

Faith and Works XLVIII

The Contemporary and Biblical Contexts

Col. 2:8

Crucified

Recently, in Seoul, South Korea there was news of a tragic incident. A 58-year-old man, a taxi driver by profession, was found dead nailed to a cross in an apparent re-creation of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Police said the man probably carried out the ordeal on his own.

The man was dressed only in his underwear with a crown of thorns on his head. He was found one week after Easter in an abandoned stone quarry. His hands and feet were nailed to the cross, and there was a stab wound in his stomach.

After days of investigation, police said they had concluded that the man had committed suicide.

How sad that we would mistake the clear teaching of the scriptures concerning the finished work of Jesus Christ, and think there would be merit to adding to the work Christ accomplished by His crucifixion. To overcome our flesh, as we shall see, is not a matter of severe or harsh treatment of the body, which one would normally equate with the world's notion of perfection through religious process. But contrary to our normal expectations, the Bible is not really presenting such a religious system.

Colossians 2:23 These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.

And yet we read in the Bible, statements that could be misunderstood if taken out of the correct and complete context of the teaching of the scriptures.

Galatians 2:20-21 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, who loved me and gave Himself for me. I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.

The Bible speaks both of our identification with Christ as He took mankind's fallen nature and sins with Him on the cross, yet it also speaks of how the just shall live by faith, abiding in the finished work of Christ. It is the process the Bible speaks of in terms of being born again.

While many seek to harvest out of context scriptures from the Bible to meet answer their question of what they must do to be saved, the Bible first demonstrates by recorded history and revelation the problem that God seeks to answer. It is not the problem man usually asks, as it takes deep revelation, humility, and a willingness to stand naked before Him in His light in order to be in the correct place to understand the solution God is offering fallen man. How is the sinful fallen nature of man to be reconciled to God, how will man, born by nature the Bible says, a child of wrath, be restored into union with His Creator?

We do not crucify ourselves, we let go of and leave behind us all that we are based on ourselves, on the old foundation inherited from the first Adam. We are to reckon the old nature by faith crucified with Christ on the cross. If we truly believe that we have died with Him and are risen with Him we will no longer be a debtor to the flesh. We are not striving against flesh and blood, we are being renewed in our mind of the spirit to take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.

Jesus is not just the Christian mascot. He is not the chairman or founder of a religious organization. He is not a historical figure who personally left an example of day to day living and dietary habits on which to pattern and imitate a successful lifestyle. He is the way, the truth and the life, and many people are unfortunately involved in religious circles that do not have Jesus as the foundation and head of

those involved, who in a true Christian church, would literally be members of His body. The emphasis each week in religious circles is how to perfect the flesh, what must we do to be saved?

John 6:28-29 Then they said to Him, “What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?” Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.”

1 Peter 3:21 There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism, not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

Colossians 2:11 In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ

Romans 8:12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh.

As Christians, we are to live with the mind set on the spirit which testifies of Jesus, and we are to take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.

Our self image, our identification of who we are, should never be based upon such transitory things such as the role that we play adapting and shaping our external clay vessel to meet the expectations of those who pride and measure themselves by themselves, who look at the external which is perishing, rather than the internal which is eternal. We should not therefore define ourselves, as the commercial marketing industries seek to label and categorize us identify us, based on a specific age group, or particular defined social association, or economic status or ethnicity.

We will age and pass from this life far more quickly then we believe.

Psalm 39:5 Indeed, You have made my days as handbreadths, And my age is as nothing before You; Certainly every man at his best state is but vapor.

2 Corinthians 4: 16-18 Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

Our identification by faith in Christ of who we are in Him must be in the eternal riches in glory, based on our inheritance with Him as an heir of all that God has prepared for those who are in union with Him through His Son.

Christian faith is confidence in the unchanging nature of the risen Jesus. It is in confidence that God is for us, not against us, but what is offered by His grace must be grasped with both hands after we have emptied them of the things men naturally hold onto in pride and seeking security from temporal possessions and pleasures.

The process of emptying our hands is a progressive revelation of how greatly and completely we must cast all on Christ as we come to understand that all our works, good and bad, do not change the fact that our old nature is destined to die due as a natural descendant of the first Adam.

Philippians 3:7-9 But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith.

Our dying to self is not a matter of physical mortification or ill-treatment of our bodies, rather it is a process of going through those trials and disciplines allowed and sometimes even designed by our heavenly Father, that provide us the opportunity to place all our hope, and all our confidence, and all our understanding of who and what we are, on Him. As we are brought to the place where we can no longer keep our confidence on those foundations of the fallen nature, the flesh, which are based upon the elemental and rudimentary principles of this world, we come to understand Paul's statement concerning his own Christian walk and experience.

