Mat 107

Pick up your cross

NATE JOKE ALSO SUPPORT

LORD SUPPER

Mat 10:37 He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.

[/Mat 10:38](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb/mat/10/38/s_939038)“And he who does not **take his cross and follow after Me** is not worthy of Me.\

[Mat 10:39](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb/mat/10/39/s_939039)“He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it.

Today we are simply going to have a laser focus on the definition of what the term take up your cross means to the Bel today.

This is the first reference to the cross in Matthew. This does not refer to the cross of Christ but to the Roman custom of crucifixion.

/The Roman Empire had perfected crucifixion as a means of capital punishment and in their domination of areas like Judea it was becoming well known to all citizens.\

The Romans had literally crucified hundreds of thousands of people**.** So the Jews here understand what is meant by taking up the cross.

**/**It was the Roman custom for the condemned person to carry his own cross to the point of execution. It was part of the punishment put out in public view just as public whippings. There was an element of humiliation as well as lessons for others to see…fear factor!\

It also was a disgrace for friends and family that they would now be associated with someone who was deemed a criminal and died in a public display.

In this context carrying the cross represents giving up the greatest things in life such as a fine family relationship because of doctrine. In other words, it is putting doctrine before anyone else. Picking up the cross is putting doctrine before anything else in your life.

When you put doctrine first your friends & family are going to get uncomfortable at times.

People may not want to associate with you as they did before.

Your circle of family and friends may reject you and judge you and it may become publicly uncomfortable for you and them!

/Picking up your cross is walking as a Bel publicly and it may be humiliating, uncomfortable and relationships and ties in your life may change dramatically. The cross in Mat 10:38 is a symbol of pain, struggle and dramatic change for the Bel.\

Again, I am telling you TLJC is using hard examples and tough talk to wake up His new church leaders.

There is nothing soft about what the last few verses TLJC spoke to these men.

Important to understand…The Lord was not thinking of His own crucifixion.

The connection we can view is that Jesus had to sever His own family connections. He severed His family connections in two ways. Jesus was on the cross for six hours.

In the first three hours He severed His human family connections — He said to John: *Son, this is your mother; Mother, this is your son* — and in the last three hours He severed His family connections with the Father: “My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?”

Remember Jesus suffered all things we suffer in one realm or another.

TLJC tasted all temptations and pain that any human being could face.

Heb 4:15 tells us…we have a HIGH PRIEST who has been tempted in all things and can empathize with our weaknesses.

Look at some principles concerning the term *pick up your cross* because there are some misconceptions;

/The Bel is told to pick up their own cross as each of us have different challenges and gifts concerning our spiritual calling. You can not carry the cross of another.\

This is the principle that says stay out of God’s plan for other Bels, you may not fully grasp everything a person is going through but God has a plan and personal sense of destiny for all of us, don’t think you can carry a cross for someone else or delay the cross someone you care about needs to pick up. REPEAT!!!

There is a scripture that tells us TLJC had help because He was physically beaten so bad that the Roman Soldiers noticed it would have killed Jesus to carry that huge wooden cross beam any further.

So there is a point where Bels help out.

/Mat 27:32 As they were coming out, they found a man of Cyrene named **Simon, whom they pressed into service to bear His cross**.\ SY-REN

This is the principle of - Gal 6:2 where we are told to bear one another’s burden but many Bels take that to an extreme and also don’t fully understand the principle of picking up your own cross.

/To bear the burden or cross of another is never designed for us to remove it or replace it, it is only to assist for a time when we see the struggle is unbearable. This is why having maturity & spiritual discernment becomes imperative so we know when we are to be an asset and not a stumbling block in another Bel’s life.\

There are times God may be disciplining a Bel or allowing someone to have a growth spurt and we get right in the way when we think we can fix everything or save them.

If that man Simon stayed with that cross and took the place of TLJC we would all be destined to the lake of fire.

He could have carried that cross beam 30 feet or 100 yards…. we don’t know.

We know it was brief and it alleviated some of the pain and struggle that the Lord had in that moment.

Another side note to this is that TLJC didn’t ask for the help….the Roman Soldiers determined Jesus needed a break or assistance for a period of time.

/The weak Bel will seek out the path of least resistance concerning a burden (cross) and many times they will expect others to rescue them or resolve the problem. This guarantees no spiritual growth and actually will cause more misery in the future.\

The times that a Bel refuses to grow during a difficulty or a test inside the plan of God will almost always come back full circle sometime in the future.

REPEAT

God will introduce a similar event or circumstance because you ran from the first one. When it comes to your personal destiny which includes some trials & tribulations that is part of picking your own cross.

God is a perfect gentleman so if you refuse and retreat back into the cosmic system you only multiply your problems.

