

John Stott in *Basic Christianity*

"The Christian landscape is strewn with the wreckage of derelict half-built towers—the ruins of those who began to build but were unable to finish. ...Thousands of people still ignore Christ's warning and undertake to follow Him without first pausing to reflect on the cost of doing so. The result is the great scandal of Christendom today, so-called nominal Christianity. In countries in which Christian civilization has spread, large numbers of people have covered themselves with a decent but thin veneer of Christianity. They have allowed themselves to become somewhat involved, enough to be respectable but not enough to be uncomfortable. Their religion is a great soft cushion. It protects them from the hard unpleasantness of life while changing its place and shape to suit their convenience."

“Come After Me”

- Lit., “to come behind”
- It means to come to Jesus for salvation and to become His true disciple.
- In the gospels, *everyone* who comes to Jesus for salvation becomes His disciple.
 - E.g., Lk. 14:26 - "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. "

“Becoming a disciple” = “Getting saved”

1. Mt. 28:19 - "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teaching them."
2. In all 5 passages with these expressions, Jesus makes the same contrast between *forfeiting* your soul and *saving* your soul (Mk. 8; Mt. 10, 16; Lk. 9, 14).

Becoming Jesus' Disciple

Mark 8:34-38

I. The Shocking Conditions for Becoming His Disciple (34)

A. "He must deny himself"

B. "He must...take up his cross"

1. Willing to lay down our life for Him (Rev. 12:11)

2. Willing to bear the shame of being His follower (Lk. 6:22-23)

C. "He must...follow Me"

1. Put Jesus & His kingdom first (Mt. 6:33)

2. Serve Jesus wherever and however He chooses (2 Cor. 5:15)

3. Obey His commands (Jn. 13:13; Lk. 6:46)

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- I. The Shocking Conditions for Becoming His Disciple (34)
 - A. "He must deny himself"
 - B. "He must...take up his cross"
 - C. "He must...follow Me"
- II. The Compelling Arguments for Becoming His Disciple (35-38)
 - A. Jesus & His gospel are your only hope (35)
 - B. Your soul is your greatest treasure (36-37)
 - C. Jesus Christ will be your final Judge (38)

Three Groups Here Today...

1. If you **don't claim** to be a follower of Jesus Christ, you need to do the math (Lk. 14:28-32).
2. If you **claim to be a Christian**, you need to examine the reality of your faith in light of these conditions.
3. If you're **a true follower** of Jesus, you need to remind yourself this is how your Christian life began and must continue—nothing has changed.