

His Cross and Mine

Luke: All Things New



Series Goal

That Mercy Hill Church would be made new as we follow the One who is making all things new!



Sermon Text

Luke 9:18-27



Big Idea

When Jesus attempts to present the gospel to people, He talks not merely about one cross, but two. His cross. My cross. These are the two poles of the Christian life. Everything else turns on the axis they establish.

(1) The Calculus

“The disciples had probably seen a man take up his cross, and they knew what it meant. When a man from one of their villages took up a cross and went off with a little band of Roman soldiers, he was on a one-way journey. He would not be back” (TNTC).

There is an equation here in Jesus’ words. If I only read to you from this first side of the equation and then stopped, you would think God is cruel and abusive, like some kind of cosmic slave-driver. But there is another side to the equation. It’s this side that leads us to the conclusion that, at the end of the day, Christianity is not so much about denying ourselves as much as it is about indulging in Christ; not so much about losing our lives as much as it about saving our lives in Christ; not so much about the great cost of following Jesus as much as it is about the great profit we gain in Him; not so much about the shame we receive from the world as much as it is about the glory we receive from God!

(2) The Christian Life

Now, perhaps you’ve misunderstood me up to this point. Let me clarify. I am not saying that the cross we pick up is somehow equal to Christ’s. I am not saying that we are somehow saved by our own works—that through our own acts of self-denial we atone for our own sins. I am saying that until we are ready and willing to take up our own cross we have no reason to think we shall receive the benefits procured by His cross. The act of taking up my cross to follow Him is simply an expression of my full-hearted embrace of Jesus as my Savior, Lord, and Treasure. It communicates both that I know how desperate a state I am in because of my sin and that I believe He is my only hope for rescue. I’d let the world go to lay hold of Him. And if you don’t have that, you don’t have Him. That’s the point. That’s why immediately following Jesus’ discussion of His own cross, He turns to speak of the cross His disciples must bear. If we don’t pick up our own cross in embrace of His we can’t even start the Christian life.

But it also seems, according to Jesus, that this is a “daily” thing (v. 23). In other words the Christian life doesn’t just start here it continues in this interplay between Christ’s cross and our own. These are the two poles of the Christian life—that everything else turns on the axis they establish. Every sin you ever commit is a lapse of faith in His cross and a consequent shrugging off of your own. And, conversely, every good fruit you ever bear is the outworking of your faith in His cross and your consequent taking up of your own.

Reflection Questions



- In your own words, describe how you think the cross you are called to pick up relates to the cross Jesus carried. What other verses from Scripture illumine this relation for you?
- What is your initial response to hearing that you must pick up your own cross if you are going to be a Christian? Explain. Why do you think Jesus uses such strong language? What’s He getting at?
- Describe those times when you are most tempted to shrug off your cross and live for the here and now of this world? Why do you think this is so hard? How would seeing Christ’s cross for you enable you to pick back up your own? How are you doing in the “daily” surrender?