

**DOTA 082      MEMORISATION 17**  
**A DISCIPLE DENIES HIMSELF (LUKE 9:23)**

Copyright Dots      T = teacher 1      S = teacher 2

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**(T)** Welcome to **Discipleship training On The Air**. In this meditation and memorisation series you may learn to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. Two teachers will meditate on the meaning of a Bible verse about one characteristic of a disciple of Jesus Christ and then memorise it together. As you listen to this programme, make notes in a notebook or record the programme. In this fifth series God teaches that there are 5 important things a Christian disciple does: he makes Christ his Lord, he denies himself, he serves, he gives and he makes other people Christ's disciples. The topic of today's meditation and memorisation is: **A DISCIPLE DENIES HIMSELF**.

**(S)      POINT 1. MEDITATION OF THE NEW BIBLE VERSE**

The new Bible that verse we will meditate and memorise is Luke 9:23. We will ask one another questions in order to help us to meditate on the truths written in the Bible. Let me read Luke 9:23 in its context, Luke 9:22-27. And he said, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life". Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it. What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self? If anyone is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God."

The memorisation verse is: Denial. Luke 9:23. Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. Luke 9:23.

**(T)      First. The Lord of the disciples himself must suffer, die and be raised up.**

This was the very first time Jesus predicted his own suffering, death and resurrection clearly. Many Jews during the time of Jesus expected their Messiah and Saviour to live and conquer their enemies. Therefore, this prediction came as a terrible shock to his disciples. But his death was prophesied by the Old Testament prophets, typified by the Old Testament sacrifices and prophesied by Jesus himself. Moreover, Jesus was completely willing to die. In John 10:11 he said, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." Finally, Jesus had to die. His death was a divine necessity. His death would be the only possible way to satisfy God's holy and righteous anger against sin and to pay the complete penalty for our sins.

Notice that precisely those people, who should have defended the religious interests of Israel, crucified their Messiah and Saviour. The "elders" in Israel were the lay members of the Sanhedrin and consisted of members of the highly privileged aristocratic families in Jerusalem. The "chief priests" were members of the high priestly families and included the high priest himself. The "teachers of the law" were the trained and ordained theologians of the Old Testament. Their task was to study, interpret, transmit, copy and teach the law.

**(S)      Second. Jesus makes a distinction between mere followers and true disciples.**

There were hundreds of people who attached themselves to Jesus Christ and literally came behind Jesus. They followed him wherever he went, listened to his teaching and watched his miracles. But Jesus said that this was not enough! Jesus made a very clear distinction between people, who attached themselves to him, and people, who really became his disciples. A real disciple of Jesus Christ denies himself, takes up his cross every day, follows Jesus Christ every day, loses his living life for Jesus Christ, boldly identifies himself with Jesus Christ and sees the kingdom of God coming with power.

**(T)      Third. A real disciple of Jesus Christ denies himself.**

When Peter denied Jesus, he said, "I don't know this person". Peter meant, "I choose not to know Jesus Christ and not to belong to him". But what Jesus requires here is not simply a desire to know Jesus Christ. He requires that a disciple once for all says "no" to the desires of his old unregenerate nature, to say "farewell" to his old selfish and egocentric lifestyle and to give up reliance on his own wisdom, power, abilities, possessions and position. Denial involves giving up every expression of independence from God and every act of rebellion against God. A true disciple that denies himself trusts Christ, relies on Christ, leans on Christ and clings to Christ for his salvation and for the way he lives as a Christian.

Jesus himself gave an example of self-denial. In 2 Corinthians 8:9 we read, "You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich." The apostles Peter, James and John gave an example of self-denial. In Matthew 4:19-22 we read how they left their nets, their boats and their families to follow Jesus Christ. In Matthew 9:9 we read how Matthew left his tax collector's booth to follow Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul explains self-denial. In Philippians 3:7-8 he says, "Whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider

everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things, I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ.” Paul was willing to deny everything in order “to know Christ”, “to gain Christ”, “to be found in Christ” and “to become like Christ”. That is self-denial!

