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# CROSS

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## > *Matthew 16:24* <

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

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The way we use the cross is kind of strange if you really think about it. For us the cross is a symbol of Christianity, of our faith, and salvation. But if we think about what a cross meant to those of Jesus' time, we might not print it on quite as many shirts and bumper stickers. In Jesus' time, wearing a cross on a necklace or shirt would be comparable to wearing an electric chair or a noose as a fashion statement. See what I mean? Kind of strange.

Jesus told His followers that if they were going to be His disciples they would have to carry their own cross. Not too appealing is it? "Hey guys, if you want to really follow me I am going to need you to carry around the thing that is going to kill you." But Jesus wanted us to know that if we really followed Him, and followed Him closely, it would most likely be a costly venture. I'm not sure that we think about it that way when we wear a cross on a shirt or on our Bible.

So what does the cross mean to you? What does it mean to carry your cross? I think it might look a little like this: if we're not doing some things that ruffle the feathers of those around us, or if our priorities and goals look exactly like those of the world around us, we might want to check ourselves. Carrying a cross might look different now, but I feel certain that it carries the same weight and makes the same difference in our world.

### **Go and Do**

Take an inventory of the things that you do for your faith. Are they costly or are they easy? It's not that all of them should be difficult, but it is that they should not all be culturally acceptable. Remember Jesus was put on that cross because He made the political and religious leaders very uncomfortable. He didn't fly under the radar and neither should we.

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