

# Summoned to be a Disciple

**Key Verse:** **IN TODAY'S LESSON, THE**  
*“Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.”*  
—*Luke 14:27*

**Selected Scripture:**  
*Luke 14:25-33*

Master sets forth in clear terms the requirements for Christian discipleship. (Luke 14:25,26) Many individuals believe that to become true followers of our Lord it is only necessary to make a public declaration in a house of worship that they have accepted Christ as their Savior and, from thenceforth, may expect to live forever in heaven following their demise. According to this theory, nonbelievers at their death will be eternally lost and the world will be destroyed.

Although there are some symbolic references in the Bible that the present evil social order will be removed, there are scriptural assurances that the earth will abide forever. (Eccles. 1:4) Additionally, the earth was created as a place for human habitation. “Thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; . . . he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited.”—Isa. 45:18

Only disciples who consistently and obediently follow Jesus' course of self-denial will reign with Christ in heaven for one thousand years in order to bless mankind. Following that period of time, Satan and all evil

doers will be destroyed, but the vast majority of humanity will live in peace, and enjoy prosperity and blessings in a perfect society here on earth.—Rev. 21:3,4

A disciple is a pupil, or one who follows the instruction and example of his teacher. In considering the life of Jesus, we are impressed by the difficulties he had to overcome before he merited the Heavenly Father's final approval.—John 15:18-21

Our Key Verse indicates that bearing the Master's cross is a process of daily doing God's will, as noted in scripture, regardless of the opposition faced while pursuing a righteous, sacrificial course. In view of the foregoing, our Lord gave a parable concerning a man who attempted to build a tower but, after laying its foundation, proved incapable of completing it, thus demonstrating how foolish his effort was. He also gave another illustration of a king going to war without making adequate preparations for battle. After being overwhelmed by the vast size of the opposing army, he had to change his course and then seek from his enemy the terms for obtaining peace.—Luke 14:28-32

As a valiant soldier of the cross, the Apostle Paul demonstrated in his life the great fortitude needed to be a true disciple of Christ. "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."—I Cor. 9:26,27

Only such believers who conscientiously devote their lives towards following the Master's example may echo, at the close of their Christian sojourn, the following testimony of the Apostle Paul. "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."—II Tim. 4:7,8 ■