

Matthew 10:38

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.

Analysis

Jesus' requirement 'he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me' uses crucifixion imagery to depict total self-denial. Taking one's cross means accepting a death sentence—willingness to die to self-will, comfort, and safety. This precedes literal crucifixion language's common usage, showing Jesus clearly predicted the cross. Following after taking the cross shows discipleship is dying to self to live for Christ.

Historical Context

Crucifixion was Rome's most shameful, painful execution method for criminals and slaves. Jesus made this His discipleship metaphor before His own crucifixion, showing He knew His destiny. Condemned men carried their cross to execution—Jesus demands symbolic acceptance of this path.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. What does taking up your cross daily look like practically in your life?
2. What self-interests must die for you to follow Jesus fully?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	ὅς	οὐκ	λαμβάνει	τὸν	σταυρὸν	αὐτοῦ	καὶ
And	he	not	that taketh	G3588	cross	G846	And
G2532	G3739	G3756	G2983		G4716		G2532
ἀκολουθεῖ	όπίσω	μου	οὐκ	ἔστιν	μου	ἄξιος	
followeth	after	me	not	is	me	worthy	
G190	G3694	G3450	G3756	G2076	G3450	G514	

Additional Cross-References

Luke 14:27 (Cross): And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

Mark 8:34 (Cross): And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

Matthew 16:24 (Cross): Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

John 19:17 (Cross): And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha:

Mark 10:21 (Cross): Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me.