

According to Jesus- Take up Your Cross

24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. 25 For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. Matthew 16:24-25

Faith is an ever deepening reality where Jesus calls us into greater levels of obedience and commitment to him.

Then he (Peter) began to call down curses, and he swore to them, "I don't know the man!" Matthew 26:74

The satisfaction we get from sin is temporary but the affects can be eternal.

The "self" that Jesus is requiring us to deny is the sinful, rebellious, selfish center of every person that keeps us from enjoying God fully.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! 2 Corinthians 5:17

Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. 22 For in my inner being I delight in God's law; 23 but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. 24 What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? Romans 7:21-24

22 You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; 23 to be made new in the attitude of your minds; 24 and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. Ephesians 4:22-23

As long as we coddle our old self and give them safe lodging in our souls, we will not be able to effectively follow Jesus.

Our faith is only as good as the persecution it is willing to endure.

11 "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. 12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, Matthew 5:11

21 ...Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers

*of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.
22 Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!"*

"Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; Luke 22:42a

yet not my will, but yours be done." Luke 22:42b

23 "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns." Matthew 16:23

Any path in life that does not involve a cross is not a path that Jesus walked. Jesus did not avoid his cross so we cannot avoid ours.