



Part 2: “Just Say No”

Introduction

The way of Jesus—the life he modeled—is a life of daily surrender and sacrificial living. Every day, we have countless opportunities to deny ourselves and take up our crosses, even in the small, seemingly insignificant moments.

Discussion Questions

1. Is there a person or situation (friend, grandchild, online shopping, sweet treats, etc.) that you find is the hardest to say **no** to?
2. Have you ever withheld something from yourself and later saw the benefit?
3. Read Matthew 16:21–26. Why is it difficult to believe Jesus’s promise in these verses?
4. The phrase Jesus uses in verse 24, “take up their cross” had a significant meaning in the Roman context. What comes to mind when you think of that phrase in today’s context?
5. If you have decided to follow Jesus, has it ever cost you anything? If so, what happened?
6. In what area (money, success, notoriety, influence, stuff, etc.) do you find yourself thinking that just *a little bit more* will lead to a more fulfilled life?
7. What is a way—big or small—you could practice denying yourself to follow Jesus’s way this week? What can our group do to encourage one another in trusting Jesus’s way?

Changing Your Mind

“Then Jesus said to his disciples, ‘Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it.’”

Matthew 16:24–25