



[Matthew 10:34-39](#)

(34) Do not think that I have come to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. (35) For I have come to set a man at variance against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. (36) And a man's enemies *shall be those of his own household*. (37) The one who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and the one who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. (38) And the one who does not take up his cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me. (39) The one who has found his life shall lose it; and the one who has lost his life for My sake shall find it.

A Faithful Version

Here, [Jesus](#) explains that there is a cost to following Him and that it will cause separation from those closest to us. When we reckon ourselves as dead and completely surrendered to the One who is giving us a new and superior life, our decision creates division, putting us at odds with family and friends who have not yet been called. They will continue worshipping in the way that seems best to them, while our surrendering to [God](#) constrains us, instead, to worship Him in spirit and in truth ([John 4:24](#)).

If we are to be worthy of Christ, our love for Him must be greater than our love for our parents and children. If God requires something of us that does not make sense to them, we must remember that we have already died and that eternal life comes with a cost. In [Galatians 2:20](#), Paul writes, “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.” When we accept Christ as our Savior, we, too, are symbolically crucified with Him, which means our lives now must conform to His.

For [Matthew 10:39](#), various paraphrases render it as “he who clings to his life” or “whoever tries to gain his own life.” In other words, we cannot serve two masters. We will either pursue life on our own terms and lose out on eternity, or we will give up our claim on our lives and trust whatever God does with them. The life God wants for us is incomparably richer than anything [this world](#) has, but if our focus is only on our current circumstances, that priceless life will not mean much to us.

I Kings 18 recounts the showdown between Elijah and the prophets of Baal, in which the prophet asked the people of Israel how long they would falter between two opinions. They knew there were benefits to worshipping the God who had delivered them from Egypt, but they were also attracted to Baal-worship. The people would not commit to follow one or the other, opting instead for an unholy mixture of beliefs, leading to the adoption of rank paganism.

This principle is especially relevant for us in the end time. In the letter to the final church in Revelation, Christ's charge is that the [Laodiceans](#) are neither cold nor hot. They claim to love Him, but their lifestyle reveals their worldly infatuations. They do not reject God completely, nor commit

to Him wholeheartedly—because of the great price. They are still clinging to their lives, because surrendering completely and bearing their crosses are too costly. Yet, trying to have it both ways, they are losing out on eternal life. They are unwilling to lose their lives for His sake, and are thus unworthy of the life of Christ.

— David C. Grabbe

To learn more, see:

[What Does It Mean to Take Up the Cross?](#)

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