

## **Has your Cross budded?**

Luke 9:23-26 If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

The secret to bearing fruit for the Lord really is no secret. We have creation that teaches us as well as the Holy Scriptures: a seed cannot bear fruit unless it dies and goes into the ground and then it will yield fruit. Likewise, unless a Christian dies and goes into the ground (1 Corinthians 9:27) he can never bear fruit for God.

### **Cross-bearing:**

We are commanded to take up our own cross and follow him. Notice, everyone has a different cross, everyone has a different burden to bear. But all of us as Christians have a cross to bear. You are commanded to live for Jesus now. The question I ask you is, why wouldn't you? (Romans 6:20-23)

Matthew 10:34-39 He that finds his life shall lose it, but he that loses his life for my sake shall find it.

Just as Simon was compelled to bear his cross, so are we compelled by our Saviour to bear his yoke and burden with him (Matthew 11:28-30, 2 Corinthians 5:14-15).

### **What will happen when you bear your cross?**

- It will cause you (your flesh) to die (Romans 6:6, 8:13, Galatians 5:24, 6:14)

The reason why we don't bear fruit sometimes is because we are not dead. We are not giving God good ground to work with. We are not tilling the ground (Adam in the garden) and pulling the weeds like we should!

- It will not make you popular in the world or amongst carnal Christians (Hebrews 13:12-13, Galatians 5:11)

- The world will tell you to come down from your cross – but you just keep your flesh there and let it die (Mark 15:29-30). They'll say, Man what are you doing? You're a fanatic! Why don't you come down from there and save yourself? Why not save your reputation before it's too late? Why not save your lifestyle? Why not save you family and friends? You know what this is doing to them and it's going to cost you? Come down from that cross, stop bearing that cross, stop it already. Why not save yourself?

Jesus probably would have said to them, I'm not interested in saving myself, I'm interested in saving YOU!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! And so likewise when the world and carnal Christians get upset because you have decided to take up your cross and follow Jesus, and do what he says and not what they say, just tell them, I'm not interested in saving myself, I'm interested in saving you, in helping you: you can't understand it now, but me living for the Lord and bearing my cross is for your good, my good, and God's good! I'm not interested in coming down from here: In fact, I like it up here. The view is sure good up here. I can see the world for what it is from up here. I'm telling you if you would just come up here, you'd see it too. You know something else, Jesus is up here with me, I am crucified right beside him. I'd rather be with Jesus. Jesus commanded me to do this

for him, and since he has done soooooooooooooo much for me, the least I can do is “shoulder up to my cross” and bear it for him (Galatians 2:16-21).

- It will please Jesus Christ (Romans 12:1-2)
- You will reap in due season (Galatians 6:7-10)
- Cross bearing yields fruit (John 12:23-26, Proverbs 12:12, John 15:1-8)

If you want to be fruitful, here is what you need to do (2 Peter 1:5-8)

If you just work on keeping the ground right (tilling the ground), that is your heart right, God will plant what needs to be planted. He might use another Christian to water you, a church to water, but God is the one that will give the increase (1 Corinthians 3:5-8) and cause you to grow and flourish and bear fruit! The ROOT of the righteous yieldeth fruit! Last time I check the ROOT is JESUS!

### **Three Reasons why there is no fruit:**

Parable of the Sower (Mark 4:14-20)

How come the word has been sown and there is no fruit? The answer lies in one of three reasons: (1) They are not saved or don't have the word of God in their hearts; (2) They have a stony heart, and therefore no root in them because there isn't any good ground to plant on; (3) They still love the things of this world and the cares of this world and have not put to death the old man with his lusts, and therefore bear no fruit.

Who is the fruitful one? Those that have a good and honest heart, that hear, receive, and keep the word. Not the ones that go to Bible school; not the ones that are smart, not the ones that argue with God and reject his word and receive traditions of men over what God said, they don't bear the fruit. Who does? Those “dumb” Christians that believe, heed, and keep his word no matter what anyone does or say.

### **When the Reckoning Day comes:**

You know what the cross is like? It is like Aaron's rod that budded (Numbers 17, Hebrews 9:1-6).

You die or you get raptured up there, and you appear before the Lord. The Lord asks you to give him your cross for examination. You take out your old rugged cross and he looks at it.

He says, Why are there no buds? You can't answer him. The Lord says, all you had to do was take your cross and LAY IT DOWN before the tabernacle and it would have budded. After all, my name was written on it, JESUS, why are there no buds? Didn't I choose you, and purpose to blossom you and cause you to bear fruit for me? Didn't I set you down next to the BREAD OF LIFE so you could fellowship with us? Didn't I set you in a safe place where you had two tables of my words to live by? Why are there no buds?

The problem with this man is that he never crucified himself to that cross, he never crucified the flesh and he chose not to LAY IT DOWN before the LORD (which was his reasonable service). Since this man was not willing to take up his cross and die, the rod remained without buds and fruits.

Another man appears before the LORD and the Lord asks him to show his cross. The man takes the cross from off his back and this cross is different than the other one. This one had budded and blossomed; there were almonds and fruits as well. He says to the Lord I made this for you Lord, I hope you like it.

And the man gives it to Jesus. Jesus looks at it and says, What is this? Is that, is that buds? Yea Lord. Are those almonds? Is that some fruit? How did that happen?

And the man says, Well I just started bearing my cross like you commanded me to do and all of a sudden it started to bud and blossom. But to be honest with you Lord, I still don't understand how me, some dirty, crooked, broken, dry, dead tree could suddenly start to bud.

The Lord says, That's because my NAME was written in it. The Root and offspring of David is the one that caused this thing to bud, and blossom, and bear fruit.

Yea, truth Lord, aint that the truth. Its because of you!

The Lord says, I like this. I can see you put a lot of time and effort into this. I can see it cost you a lot to make me this. It's very precious to me. It is most beautiful.

And the Lord says, one other thing, where have you taken this cross?

The man says, I just LAID IT DOWN before you and said what you said, not my will but thine be done. It hurt a little bit at first, but then, Hallelujah there was great joy and peace! And that's when things started to change and miraculously the cross started to bud and bear fruit.

What I don't understand is that I laid down my flesh on this cross, and then next thing I know, I was lifted up on high and I was set beside the BREAD OF LIFE and the two tables of stone. I looked to my left and I saw the word of God and I looked to my right and I saw the WORD OF GOD. And then the WORD OF GOD opened his mouth and spake peaceably unto to me and we had such a good time of fellowship together, I never experienced anything like it!

And the LORD says, If you thought that was good, its about to get even better. Now we can fellowship together forever with no more crosses!

And the LORD says you have given me this gift, I want to give you something in return. So the man trades his cross and gets a crown. And the LORD sets a crown upon this man's head. And the man no sooner than he receives it, takes it off, falls on his face

and throws it at the feet of Jesus and says, it was you, it was you, it was you: you deserve this not me.

And at this point the hosts of heaven can't take it anymore and they all fall on their face and praise God and worship the LAMB that liveth for ever and ever.

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