



[Matthew 16:24-25](#)

(24) And Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and let him take up his cross and follow Me. (25) For whoever desires to save his life shall lose it; but whoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it.

A Faithful Version

[Jesus](#) tells us to *deny ourselves*. This means we must disown and renounce ourselves and subjugate everything—all our works, interests, and enjoyments—to the standards set by [God](#). Paul commands us to bring under our control every thought that opposes God and His way ([II Corinthians 10:5](#)).

Jesus also instructs us to *bear our cross*. We need to embrace the situations God has set us in, and with [faith](#) in Him to bring us through them, bear the troubles and difficulties that come upon us. Just as Jesus accepted His role, even to "the death of the cross" ([Philippians 2:8](#)), we need to be content with what God gives us to do ([Philippians 4:11](#)). As Paul says in [I Timothy 6:6](#), "Godliness with contentment is great gain." What an achievement it is not to be driven by evil hungers!

God has called us to lay down our lives in subjection to Him. The supreme object of our lives is not our personal happiness or fulfilling our every desire. Our goal is God's kingdom and His righteousness ([Matthew 6:33](#)), but notice what Jesus says next: "And all these things shall be added to you." If we yield ourselves to God's instruction and grow and overcome, He will fulfill our legitimate desires!

[Matthew 16:25](#) shows us the two sides of this issue. Jesus says that if we insist on preserving our way of life, with all its wrong hungers and desires, we will lose it eternally! But if we take control of our mind and emotions and destroy our way of life—ridding ourselves of all the wrong hungers and desires that are against God—then God will save it eternally! The better option is obvious.

[Satan](#) has filled [this world](#) with hungers of every sort to tempt men, including the people

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of God. Hungers of lust, power, money, and fame seem inviting after the monotony of day-to-day living, but Satan's way is a trap, though an enticing one. It always looks good on the outside, but inside is [sin](#), destruction, and ultimately death, eternal death.

God allows us to make decisions. He allows us to learn from the decisions we make—both right and wrong. The right decision to make about the wonderful calling and opportunity He has given to us is to yield ourselves under the mighty hand of God in faith that He will work in us. His work is always wonderful and good. Once we yield, we can set our mind to overcome, hungering and thirsting for righteousness. And God will satisfy us!

— John O. Reid (1930-2016)

To learn more, see:

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