Satan has much more tribulations and attacks and pain in his cosmic system but God will not chase after you or demand that you as a Bel go forward in His plan.

But you are rejecting spiritual growth and God’s protection…the choice is yours Royal Family.

/The call is to- *take up your cross and follow Me.* When the Bel refuses the call, they are essentially refusing an intimate relationship with Christ.\

The age-old lesson is this - when you reject the plan of God you are accepting the plan of Satan. Independence from your Creator.

There are only two camps Royal Family…God’s and Satan’s…that third camp is only an arrogant illusion in the mind of a person who thinks more highly of themselves then what they ought too! REPEAT

/The cross we are called to bear may differ at times and most of the time it can lay dormant which are times designed by God for us to study, grow and enjoy blessings. This will help us be rested, prepared and trained for the burden when it does come up.\

ELABORATE

We all have different callings and crosses to bear.

Some Bels go through financial burdens and come out the other side with a greater sense of happiness about handling their financial affairs.

Maybe the Bel goes through a medical challenge and they have illness for 9 months or two years and then have a long stretch of a healthy lifestyle for a period.

It is not set in stone.

I can’t give you a definitive answer as to what your cross will be…if it will be something brief & fleeting or a longer challenge with a great deal of public attention….all I can do is teach you what it might be….what it might look like.

/Your cross is unique because it is part of your personal sense of destiny, it is wrapped up in an individual plan for your life. It is a burden or challenge that will be difficult, possibly painful and at times displayed publicly in your walk with God.\

You must be willing to pick that cross up and follow Christ and that speaks to staying inside the plan of God during the time you carry that cross. Job is an extreme example but a good one to understand what I am talking about.

/The cross we carry is unique to our life and it is not an event or circumstance that we can trace back to poor decisions or negative volition toward Bible Doctrine.\

IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND

In other words, if you smoked a pack of cigarettes a day for 20 years and now you have lung cancer…that is not the cross TLJC is talking about.

Your marriage is never a cross to bear because that was your choice and the fact that marriage is suppose to be a divine institution and one of those important decisions governed by your relationship with God…that’s on you.

It will be something you didn’t put your hands in by decisions or lifestyle choices you made.

/Your cross will resemble something the Apostles faced which will be attacks in the physical or mental or even financial realm that will be driven by forces outside your volition. It will be a time to stand strong in Christ and have others witness that spiritual walk.\

Job was a righteous man who was doing everything the right way inside the plan of God.

He hit spiritual maturity at the highest level and was then entered into the angelic conflict as a witness.

Most scholars believe it was about 7 to 10 months of attacks that Satan was allowed to attack Job.

At the end Job was double blessed for all he lost.

His case is extremely unique due to the historic context of the attacks and Job’s maturity level…doubtful that many Bels would see this level of attacks.

This is just something we should note as an example because;

/The cross in your life will be something that will be undeserved. It will be unavoidable if you want to remain inside the plan of God. It may be viewed publicly by others as divine discipline, but you will know it is not, yet you will remain silent even if accusations are tossed in your direction.\

Think about TLJC….we are going to get ready to finish up with the Lord’s supper and think about His Cross.

/Your cross may come in the form of loss of finances, illness or sudden changes in your circle of family and friends that bring accusations and grief directly at your doorstep.\

You may lose your job due to a false accusation.

You may suddenly get diagnosed with cancer or some other illness and you did nothing physically to bring that on.

I think you are following what I am teaching…think about TLJC.

/Jesus Christ came to save and enlighten mankind, He reached out with compassion and wisdom and in return He was ridiculed and betrayed. He was wrongly imprisoned and suffered a severe beating. He then was hung up beaten & naked to die in front of everyone, an innocent man!\

That is a cross we may never fully wrap our human minds around.

There were friends and family who He was separated from, there was a separation from the Father as the sins of the world struck His body.

At the time TLJC taught this lesson to His disciples in Matthew chapter 10 they were barely getting a visual of what was to come…but they knew the Roman crucifixion was a painful, humiliating cross to bear and this is the point Jesus needed them to realize.

What these men would face in the future would be a constant challenge. Ridicule and enemies would be at every turn.

They would be wrongly accused of being liars and chased out of towns and cities innocent men teaching truth…. treated as common criminals.

And yet it all pales in comparison to what the TLJC did on Calvary.

So we have some challenges and burdens coming ahead of us…yes we do as positive Bels moving forward.

We all so have blessings and rewards.

We have a wall of fire around us.

We have eternal security.

We have gifts and callings to live in…ambassadorship and royal priesthood to fulfill. Many things and the good far out-weigh the bad Royal Family.

