

Suffer with Christ So That You Can Be Raised with Him
(By Rev. Anthony Menzel, 4 April 2021, Resurrection Sunday)

The Lord Jesus has been so good to us...

Through His suffering, death, and resurrection, He has given us so much...

John 3:14-21

14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, **15** that whoever believes in Him should [c]not perish but have eternal life. **16** For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. **17** For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

18 “He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. **19** And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. **20** For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. **21** But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.”

However, even though the initial receipt of salvation is free, there is a price to be paid as we persevere in the way of Christ...

That price is not money that we give although sometimes it involves financial giving...

That price is living for the Lord Jesus...

Living for the Lord Jesus involves taking up our own mini-cross daily, just like the Lord Jesus took up the Cross of Calvary for us...

Luke 9.23-25

23 Then He said to *them* all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross [b]daily, and follow Me. **24** For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. **25** For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost?

Everyone has a different cross.

Your cross might be to give up everything.

Mark 10:17-27

17 Now as He was going out on the road, one came running, knelt before Him, and asked Him, “Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?”

18 So Jesus said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one *is* good but One, *that is*, God. **19** You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘Do not murder,’ ‘Do not steal,’ ‘Do not bear false witness,’ ‘Do not defraud,’ ‘Honor your father and your mother.’ ”

20 And he answered and said to Him, “Teacher, all these things I have kept from my youth.”

21 Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, “One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me.”

22 But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

With God All Things Are Possible

23 Then Jesus looked around and said to His disciples, “How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!” **24** And the disciples were astonished at His words. But Jesus answered again and said to them, “Children, how hard it is [b]for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God! **25** It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”

26 And they were greatly astonished, saying among themselves, “Who then can be saved?”

27 But Jesus looked at them and said, “With men *it is* impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible.”

If we go back to Luke 9, we see that part of our cross may be leaving loved ones behind.

Luke 9:57-62

57 Now it happened as they journeyed on the road, *that* someone said to Him, “Lord, I will follow You wherever You go.”

58 And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes and birds of the air *have* nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay *His* head.”

59 Then He said to another, “Follow Me.”

But he said, “Lord, let me first go and bury my father.”

60 Jesus said to him, “Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God.”

61 And another also said, “Lord, I will follow You, but let me first go *and* bid them farewell who are at my house.”

62 But Jesus said to him, “No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”

Your cross might be ministering to your loved ones.

Mark 5:18-20

18 And when He got into the boat, he who had been demon-possessed begged Him that he might be with Him. **19** However, Jesus did not permit him, but said to him, “Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you.” **20** And he departed and began to proclaim in [e]Decapolis all that Jesus had done for him; and all marveled.

Your cross might be taking care of your loved ones.

1 Timothy 5:4-8

4 But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents; for this is [a]good and acceptable before God. **5** Now she who is really a widow, and left alone, trusts in God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day. **6** But she who lives in [b]pleasure is dead while she lives. **7** And these things command, that they may be blameless. **8** But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

Always remember that taking your cross is not measured by how great your sacrifice is.

1 Samuel 15:22-23

22 So Samuel said:

“Has the Lord *as great* delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices,

As in obeying the voice of the Lord?

Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice,

And to heed than the fat of rams.

23 For rebellion *is as* the sin of [d]witchcraft,

And stubbornness *is as* iniquity and idolatry.

Because you have rejected the word of the Lord,

He also has rejected you from *being* king.”

We can be involved in activities that appear to be godly, but they are not God’s Will for us.

Matthew 7:21-23

21 “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. **22** Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ **23** And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’

If God did not send us to minister in a certain way, then what we are doing is not carrying our cross.

He might be merciful to the people we minister to and use us to bless them, but He will not be pleased with us for such an attempt at serving Him.

Remember that serving the Lord Jesus is not always very hard or complicated. It may just mean being faithful as a parent, child, spouse, or churchgoer, for example,

1 Corinthians 10:12-13

12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. **13** No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God *is* faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to [d]bear *it*.

God doesn’t put more on us than we can bear...

Matthew 11:28-30

28 Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. **29** Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am [f]gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. **30** For My yoke *is* easy and My burden is light.”

Just by keeping our thoughts and feelings right with the Lord Jesus, we may be carrying our cross by protecting others spiritually...

Hebrews 12:12-17

12 Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, **13** and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.

14 Pursue peace with all *people*, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: **15** looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; **16** lest there *be* any fornicator or [f]profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright. **17** For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.

So, as we celebrate the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus, let us remember to thank Him by carrying the mini-cross He has for us so that we can share in His glory for all eternity...

1 Peter 4:12-13

12 Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; **13** but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.

2 Timothy 2:11-12

11 *This is* a faithful saying:

For if we died with *Him*,
We shall also live with *Him*.

12 If we endure,
We shall also reign with *Him*.

If we deny *Him*,
He also will deny us.

13 If we are faithless,
He remains faithful;
He cannot deny Himself.

Romans 2:5-11

5 *But in accordance with your hardness and your [a]impenitent heart you are [b]treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, 6 who "will render to each one according to his deeds": 7 eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for*

glory, honor, and immortality; 8 but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness—indignation and wrath, 9 tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the [c]Greek; 10 but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 11 For there is no partiality with God.

Philippians 3:7-11

7 But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. **8** Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ **9** and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; **10** that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, **11** if, by any means, I may attain[b] to the resurrection from the dead.

2 Timothy 3:12

12 *Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.*

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