

Carrying Your Cross

8/22/26

- Today – Opportunity to give a Bible study
- Title – “Carrying Your Cross”

-
- A quick reference to the physical cross
 - To most Christians – the cross is the symbol of the resurrection
To some Christians – they view the cross as a pagan symbol
(This week, I read what the Jehovah Witness religion says about that idea)

According to christiansymbols.net:

“The cross on which Jesus our Lord and Savior died for our sins is the most commonly recognized and most universally accepted symbol for Christianity the world over. It symbolizes God’s great sacrifice, an offer of salvation to all of humanity and the promise of the Resurrection.

“There are three different styles of crosses Jesus might have died upon. Scholars are not completely sure as to which style it was. The first style is the Tau cross. It is in the shape of a ‘T’. The second style is referred to as the Latin cross. This cross is the most popular representation of the cross today and most likely the form Jesus died upon. The final style is the Y-shaped cross. This cross is not as popular as the first two, but still an option.

Tradition tells us that the cross our Savior died upon was made of four different types of wood. The four types of wood were chosen by the Jews for their lasting properties, so that Jesus might hang on the cross forever. The footrest of the cross was made of cedar for its durability and resistance to rotting. Other woods used were the cypress, for its pleasant aroma that would offset the stench of death, the palm, a symbol of victory and olive wood for the inscription, a symbol of the peace that would follow after Jesus was dead.

During the early days of the church, the cross as a Christian symbol was rarely used. Believers did not want to think about their Savior’s death. It was, after all, the instrument upon which He died.

In the year 325 A.D. Constantine the Great conquered the Roman Empire and made Christianity its main religion. Christians no longer had to hide from the authorities or suffer gruesome deaths for their faith. As peace spread throughout the empire, the popularity of the cross as a Christian symbol spread with it. . . .

Crosses fall into two major categories: the Greek (equal length arms) or Latin (shorter cross bar raised above the center). All crosses are variants of these two forms and quite a few variations there are indeed. F. R. Webber estimates that there are 400 different forms of the cross, with 50 of them playing a prominent part in the decoration of our churches and parishes.”

· Hanging on a “tree”

Acts 5:30	Luke quoted Peter saying – “the God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom you murdered by hanging on a tree”
Acts 10:39	Luke quoted Peter saying – “whom they killed by hanging on a tree”
Acts 13:29	Luke quoted Paul saying – “they took Him down from the tree and laid Him in a tomb”
Gal. 3:13	Paul quoted Deut. 21:23 – “cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”
1 Peter 2:24	Peter wrote – “who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree”

· Carrying your cross – our behavior as children of God

Luke 14:27	whosoever does not bear his cross & come after Me cannot be My disciple
28-30	count the cost – when building a tower
31-32	count the cost – going to war
33	willing to forsake all that he has
Matt. 10:38	he who does not does not take his cross & follow Me is not worthy of Me
Matt. 16:24	if anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me
Matt. 22:34-40	the Father has expectations
Matt. 23:2	beware of Pharisees – who add burdens
4	bind heavy burdens
5	phylacteries – showing off
6	the best seats in the synagogue
7	fancy titles
12	exalted themselves over people
13	shutting up the kingdom
15	seeking proselytes – to control them
Matt. 20:25-28	Christ – the ultimate servant

· For a brief moment – Christ did not carry His own cross

· For a brief moment – the ultimate servant needed help

Mark 15:21	they compelled a certain man (Simon, a Cyrenian, the father of Alexander and Rufus) as he was passing by – to bear Christ’s cross
34	“My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me?”
Heb. 5:8	Christ “learned” from suffering

· As we conclude – I have 3 questions for you to consider

1. Do you remember your commitment to carry your own cross?
2. Would you have been willing to carry Christ’s cross for Him?
3. How many crosses will you help people to carry this week?