That is why as we prepare for the Lord’s supper I read from the Book of Hebrews;

/Heb 12:1 Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also **lay aside every encumbrance and the sin** which so easily entangles us, and let us **run with endurance** the race that is set before us,\

That burden is light and that yoke is easy in the new nature…remember what TLJC has done for us and He did it from pure love.

/[Heb 12:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb/heb/12/2/s_1145002) **fixing our eyes on Jesus**, the author and perfecter of faith, who for **the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame**, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.\

That focus is on Him now…no longer on our flesh…that was nailed to the cross at Calvary. That joy set before HIM is us Royal family.

/[Heb 12:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb/heb/12/3/s_1145003) For consider **Him who has endured such hostility by sinners** against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.\

We can do all things thru Christ who strengths us.

Do not lose faith… do not lose sight of all He has done for us.

/[Heb 12:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb/heb/12/4/s_1145004) **You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood** in your striving against sin;\

Remember that next time you are in a struggle or suffering….HE endure more than we will ever realize because beyond the human beatings and pain of the crucifixion… TLJC took the punishment for the sin nature of all mankind and was separated from His Father.

We may never fully grasp that Royal Family.

On the night TLJC was betrayed He took bread and broke it…saying this is my body which is broken for you…eat this in remembrance of our Lord.

Then our Lord took the cup lifted it up and said this is my blood….the blood of a new and everlasting covenant.

So as we drink the cup we remember our LORD and bring Him into remembrance until He returns…let us drink the cup…

PRAY

**Verse 39 — “He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.” There are four steps here:**

**1. “He that findeth his life.” But it isn’t he that findeth his life, it is he that findeth his soul. This is an aorist active participle. The action of the aorist participle precedes the action of the main verb; “shall lose it.” The word “find” is literally, to discover, “he that discovers his soul.” What does it mean to discover the soul? It means to enter into a family relationship of love and rapport, to enter into a marriage relationship of love and rapport. In other words, to find someone in life about whom you can say that you love the person and that you like the person, to have a wonderful relationship.**

**2. “Shall lose it” means to be deprived of it and this is the main verb. This is aorist active indicative. You have to find this before you can lose it. How do you lose it? By putting doctrine first.**

**3. “He that loseth. This step three is taking up your cross. So to “lose it” means to put doctrine before anything else, and you lose it in that sense. Doctrine becomes first, not what you love. When you get identified with doctrine everyone is going to look down their nose at you — opposition because you are now centred in doctrine.**

**4. “Shall find it” is a future active indicative. The future tense is used here for logical progression, it is logical in God’s plan, it follows that if you put doctrine first, if you pick up your cross, then you are going to find everything that is wonderful.**

Luk 14:26 “If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple.

Jhn 5:22 For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, 23 so that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.

The cross was an instrument of death. What Jesus is referring to is commitment to Him, even unto death—obedience to the extreme measure and willingness to die in pursuit of obedience. Death on a cross was not pleasant. It was painful and humiliating. The implication is that even if obedience is painful and humiliating, we should be willing to endure it for Christ.  
  
By saying, "Take up your cross and follow Me" Jesus was giving us a word picture of the concept of "death to self," which originates in another saying of Jesus, "For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?" ([Luke 9:24-25](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Luke%209.24-25)). The idea is that nothing in this life is worth keeping if it means losing eternal life, not a job, not a family, not a group of friends, not even our very identity. The call is tough, but the eternal reward is well worth the temporary pain.  
  
The multitudes that followed Christ were convinced that He was going to bring a glorious kingdom to earth, freeing them from the oppressive Roman rule. Even His own disciples were thinking this way ([Luke 19:11](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Luke%2019.11)). Misunderstanding the prophecies, they were shocked when He began to talk about death to self and carrying the cross ([Luke 9:22](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Luke%209.22)). They left Him in droves because of these teachings. Similarly, sometimes believers today misunderstand the call of Jesus as a call to health, wealth and prosperity. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The call of Jesus is a call to die, but today some, unwilling to accept a call to die, leave Him or simply change His message to something more pleasant.  
  
But His message never guaranteed a pleasant life. Jesus instead guaranteed that trials would come to His followers ([John 16:33](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/John%2016.33)). Discipleship demands sacrifice, and Jesus never hid that cost. He also promised that He would be there to us give us the joy and peace of the Holy Spirit ([John 14:15-19](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/John%2014.15-19)), comfort us in our trials ([James 1:12](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/James%201.12)), and act as a faithful high priest who understands our struggles ([Hebrews 2:17](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Heb%202.17)) and accomplish for us peace with God by His blood ([Romans 5:1](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom%205.1)).  
  
In [Luke 9:57-62](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Luke%209.57-62), three different men expressed a willingness to follow Jesus. When Jesus