

RUSSELL SANDERS
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CROSS BEARING

In Matthew 16:24-25 Jesus said to his disciples, ***“If any man will come [follow] after me, let him deny himself [and all fleshly desires], and TAKE UP HIS CROSS, and follow me.”***

His “cross” was more than the tree on Golgotha. It included all the ridicule, opposition, and afflictions of his three plus years of earthly ministry.

Jesus’ words in John’s gospel tell us that as the world and its god hated him, so also would they hate us, his followers. [John 15:19] We must take up our own cross to follow Him. It would not be an easy path to follow. The only true human support we would get would be from like-minded believers who are also carrying their own cross for Christ.

If at times it may feel like you are alone on that journey, rest assured that Jesus is right there beside you the whole way. The burden might weigh heavily upon you at times. It is then that you must cast all your cares upon Him. That is how you take up YOUR cross to carry, because he said in Matthew 11:30, ***“For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”*** He picks up the heavy load.

Do you feel like your life load is heavy? You allow yourself to become overwhelmed with situations and circumstances. You are not casting your burdens upon Jesus. Trust Him. Trust Him to shoulder your load.

You may “take up your cross, and follow Him,” but He will not let you bear that cross alone. He will help you.

1 Corinthians 10:13 [Modern English translation] says, ***“No temptation has taken you except what is common to man. God is faithful, and He will not permit you to be tempted above what you can endure, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it.”***

Jesus bore His cross alone, but you do not have to do that. He will bear your cross with you if you just trust Him. However, He cannot bear it with you if you refuse your cross of following Him. You must first choose to follow Him, and then He can help to shoulder your cross of affliction.