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

And again, Paul makes the contrast between spiritual and carnal life, one based on Christ, one on the natural foundation of who we are in this world apart from Christ.

Colossians 2:6-10 As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.

Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.

Those tools that were effective according to the basic principles of the world utilized the fallen capabilities of fallen man, that potential that was inherited by those still by nature related to their first husband, the first Adam. That nature seeks to find its own way through its own knowledge of empirical facts, to become as God and thus support themselves on behalf of what mankind lost when it no longer chose to live, move and have its being in God.

The fallen nature continues to find its own way as long as we give it life by relying upon it and remaining dependant on it as a foundation and in its debt for our own well being. And ultimately, the mind set on the flesh will reap corruption, if not outwardly obvious, yet despite the best religious veneer, the inside of man will yet be the bones of a dead man.

Jesus made the statement that the devil had nothing in Him. To do that ourselves we need to come to the end of our own efforts to achieve self righteousness. This is the task of those who walk through this present age with their eyes fixed on the author, perfecter and finisher of their faith.

John 15:1-4 “I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

Self cannot cast out self. When we are still focused and concerned with the livelihood of that first husband, that is an indication that we have simply adopted religion as another role for the self to play while it yet seeks to avoid its own demise at the cross of Christ. With our minds set on the flesh and not the spirit, the flesh continues to entice us to cling to it, as if it were still necessary for who and what we are, as if we needed to continue to build on it as a necessary foundation, instead of who and what we are in Christ.

Christianity is not simply the best of religions that seek new ways or techniques for the flesh to better achieve its goals to find eternal security for its temporal nature and satisfy itself. For those who are truly abiding in Christ have died, and they now understand that their life is now hidden with Christ in God. They are no longer focused on those external things that are perishing, but on those internal things that are eternal, and by faith they know and rest in that revealed truth that they are seated with Christ and are joint heirs with Him at the right hand of God (Col. 3:1). That is where their attention is. That is why, in true Christian circles, Christ Himself is lifted up, and He is the utmost importance, and the focus of faith.

The liberal movements in modern religion who no longer find relevance in the revelation of God through the law and the prophets are now seeking to be relevant according to the expectations of man's natural intellect. The modern religious trends seek to derive from the teachings of Jesus examples that will guide fallen man to a place of better ethics.

Yet the Gospels of the new testament do not record Jesus presenting a new system of ethics, rather the expectations of the fruit that would result from one truly from the heart acknowledging the need for salvation based on exposure by God's holy and unchanging law, and the receiving of the pardon God offers in Christ for a debt that none of the fallen race of Adam could ever hope to earn or repay.

Those who have received this gift in truth and in spirit then show a willingness to love and forgive others, as they themselves have been forgiven and accepted in the beloved, Jesus Christ. Those things that Christ loosed in heaven, are loosed as a witness of the grace of God by those who have received God's mercy, and show that same mercy and love to those they are no longer in competition, as was Cain with Abel, to measure themselves by themselves. We forgive, because we have been forgiven. This is the essence of what the Lord told his disciples to pray (Matthew 6:12).

Those in Christ now recognize that all men are equally endowed by their Creator with inalienable value, as the value God place on all mankind was the payment of the life of His Son.

It is a carnal church that calls itself Christian that continually focuses the gaze of its members on each other, that seeks somehow to ransack the storehouse of God's word to try to find some way to achieve eternal life for the first husband. There is nothing, according to the Bible, but death for the first husband.

The question is, will we abide in Christ and take that new life in Him, letting go of our fist husband, and by faith leaving him crucified with Christ on the cross, and reckoning as dead our first husband as no longer necessary for that which we seek, for only in Christ we are complete. Or will we ourselves continue on based on the foundation of the natural mode of being and face the second death?

For all that is not in the Lamb's book of life, will at the end find themselves cast into the outermost darkness. By their continuing to cling and build on their

old fallen nature they will find themselves repelled by the confrontation with the unveiled nature of God, and still in rebellion to Him, unable to continue to live and move and have their being in Him, will seek to hide from His presence. He is a refining fire, and all that is not of gold built on the foundation of Christ, the works will be consumed, and the souls of those still in rebellion, those who have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of Christ, will be cast for eternity, time without measure, into outermost darkness away from His presence.

1 Corinthians 3:9-15 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building. According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

When we finally come to the root of ourselves, and come to the experiential realization that it is the whole foundation that makes us what we are and it is from the root of what we are that we must be delivered, we do not cry out, what must I do to do the works of God? No, when we have truly reached this place of self revelation, allowing ourselves to be exposed in God's light, we cry out, as did Paul.