**(S) Fourth. A real disciple of Jesus Christ takes up his cross every day.**

“To take up the cross” is generally a picture of a condemned man who is forced to carry his own cross to the place of execution. However, here there is a great difference between what a condemned man is forced to do and what a disciple does willingly! For Jesus Christ the cross meant a lot of things. The cross meant that people opposed him, persecuted him and shamed him publicly by calling him “demon-possessed” and even “mad”. The cross meant that people rejected him as the Messiah, falsely accused him at his trial and caused him to suffer by beating him and crucifying him. Finally, the cross meant that people killed him. Jesus Christ carried this cross willingly. Likewise, every disciple of Jesus Christ must bear his or her own cross. The cross will be different for every disciple of Jesus Christ. One true disciple will willingly accept opposition, persecution and public shame for the sake of following Jesus Christ. Another true disciple will willingly accept rejection, false accusations and suffering for the sake of extending the kingdom of Jesus Christ. And some true disciples will willingly die for the sake of Jesus Christ. There are many examples in the Bible of true disciples carrying their cross. In Acts 5, the apostles were *arrested, put in prison and flogged* with a whip, because they preached the gospel to people. In Acts 7, Stephen was *stoned to death*, because he exposed the Jews as stiff-necked people with uncircumcised hearts and ears, who always resisted the Holy Spirit and who betrayed and murdered their own Messiah (Acts 7:51-52). In 2 Corinthians 11:23-28, the apostle Paul summarises the cross that he was carrying. *“I have been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, ... I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles; ... I have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches.”* And in Revelation 1:9 we read that the apostle John was *banned on the island* of Patmos, because of his preaching and teaching of the word of God and his testimony of Jesus Christ.

**(T) Fifth. A real disciple of Jesus Christ follows Jesus Christ every day.**

“To follow” means to follow Jesus Christ continuously without stopping. One. Following in the Bible means, “to believe in” Jesus. In John 6:66-69 we read that because the disciples believed that Jesus is the Holy One of God, they did not turn back and stop following him, like most of the other people did. Two. Following means, “to walk in the footsteps of Jesus”. In 1 Peter 2:21 we read, “To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.” Three. Following means, “to obey Jesus”. Four. Following means, “to serve Jesus”. In John 12:26 we read, “Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be.” Jesus Christ expects true disciples to deny themselves every day again and again and to never stop following him. “Denial”, “carrying the cross” and “following” Jesus Christ is another way of expressing *genuine conversion or justification and continuing sanctification*. Justification and sanctification are at the same time God’s gracious gift and our solemn responsibility.

**(S) Sixth. A real disciple of Jesus Christ loses his living life for Jesus Christ.**

In Luke 9:24-25 Jesus says, “For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it. What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self?” The word “life” can also be translated with “soul” or “self”.

One. When Jesus says, “Whoever wants to save his life will lose it”, he is referring to the “spirit”, the immaterial or invisible inner being of a person apart from God’s grace. Jesus means that if a person wants to save his soul, self or life, by clinging to his old sinful life, his earthly possessions, pleasures, prestige, position, fame and desires to live for himself, then he will lose his soul or life. Whatever purpose God originally had for his soul and life, would become increasingly narrow until at last it is destroyed in hell.

The Bible gives an example of a rich man who lost his soul. In Luke 12:16-21, the rich young man said to himself, “You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.” But God said to him, “You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself? This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich towards God.”

