



There Will Be No Crown Without a Cross!

To wear a crown you have to be royalty or a part of a royal family. You must be the descendant of a King to inherit the throne. In our case we must be born again. Where we were paupers we are now Children of the Creator the King of Kings.

But many worldly kings have lost their crowns, their throne and their authority in this world and replaced by someone else.

If I would do a study of all the Kings of the Bible you would probably see that there are more evil than good.

God gave them authority and they missed used it, he gave them wealth and they misused it, he gave them wisdom and they missed used it. They decided to follow the God of their own mind and not the God that spoke to them in visions and dreams and the mouth of the Prophets.

They ceased being Godly kings and became worldly kings.

Many people have started out being Godly Christians but ended up being worldly because they ceased to follow the creator.

People have become their own Priest and fell into utter destruction.

What I am trying to say is that there will be no crown of life without a cross.

Our salvation wasn't free, it cost Jesus and heaven dearly. The cross that our savior bore was heavy very difficult to carry.

Imagine Jesus as he carries the cross to Calvary, he had just been beaten and ridiculed by the Romans and the religious people of that day. He never fought back, he never defended himself, he knew that this cross was of utmost importance if the world was going to be saved.

How many of us are that concerned about the sins of other people?

Without a cross there will be no crown! To be a follower of Jesus you must be willing to die, die out to sin. The cross of being holy, faithful, and loving and giving and changing are, too heavy for some.

It's a cross of denying self and carrying the burden for someone else.

Scripture; Mark 8:34-38

34 Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. Why does god use if so much when talking to us?"

35 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it.

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

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

38 If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels." NIV

Luke 14:27 NIV

27 And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.

What did Jesus mean when he said "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

Let me tell you what it didn't mean first: Many people interpret "cross" as some burden they must carry in their lives: a strained relationship, a thankless job, a physical illness. With self-pitying pride, they say, "That's my cross I have to carry." Such an interpretation is not what Jesus meant when He said, "Take up your cross and follow Me."

When Jesus carried His cross up Golgotha to be crucified, no one was thinking of the cross as symbolic of a burden to carry. To a person in the first-century, the cross meant one thing and one thing only:

Death by the most painful and humiliating means human beings could develop.

Two thousand years later, Christians view the cross as a cherished symbol of atonement, forgiveness, grace, and love.

But in Jesus' day, the cross represented nothing but torturous death.

Because the Romans forced convicted criminals to carry their own crosses to the place of crucifixion, bearing a cross meant carrying their own execution device while facing ridicule along the way to death.

Therefore, "**Take up your cross and follow Me**" means being willing to die in order to follow Jesus.

1. This is called "dying to self."
2. It's a call to absolute surrender.

After each time Jesus commanded cross bearing, He said, "For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it.

What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self?"

([Luke 9:24-25](#)). Although the call is tough, the reward is matchless.

Our ideas of what Jesus is all about are not much different than what people of his day believed.

Wherever Jesus went, He drew crowds. Although these multitudes often followed Him as Messiah, their view of who the Messiah really was—and what He would do—was distorted.

- They thought the Christ would usher in the restored kingdom.
- They believed He would free them from the oppressive rule of their Roman occupiers.

Even Christ's own inner circle of disciples thought the kingdom was coming soon (Luke 19:11).

When Jesus began teaching that He was going to die at the hands of the Jewish leaders and their Gentile overlords (Luke 9:22), His popularity sank.

Many of the shocked followers rejected Him. They were not able to put to death their own ideas, plans, and desires, and exchange them for His.

Isn't that our problem too, we want to pick how we serve him and follow Him at our convenience?

- A. Following Jesus is easy when life runs smoothly;
- B. But our true commitment to Him is revealed during trials.
- C. Jesus assured us that trials will come to His followers ([John 16:33](#)).
- D. Discipleship demands sacrifice, and Jesus never hid that cost.

In Luke 9:57-62, three people seemed willing to follow Jesus. When Jesus questioned them further, their commitment was half-hearted at best.

They failed to count the cost of following Him. None was willing to take up his cross and crucify upon it his own interests.

Matt 19:16 And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?

Jesus said in the next verse to keep the commandments and he told Jesus I have done that since my youth.

Then the real question came, the question that everyone hates to hear because it demands giving up something you love more than anything or anyone else: here's what kept him out of the kingdom, Matt 19:21-22

Jesus said unto him, If (there's that IF word again) **thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.**

22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions. His unwillingness to sacrifice cost him eternal life!

Listen to this scripture: Matt 19:23 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, **“Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.”**

When we came to Jesus we were ready to follow and do anything because we were so excited about being saved.

We wanted everyone to feel what we were feeling and when they rejected us we couldn't understand why.

What happened to that excitement and commitment we first had?

How many people would respond to an altar call that went

“Come follow Jesus, and you may face the loss of friends, family, reputation, career, and possibly even your life”?

The number of converts would likely decrease! Such a call is what Jesus meant when He said, **“Take up your cross and follow Me.”**

If you wonder if you are ready to take up your cross, consider these questions:

- Are you willing to follow Jesus if it means losing some of your closest friends?
- Are you willing to follow Jesus if it means alienation from your family?
- Are you willing to follow Jesus if it means the loss of your reputation?

- Are you willing to follow Jesus if it means losing your job?
- Are you willing to follow Jesus if it means losing your life?

In some places of the world, these consequences are reality. But notice the questions are phrased, “Are you willing?”

Following Jesus doesn't necessarily mean all these things will happen to you, but are you willing to take up your cross?

If there comes a point in your life where you are faced with a choice—Jesus or the comforts of this life—which will you choose?

So many people use the Phrase What Would Jesus Do? Do we ask ourselves that question when there is something going on in our life? Do we ask that question for ourselves every day?

Here is how Jesus said it:

Luke 22:42 **Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.**

What is the will of God for your life what cross do you have to carry to wear a crown?

Aren't we more concerned about what we have to give up and not what we are gaining?

Think of it, heaven or hell, every time I ask that question everyone wants to go to heaven, but are you willing to deny yourself and take up your cross and follow him?

Are you willing to separate yourself from sin and sinful people and sinful activities?

Here's the best Scripture I can come with to help you make it to heaven.

Hebrews 12:1-2 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

His cross was to save us; our cross is to save others! Are willing to bear a cross to receive a Crown?