

**Matthew 16:24-28**  
Your Cross to Bear

*If anyone ...*

- I. A Life Command
  - A. Follow Me
  - B. To Death
- II. A Matter of Eternity
  - A. Infinite Loss
  - B. Everlasting Gain
- III. A Day of Reckoning
  - A. Your Only Plea
  - B. Your Own Dismay

*... come after me.*

**Children, listen ...**

1. What happens when this life is over?
2. Why is it good to think about that?
3. What is the only way someone can live with God forever?

**A Matter of Death and Life**

What do you cherish most? I would venture to guess that in order of priority you would have on the top of your list the things that last the longest, and at the bottom disposable, expendable things. Do you have anything on your list that lasts forever? You certainly do, and I hope you didn't neglect to add it. In fact, I hope you have it at the top of your list. Stating the obvious, it is your soul – we have souls that will never die. Jesus helps us to see just how valuable our souls (“our very self”) are by reminding us that the sum value of everything we could ever imagine possessing in the world cannot match the value of our souls. We need to be productive in life, providing for our needs and enjoying the many good things of life, but we need to constantly remind ourselves that this is not it. Yet how often do we think of eternity? How often do we seriously consider the fact that one day we will cross the threshold we know as death and enter into an eternal state of being? I can't think of a more sobering thought than that. Don't live life avoiding the issue: be sure you have the ultimate question – “where will I spend eternity?” answered. Not sure? Listen to Jesus says in v. 24,25. He does not leave us in the dark. No, it's not the easy way, it's the only way.