

Reflections

thoughts for the journey

APRIL 2003 – *The Hard Way or the Easy Way?*

In following Jesus, what appears to be the hard way is actually the easier way. “The terrible thing, the almost impossible thing is to hand over your whole self – all your wishes and precautions to Christ. But it is far easier than what we are all trying to do instead. For what we are trying to do is to remain what we call ‘ourselves,’ to keep personal happiness as our great aim in life, and yet at the same time be ‘good.’ We are all trying to let our mind and heart go their own way – centered on money or pleasure or ambition – and hoping, in spite of this, to behave honestly and chastely and humbly. And this is exactly what Christ warned us you could not do.”¹

What does Christ want of me? “Christ says give me all. I don’t want so much of your time, so much of your money, so much of your work: I want you. I have not come to torment your natural self, but to kill it. No half measures are any good. I do not want to cut off a branch here and a branch there, I want to have the whole tree down.... Hand over the whole natural self, all the desires you think innocent as well as the ones you think wicked – the whole outfit. I will give you a new self instead. I will give you Myself: my own will shall become yours.”²

If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

For whoever wants to save his life will lose it,

but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it.

What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?

Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?

Mark 8.34-37 NIV

¹ Lewis, C.S. *Mere Christianity*. McMillan Publishing Company, Inc., New York. ©1952. p. 168.

² *Mere Christianity*. p. 167.