Romans 7:24 O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?

The plan of God revealed in the scriptures through the law and the prophets of the revelation of Jesus Christ is not for the purpose of man's continued spiritual evolution. Man is not on a natural path as a descendant from the first Adam that is leading anywhere but death. Man is not functioning within a natural order that is designed to help him achieve parity with the Creator. No, the plan of God is a complete new birth in Christ, the old allowed to pass away crucified with His Son on the cross of Calvary, and at the end of this age, a completely new heavens and Earth. This is the hope of Biblical Christianity.

Paul said he was persuaded, and that he knew whom he had believed and was persuaded that He was able to keep that which Paul had committed to Him against that day. He had a hope, an anchor that pierced beyond that veil, even beyond death in this life.

Romans 8:38-39 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Jesus Christ Himself is our peace. In this world, Jesus said, we would have tribulations, but we were to be of good cheer, as He had overcome the world, it was no longer to be considered by His followers to have any hold on us. We are instructed not to fear the first death, but rather to fear Him who after He has killed, can cast into Hell, and in Revelations we are told those in Christ shall have no reason to fear the second death.

Obviously if we are seeking God on behalf of our flesh to ensure that it undergoes no tribulation in this life, our goal is not the new birth in Christ, to begin new in Him, but rather to seek the longevity and continence of our life based on the old foundation inherited from the first Adam.

We can only be considered free from the body of this death (Rom.7:24) when we abide in Christ. Anything less than our complete identification of ourselves in Him leaves us still building on the old foundation. We are still subject to the old natures terms and conditions and its condemnation under the Law.

Our relationship to God through Christ is not a transaction to ensure that if we pay our religious dues, that God in turn will insure the security and continuance of that which He said we were to reckon as dead and crucified with his Son on the cross.

We need to say with the Psalmist, "lead me to the rock that is higher than I" (Psalm 61:2). And agree with Paul that if we have died and are risen with Christ in God, that we should be seeking that vision of ourselves seated with Christ at the right hand of the Father (Col. 3:1). And no longer measure ourselves by ourselves and the temporal circumstances and options of those still living according to the standards and principles of this fallen world system.

And yet this is the very trap that the modern church falls into when it seeks to make itself relevant to the current culture by meeting the demands of the current fashions and fads.

Let us plan to attend the wedding clothed in the robes of righteousness, clothed in Christ, not in our own old filthy rags. Let us learn what Paul meant when he said that for him to live was Christ, and to die was gain.

Let us learn that Christianity, and in particular being born again in Christ (John 3:3) is not just another religious system whereby we complete ourselves, but rather of finding our completeness in Christ's finished work (Colossians 2:10). It is not something we add to, it is a foundation on behalf of which we live and build. Christian faith is an orientation to all of life from a fixed position in Christ. The more we are identified in Christ, the less we will identify ourselves and the members of the body of Christ by ethnicity, economics, social status, politics, age or gender.

It is not something we add to, or which adds to us to improve that which we should have once and for all left for dead at our baptism, our identification with Christ, on His cross.

In Romans chapter 5 Paul clearly demonstrates that death has reigned in the human race since the fall of the first Adam. In chapter 6 Paul shows how it is not just Christ's death, but our own death with Christ that is important. However it is in chapter 7 that we come to understand the role that the Law plays in our coming to realize our need for Christ. It changes how we receive Him.

There is an experiential death that we must come to. Paul says that the Law, though good, killed him when he realized how completely his nature was incapable of following it. The flesh cannot put off the flesh, nor will it act in love or forgive without an ulterior motive. For the heart of man is deceitful and wicked, and until we come to the exposure of our inner self that the Law brings, we only have a superficial understanding of what God has given us in Christ. It is the difference between someone who has been forgiven a small debt, and someone who has been forgiven an astronomical debt. He who has been forgiven much, loves much. We are to forgive as we have the knowledge of how great is God's mercy towards ourselves.

It is only at that deep level of maturity and understanding, no longer trying to hide from His light but fully coming to the end of ourselves and allowing His light to expose all, that we come to Him in spirit and in truth hungering and thirsting for His righteousness.

It is this self awareness and Christ awareness that separates the carnal minded from the spiritual. For those who are carnal are working under the assumption, because they have not yet come to the end of themselves, that they only need a bit of religion or spiritual behavior or technique in order to achieve eternal life for themselves.

