



# ***REFLECTIONS***

March 20, 2022

**“And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.”**

*Luke 14:27*

## **A Cross to Bear**

We all have one—it may feel like more. The world is a tough place to live. And the pursuit of happiness may be an inalienable right, but it isn't a piece of cake to achieve. We have a cross to drag along, a weighty one, that makes every step a challenge to take.

Happiness produces smiles. That's the sign of it. Happy homes are painted with cheerfulness; but even a fresh coat dries quickly and flakes onto the ground. Happy people wake with a smile on their face and a sparkle in their eye, hoping for the day to be the first without a prickly pebble in their shoe. But it *is* there, always there, every step a reminder of the burden to bear. Jesus spoke of it:

*“If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.”* (Luke 9:23)

Think about it. In Jesus' day crucifixion was the most feared and disgraceful form of execution. The cross symbolized the excruciating pain to endure. Yet Jesus willfully placed the weight of the world's sin on his shoulders and dragged them through the streets of Jerusalem to sacrificially face crucifixion on a hill called Golgotha.

Yes. Each of us has a cross to bear too. We were not given them as something to complain about or to blame for our failures. The cross may be a pebble perpetually imbedded in a shoe, or it may be something painful beyond imagination; but our burdens serve as reminders of Jesus' sacrifice for our sins, and as inspiration to dedicate our lives to follow him.

Our lives make a difference in the people in the small corners of the world we live in, some of them we may not even know. So, may each of us take up our crosses, however painful they may be, and as Paul encouraged the Colossians:

*“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”* (3:16-17)

*“You are the light of the world,”*

*Richard +*

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