



Grace Assembly Of God

Chapter-by-Chapter Bible Reading Devotional

Scripture:	Matthew 16	Title:	Taking Up Your Cross
Author:	William Hioe		
Summary of Chapter:	Three main divine revelations to Jesus' disciples: (1) God revealed to Simon Peter that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of the Living God; (2) Jesus declared that He would be the Rock upon which His church would be built; (3) Jesus required His disciples to deny themselves and take up their cross if they wanted to follow Him (after He predicted His own death and resurrection).		
Key Verse(s) (NLT):	How does it speak to me?		
<i>²⁴ Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, and follow me. ²⁵ If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it. ²⁶ And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul?"</i>	<p>As present-day followers of Jesus Christ, are we willing to give up our self-centred, comfortable way of living, and take up our cross for Jesus' sake?</p> <p>Twenty years ago, God convicted my heart that He wanted more of my time than my financial offerings to Him. That time I was in a high position in a large organisation with heavy responsibilities. I was so busy that I hardly had quality time for doing God's work. The only way I could fulfill God's command to me was to leave my job and be my own boss where I could have better control of my time. It was a tough decision as I had to give up a stable career that paid me fairly well. I struggled for five years before I finally yielded to the Lord and stepped out of my comfort zone in faith. When I started my own consultancy business I had zero customers. But, through God's providence, He opened many doors for me. Friends and ex-colleagues approached me with ready customers and invited me to team up with them. And, best of all, I now have more flexi-time to be involved in ministry in the church and in the missions field.</p> <p>As we honour God, He will honour us. God will never shortchange us as we walk in His will. He will reward us in return many more times than what we can anticipate.</p>		
APPLICATION REFLECTIONS			
Adult:	Spend some time to allow the Holy Spirit to search your heart. Which areas of your life (career, ambitions, hobbies, interests, etc) does God want you to give up or spend less time on, so that your talents and giftings can be used by God for His Kingdom?		
Youth:	Invite the Holy Spirit to speak to your heart and be prepared to yield to God's leading. What are God's plans for your future that are aligned to His will and purpose for your life?		
Child:	Parents with young children – share with them from an early age what is the significance of giving up something they like and what God's desire is for them.		
P R A Y E R			
Praying Scripture:	Dear Heavenly Father, forgive us for thinking of our own self-interests and self-ambitions first rather than aligning to Your will and purpose for our lives. Help us to deny ourselves and take up our cross for the sake of Your Kingdom. Search our hearts and show us areas where You want us to serve You more effectively.		
Thanksgiving Prayer:	I/We thank you for _____ (e.g. delicious food we ate, places we went, prayer that was answered, etc)		
Intercessory Prayer:	I/We want to pray for _____ (e.g. healing of sickness, family members, work or study, leaders, nation, etc)		
Salvation Prayer:	I/We pray for the salvation of my/our unsaved loved ones _____ (add one name per day). In Jesus' Name I/we pray. Amen.		