ‘If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.’”  
(Luke 9:23)*

We hear the word “disciple” thrown around quite a bit in the world today, especially in the sports world. Some say that Bill Belichick was a Bill Parcells disciple, emulating many of the defensive principles he learned from Parcells. I’ve watched a documentary on those two. Belichick was the defensive coordinator when Parcells was coach of the New York Giants. Though Belichick was well-paid, coaching under Parcells still came at a price – a lot of yelling, harassing, second-guessing, etc.

No matter the cost Belichick had to pay, it’s nothing in comparison to what a disciple of Jesus must pay in order to enjoy the privilege of following Christ. Jesus didn’t mince words – “If anyone desires to come after Me” – that is, to be my disciple. “Let him deny himself.” If you want to follow Jesus, the first thing you must do is deny yourself. By signing on as a disciple of Christ, you are relinquishing all control of your life. It’s no longer about you – it’s all about Him!

Next, a disciple must “take up his cross daily.” What does that mean? Let’s think about that – a cross was an instrument of death. So then, Jesus was saying that a Christ-follower must die to Himself every day and willfully take up the burdens that come with following Jesus. And of course, a disciple must “follow Me” – he must follow in the footsteps of Christ. I heard a preacher summarize it as denying, dying, and devoting ourselves to Jesus. Can those three words be used to describe your pursuit of Christ?