Two. When Jesus says, “Whoever loses his life for me will save it”, he is referring to the “spirit”, the immaterial or invisible inner being of the person who has been influenced by God’s grace, that is, has been born-again. Jesus means that when a person loses his soul, self or life by devoting his life completely to Christ and by serving Christ in this world, then he will save his soul or life. His soul, spirit or life will increasingly expand to experience more peace, more assurance, more joy and more love in relationships and more purpose in living! Jesus Christ urges the people who desire to become his disciples not to turn inward and live selfish lives, but to turn outward and live their lives for him and for his kingdom. The Bible gives examples of “losing your life for Christ and his kingdom”. In Matthew 10:37-39 Jesus says that you lose your life when you love him more than

your father and mother or your son and daughter. In Matthew 16:21-25 Jesus says that you lose your life when you suffer persecution after you have identified yourself with Christ and his teachings in the Bible. In John 12:24-26 Jesus says that you lose your life when you serve him wherever he is working in the world. In Luke 17:30-33 Jesus says that you lose your life when you always remain ready to meet Jesus at his Second Coming. Jesus Christ lays claim to our absolute devotion to him and to his cause in our relationships, in the circumstances of our Christian service and in our future life. Jesus warns that even if a person would be able to gain the whole world with all its material treasures, pleasures and prestige and yet in the process of doing this loses the life that God could have given him, he ultimately gains nothing, but loses everything!

**(T) Seventh. A real disciple of Jesus Christ boldly identifies himself with Jesus Christ.**

In Luke 9:26 Jesus says, "If anyone is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels". What does it mean, "not to be ashamed of Christ and his words"? To be ashamed of Christ and his words means to be so fearful or proud that you want to have nothing to do with him or his cause. People who live their lives for themselves and who ignore or oppose Christ cannot be saved. In Luke 13:24-25 Jesus says, "Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to. Once the owner of the house gets up and closes the door, you will stand outside knocking and pleading, 'Sir, open the door for us.' But he will answer, 'I don't know you or where you come from'."

**(S) Eighth. A real disciple of Jesus Christ sees the kingdom of God coming with power.**

In Luke 9:27 Jesus says, "I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God." How is it possible that some of the disciples would see the kingdom of God come with power (Mark 9:1)? Verse 26 and verse 27 belong together. They describe *the end and the beginning of the work of Jesus Christ on earth*. In verse 26, Jesus speaks of his Second Coming, when he will appear on the clouds with glory and with thousands of angels. At that time he will judge all the people who have ever lived on earth. He will judge them on the basis whether he knows them and they have followed him or not. In verse 27, Jesus speaks of the beginning of his kingdom on earth, that is, his resurrection, ascension and enthronement in heaven, the outpouring of his Holy Spirit and the rapid spread of the gospel to many nations during the first century. The resurrection of Jesus Christ happened through God's power. Jesus Christ now sits at God's right hand, which is far above all powers in the universe! The outpouring of the Holy Spirit clothed his disciples with power to be his witnesses (Eph 1:19-21; Acts 1:8). Thousands of Christian disciples witnessed these events in their own lifetime (1 Cor 15:6).

**(T) POINT 2. MEMORISATION OF THE NEW BIBLE VERSE**

Write the Bible verse on a card or in a notebook. The topic today is "Denial" and the reference is Luke 9:23. Let us memorise the Bible verse together.

**(T+S)** Denial. Luke 9:23. Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. Luke 9:23.

**(S) POINT 3. REVIEW OF THE LAST BIBLE VERSES YOU HAVE MEMORISED**

Let us review the last 5 Bible verses that we have memorised without looking at our notebooks.

Series "The gospel", verses 2-5, and series "Discipleship", verse 1.

**(T)** Punishment of sin. Ecclesiastes 12:14. "For God will bring every deed into judgement, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil." Ecclesiastes 12:14.

**(S)** Atonement of sin. Romans 5:8. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8.

**(T)** Salvation is a gift. Ephesians 2:8-9. "For it is by grace that you have been saved, through faith - and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast". Ephesians 2:8-9.

**(S)** Salvation by faith. John 1:12. Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." John 1:12.

**(T)** Lordship. Romans 12:1-2. Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God - this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is - his good, pleasing and perfect will. Romans 12:1-2.

**(S) POINT 4. ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK**

First. Daily review the last five memorised Bible verses once every day for 5 weeks.

Second. See the workbooks "Go and make disciples" and Internet on www etc.

Third. Listen on short wave radio every SATURDAY to WEDNESDAY to "Discipleship training on the air".