But it is those who have allowed themselves to be disciplined and been willing to face true exposure of their need for Christ, that will truly embrace the Gospel in a way in which their faith will result in the fruit of a changed life. It is the spirit of life in Christ Jesus that sets us free from the fallen body of death to the extent the we cloth ourselves in Him, no longer basing who we are on the old foundation, reckoning it dead with Christ, leaving it behind and pressing on to a place where we do not approach God by our works, but in the name and identity of Jesus. Maturity in the body of Christ, even the work of the Holy Spirit in the body of Christ, is to the end that all might come to the full stature and understanding of what it means to be in the body of Christ.

Hebrews 4:1-3 Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it. For we who have believed do enter that rest...

We are also admonished to strive to enter into that rest:

Hebrews 4:11-13 Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience. For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

Implied in here is that perfection in Christ requires enough understanding of God's revealed law, that man can come to a place where he recognizes his need for the complete salvation that God offers those who by faith would be born again into a spiritual union with God through Christ Jesus.

How do we, those exposed by God's law as sinners from birth due to the fallen nature of our fore father, come into that rest?

Abiding in Christ is not something we will do simply because we mentally agree that it is a good idea. It is usually something we will do only when we come to realize it is the only thing to do, it is the only idea we have left when we have come to the end of our own ideas.

Trials and the law bring us experientially and morally to the end of ourselves, if only we humble ourselves and admit before God our need for Him to act on our behalf by His grace, rather than what we deserve or have earned from Him. If we will admit to our weakness, failure and need, we can begin and continue to abide and walk in Christ.

When God works on our behalf, it is not because we have become better or improved our fallen natures, and thus qualifying or obligating God to work on our behalf. It is because Jesus is the best, and when our faith is in Him it is because of His righteousness imputed to us that God works on our behalf. Our faith is to be in Him, He is to be the source of everything we are.

The Bible teaches that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord:

2 Corinthians 5:1-8 For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life. Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.

Romans 6:7 For he who has died has been freed from sin.

Romans 6:4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Colossians 2:12 buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

When we finally come to the end of ourselves, we recognize and realize the great gift given because God so loved the world, that He was not willing that any should perish, and by His the offering of His own Son be identify with us in our sin, died the death we all must die, but being God, rose again, death not being able to hold Him who is the resurrection and the life, that we might be the righteousness of God in Him.

The gift is free, but it is not an add-on, it is a replacement for those who are ready to trade up. When we honestly acknowledge the true nature of God and His holiness, we are undone in our efforts to match or achieve parity with Him by our own works based on the fallen nature we have inherited from Adam.

He has not given His law to damn mankind without hope of redemption, for sin and its effects are already at work in the world, the law only makes the condition of our sinful nature known. We are not sinners because we sin, we sin because we are born sinners.

Romans 7:21-25 I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!

He has given His Law so that those of us who are not afraid of His light, who are willing to have our deeds exposed as filthy rags, might turn to Him, and be clothed with the righteousness of His Son, even as the prodigal son returned to his father, acknowledging his fallen condition, seeking his father's forgiveness only to have his father embrace the return of he who had died and was lost.

Luke 15:32 It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.””

In Colossians chapter 1, Paul talks about how he seeks by his own suffering and discomfort in the work of proclaiming the Gospel and being an ambassador for Christ (Colossians 1:24) to complete that which is lacking in the afflictions of Christ for the sake of the body of Christ, the church. He is not there saying, however, that Christ's suffering on the cross was incomplete, for the work of Christ in His death and resurrection has finished the payment and redemption of man from his fallen condition through the body of Christ (Colossians 2:11-15). What Paul is taking about is living on behalf of others in the work of the Gospel and the discipleship of the church. Our dying to self is not to pay for our sins through our own suffering, it is rather to die in the sense that we no longer have a relationship with our old nature, and now build on the foundation of the new nature in Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:16-21 Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

The goal in the Christian sense of denying self is not the devaluation of man's worth, but rather to place the foundation for man's worth on Christ.

It is not the pain of our trials and tribulations in this world that God seeks as any kind of payment for our sin. But the death to our pride and the loss of our confidence to continue to base our existence, who we are, on the foundation of the fallen nature is a place we come to usually though many of the trials that God allows in our lives that bring us to the place of which the scriptures speak :

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure.

Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

John 15:1-2 “I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.

Hebrews 6:1-8 Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this we will do if God permits.

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame.

For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God; but if it bears thorns and briers, it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned.

Hebrews 12:7-11 If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

Luke 14:25-33 Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them, “If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it— lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish’? Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace. So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.

Philippians 3:7-21 But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. 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, who loved me and gave Himself for me. I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.”