

# Bearing The Cross

Of Jesus, John wrote, "And He, bearing His cross, went out to a place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha" (John 19:17).

Just as Jesus bore His cross, He calls upon us to bear ours. He said, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me" (Luke 9:23).

## Difficult

Bearing the cross was difficult for Jesus. He had already been scourged (John 19:1). And, on His way to the place of crucifixion, Simon was compelled to carry it for Him (Luke 23:26). No doubt, being on the cross was excruciatingly painful for the Lord, having His hands and feet thrust through with nails and His abused body hanging for hours (John 20:25; Mark 15:25; Luke 23:44).

Bearing our cross is difficult too. We must endure hardships for the cause of our Savior (2 Timothy 2:3). At times a Christian is called upon to suffer verbal abuse and social seclusion (Acts 24:5, 6; 2 Timothy 4:16). There are duties entered upon which require much from us (Matthew 25:31-40). We must count the cost and be ready to pay (Luke 14:27-30).

## Voluntary

Though difficult, Jesus bore the cross voluntarily. He said, "...I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself..." (John 10:17-18). He willingly gave Himself to die so that we may live (Galatians 1:4).

Our cross is voluntary as well. Only those who desire to follow the Lord, will follow the Lord (Revelation 20:17). The Psalmist said, "Your people shall be volunteers In the day of Your power..." (Psalm 110:3). We willingly obey the gospel in baptism (Mark 16:16; Galatians 3:26-27). We must willingly serve the Savior from day to day, or it is no service at all (cf. 2 Corinthians 8:5; 9:5, 7).

## Temporary

Jesus was on the cross for six hours (Mark 15:25, 34). Though it was a

long time for Him to suffer, it was also a limited amount of time. He need not "offer Himself often...since the foundation of the world" (Hebrews 9:25-26). His pain and suffering came to an end, with His resurrection and ascension following (Matthew 27:50; 28:1-7; Acts 1:9). Jesus could see this, as the Hebrew writer said, "Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:2).

Our cross is temporary. We will bear our burden for a time, not eternity. Our death will come or Jesus will return. With Paul, we must say, "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Romans 8:18). Let us look at the things with are eternal, not temporal (2 Corinthians 4:16-18).

Jesus bore His cross for you, are you willing to bear yours for Him?

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