THREE PREQUISITES FOR THE DISCIPLE

 #1 - SELF-DENIAL

 LUKE 9:23 (MARK 8:27-34)

Self-denial is exactly what it says it is - it is self-denial. It is the placing of something or someone else as the most important thing or person in your life. it is saying that I am no longer #1.

My needs, my thoughts, my hopes, my dreams are no longer what is important in my life - my priorities have changed

Denial - deny yourself - literally means disown - turn the deed over to Jesus
 him first, me second , no more `me first', put the good of others ahead of our own

 Agape love - for the benefit of the one being loved

 Complete Surrender of self to the control of the Holy Spirit

SELF-SACRIFICE Romans 12:1-3

The first two verse are introduction

- commitment without follow through is meaningless

Self-indulgence and self-denial are mutually exclusive

- the one doesn't go along with the other

Mark 8:33 - how much of our `religion' is for `our own good?

SUBMISSION Matthew 6:21

`Where your treasure is, there will be your heart also.'

 What does this have to do with submission

Submission to Christ is a voluntary thing. It is requested; it is required; but it is not forced on you.

If Jesus is the most important thing in your life, then your heart will not be torn between the material and the spiritual.

SERVICE 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10

Service to Christ is more valuable than your own life and will help overcome self-centeredness.

 With Christ at the center of your personality, you will concentrate service and love in Christ and others rather than yourself.

Matthew 19:16-24 Jesus told the rich young man, “sell all that you have and give to the poor, then you can be my disciple”. Nowhere does Jesus tell us we should go out and make all kinds of money, amass great wealth, acquire material possessions.

On the contrary he tells us give it away, he tells us that he will provide our needs <Matt 6:33>

I Timothy 6:6-10

Be content where God has placed you, with what he has given you

We must focus outside ourselves. After all, my life is no longer my own, it is His, for my life is hid with God in Christ Jesus.

I am (have been) crucified with Christ... yet not I, but Christ, lives in me (Galatians 2:19-20)

And He is the greatest model of self-denial that the world has ever seen, a fitting role model for the one who would be as He is.

Luke 9:23-26

We must lose ourselves in Him, yet we lose nothing.

We gain everything.

DISCUSSION

Scriptures: LUKE 9:23; MARK 8:27-34; Romans 12:1-3; Matthew 6:21; 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10; Matthew 19:16-24; Matthew 6:33; I Timothy 6:6-10; Galatians 2:19-20; Luke 9:23-26

How do you measure up to this?

Are you putting Jesus first in your life?

Have you submitted all you are and have to Him?