

What Does ‘Carry Your Cross’ Mean?

Have you ever asked yourself what it looks like to carry your cross?

This phrase—one you may know well—comes from an instruction Jesus gave His disciples:

“If anyone will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me” (Matt. 16:24).

Perhaps you have heard this verse before. But have you ever personalized it? It’s important to know that the cross you take up is unique to your journey. You’ll need to answer some questions about the cross to know what yours looks like and how to carry it.

When I considered this directive recently, I found myself asking some essential questions: What exactly is Jesus asking me to carry? Where do I find my cross? How do I know if I’m carrying it?

If you are like me, you may initially answer, “I don’t know!” I have written on the cross many times, but there was a season when it seemed I couldn’t even locate mine, let alone define it.

Then one day, I polled a social media outlet to gather some single-word descriptions of the cross. In the end I tallied more than 500 responses including:



As I reviewed the list of words so many were kind enough to volunteer, I heard the Holy Spirit whisper, “Behold the cross. All of these words and more represent the cross. Carry these with you into your everyday world.”

My eyes retraced the list in my trembling hand. It was true! The cross provides all that it won, just as Jesus provides all that He is!

Through the cross, Christ purchased us love, forgiveness, freedom and redemption. It was time I carried all I had experienced to others. Each of the words in my list captured some essential element of the cross that needed to be expressed in the world.

The cross I carry is all that Jesus has done for me, just as the cross you carry is your gospel, or witness, of what He has done for you. But it doesn't stop there. We are containers that pour out heaven's precious gifts. Paul describes it this way:

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, the excellency of the power being from God and not from ourselves" (2 Cor. 4:7).

We do not filter the gospel; we just carry it. In this way the extraordinary is transferred within the confines of our daily "ordinary." Each day I take the hope, love and forgiveness of the cross with me to the grocery store, on the plane and to the office. I carry it everywhere my life takes me. These are the places where I offer the power and wonder of the cross.

Dear friend, there is a hurting world all around you that needs what you carry. What has Jesus done for you? That is the cross you are to take up and carry into your world.

What if each day we prayed, "Heavenly Father, may everything that the crucifixion of Your Son provided gain full expression in and through my life today"?

Our world would see Jesus lifted up.

Let's commit ourselves to carrying the wonder of the cross!

*To dig deeper into this subject, check **Lisa Bevere's** book*

Girls with Swords: How to Carry Your Cross Like a Hero.