

## What Did Jesus Mean When He Said . . .

*Pastor Ray Swash*

*Take up your cross ...*

*If anyone would come after me, they must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it. What good is it for a person to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?*

Mark 8.34-36 (TNIV)

*. . . take up their cross daily and follow me . . .*

Luke 9.23 (TNIV)

- articulate
- accurate
- applied

Is it literal or figurative, active or passive, once-for-all or ongoing, required for all believers or optional for only the more mature? What are its prerequisites, and what are its consequences?

## Living out true Discipleship

- A) We are called to **SURRENDER**  
- This is not partial, but **complete**
- B) We are called to **IDENTIFY** with Him in suffering and death  
- This isn't about carry 'His' cross but about our **experience**
- C) We are called to **FOLLOW** Him obediently  
- This is about making him **Lord**

## Counting the Cost

*"If one of you is planning to build a tower, you sit down first and work out what it will cost, to see if you have enough money to finish the job. If you don't, you will not be able to finish the tower after laying the foundation; and all who see what happened will laugh at you. 'This man began to build but can't finish the job!' they will say . . . In the same way," concluded Jesus, "none of you can be my disciple unless you give up everything you have.*

Luke 14.28-30, 33 (GNT)

## Not Easy . . . But Right

### Why 'Cross-bearing'?

- A) You can't **AVOID** it:  
- Troubles, Stresses and Challenges are **Inevitable**

*In the world you have trouble and suffering, but take courage - I have conquered the world*

John 16.33 (NET)

- B) It is an act of Spiritual **MATURITY** and Fulfillment:  
- Often the greatest crosses we'll bear involve 'others' and therefore is best achieved through a lifestyle of **Humility**

*Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.*

John 15.13 (ESV)

- C) It is a purposeful **EXPERIENCE** to create the person you truly need to be:  
- Crosses can be and must be carried **Individually**

*And no one can be my disciple who does not carry his own cross and follow me.*

Luke 14.27 (TLB)

*My brothers and sisters, consider it nothing but joy when you fall into all sorts of trials, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect effect, so that you will be perfect and complete, not deficient in anything.*

James 1.2-4 (NET)