

INCONVENIENT

"Take Up Your Cross"
September 24 & 25, 2011
Steve Markle, Pastor

Matthew 16:24-26

"Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it. What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?"

What does it mean to "take up your cross?"

1. Cross-carrying is always VOLUNTARY.

Matthew 11:28-30; 10:37-39

2. Cross-carrying is an ACT of LOVE.

John 3:16; Romans 5:8; 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

3. Cross-carrying is PERSONAL.

1 Corinthians 12:5-7

4. Cross-carrying is DIFFICULT, but WORTH it.

John 6:60, 66; Luke 14:27-30

5. Cross-carrying is a DAILY responsibility.

Luke 9:23

Going Deeper...

For discussion or personal study

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"Take Up Your Cross" – 2 of 3

Questions

1. What was the most inconvenient thing that happened in your life this week? When you think of your "suffering" how does that compare to the suffering of Jesus on the cross?
2. What are your immediate thoughts whenever you see a cross...whether in a church, on a t-shirt or around someone's neck? Is it so commonplace now that you barely notice it?
3. Do you grasp the difference between bearing burdens and taking up your cross? Do you have burdens that you currently need to give over to God so that you can focus better on taking up your cross?

Scripture

Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. This passage describes what it means to put love into action. Taking up your cross is an act of love toward both God and others.

As you read each of these characteristics of love, identify a corresponding action that would reflect the sacrifice of taking up your cross.

Example – "love is patient" – taking up my cross could mean giving my time to listen and minister to that very person that I find very difficult.

Application

Identify a new way you can take up your cross this week.