

Living the Yielded Life: Taking Up the Cross to Follow Jesus

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There is no fine print in Jesus' call to follow Him. The Christian life is the surrendered life. You yield the rights to your life – every part of it – to Jesus, recognizing that you are not your own; you are His. When you live with this posture, you activate the surprising paradoxes of the Kingdom: you die to live, give to gain, lose in order to save, serve to become great, humble yourself to be exalted, and surrender all to Jesus to be free. You live in resurrection joy.

If you yield, or turn over, all your rights to Jesus, every event becomes a privilege:

- Not something you deserve. You are never disappointed.
- Not a drudgery you perform. You never have cause to complain.

Yield the Right to Do What You Want with Your Life

The root problem for all human beings is the determination to live self-ruled, self-willed lives rather than God-ruled, God-directed lives. To follow Jesus means dealing with this issue. Answering the question: Who will direct my life?

We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. Isaiah 53:6 (emphasis added)

Turning from God to go our own way – the root of “iniquity” (sin) – separates every person from God. Christ died so that we would no longer live for ourselves, but for Him.

And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. 2 Corinthians 5:15 (emphasis added)

Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price...1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (emphasis added)

According to the last two Scriptures, how much are you worth to Jesus? How much has He invested in you?

On what basis does Jesus have priority in determining what you do with your life?

If you invested as much in other people as Jesus has invested in you, you would take good care of them. They could trust you to do what is best for them; your proven love would give them good reason to trust you.

Is Jesus trustworthy enough to direct your life? Are you willing to trust Him?

In the following passages, notice how Jesus gave up His right to do whatever He wanted to do, submitting to His Father's will.

Read John 5:19

How does this passage reveal Jesus' submission to His Father?

Read John 15:9-11.

How much does Jesus love you?

What example does Jesus tell you to follow? What is the result?

Follow Jesus' example. Stay in His love each day by listening and obeying His you will fill you.

Read Matthew 11:28-30.

What qualities about Jesus make Him trustworthy with your life?

If you yield to Jesus' yoke by obeying Him, what is the result for you?

Yielding in obedience to Jesus produces rest and peace in the safe place of being yoked with your gentle, humble, wise, living Savior.

Yield your life to Jesus by obeying in the little things every day. Doing what you know is right each day keeps your feet on the path to fulfilling your Kingdom destiny, step by step.

"I figured I was the driver of my own car and Jesus would sit in the back seat and give advice. I quickly realized that the Lord Himself wanted to take over control of my car; He wanted to be in the driver's seat. It was a hard choice, but I am glad I yielded full control to Him."



Taking up the cross does not mean you have to live a life you hate. Jesus wants you to let Him be in the driver's seat. But you don't have to be afraid of where He will take you. Just because you don't want to do something (a certain career, for example), does not automatically mean it is God's will for your life. He gives you desires, interests, gifts, and abilities for a purpose. But those desires and gifts, unsubmitted to Him and operating without putting to death your selfishness, will become destructive to you and those around you. Turn over all your dreams to Him, yielding your right to use them. Either He will give them back to you in greater measure or He will give you far greater dreams that He will fulfill. Either way, you will experience great rewards in this life, and in eternity besides. God is trustworthy with your life.

Take delight in the Lord, [live your life toward God] and he will give you the desires of your heart. [He will either give you what you desire, or He will give you desires He wants you to fulfill.] Commit your way to the Lord [submit your life to Him]: trust in him and he will do this: He will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn, your vindication like the noonday sun. Psalm 37:4-6

Make this passage into a prayer as you entrust your agenda for life to Him.

Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in you. Show me the way I should go, for to you I entrust my life. Rescue me from my enemies, Lord, for I hide myself in you. Teach me to do your will, for you are my God; may your good Spirit lead me on level ground. Psalm 143.8-10