

WEEKLY ENCOURAGEMENT

from Johnny Hunt

DESIRE FOR DEVOTION

PART ONE

Scripture: Luke 9:23

“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.’”

INTRO

- This passage is explained both to the **saved** and the **unsaved**. To the **unsaved**, there is the initial surrender of the new birth, when a person comes to Christ for salvation and the old life of sin is exchanged for a new life of righteousness. To the **saved**, this truth has reiterated the call to the life of **daily obedience** to Christ.
- **Bottom line:** Never forget, it is possible for believers to lose their first love when they first surrendered all they were and all they had to Him. It is a constant temptation to want to take back what was given up and to reclaim what was forsaken. It is not impossible to again place one's will above God's and to take back rights that were relinquished to Him. The **bottom line**, the character of a true Christ follower is manifested in **obedience**.

I. DESIRE

- **“If anyone desires to come after me”**
- Where does this **desire** come from?
- “God satisfies the desire He creates”—Oswald Chambers
- The gospel creates the desire that only God can satisfy.
- Why are most believers **not** living the life **they desire** that He creates?
- We try to live our lives in our own strength, and we ultimately fail. If we don't fail, we fall very short of God's purpose for us.
- **When we operate in our strength (flesh) 3 things happen:**
 1. We will always lack the **power of the Spirit** and we will suffer from **fatigue**.
 2. We will always lack the **vision of the Spirit** so we will suffer from **frustration**.
 3. We will always lack the **sustaining ministry of the Spirit**, so we will suffer from **failure**.
- **Where the Battle's Lost and Won (for control)**
- “The battle is lost or won in the secret places of the will before God, never first in the external world. The Spirit of God apprehends me and I am obliged to get alone with God and fight the battle out before Him. Until this is done, I lose every time. The battle may take one minute or a year, that will depend on me, not on God; but it must be wrestled out alone before God, and I must resolutely go through the hell of a renunciation before Him. Nothing has any power over the man who has fought out the battle before God and won there.”
—Oswald Chambers

II. DEVOTION (I'm pursuing Him)

- **“come after me”**
- A call to loyal obedience. True discipleship is submission to the lordship of Christ that becomes a pattern of life.
- The very desire to come after Jesus, is the work of Jesus.
- The life Christ plants in us develops its own virtues, not the virtue of the old man, but of Jesus Christ. God will wither up your confidence in natural virtue after sanctification, and in any power you have, until you learn to draw life from the reservoir of the resurrection life of Jesus.
- God creates the desire to come after Him. It's not natural for us to want to do this on our own.
- **“Coming after me”**—even though this commenced with our **salvation**, it continues with my **sanctification**. The person of Christ in me, since the day I came after Him (came after me, pursuing me), continues to confront me. Our decision to follow Jesus is a righteous resolve that is the result of a devoted disciple of Jesus. A promise made to God is an exclamation mark of a sold out life. It's at the crossroad of commitment that disciples are exposed as authentic or impostors.