

Bury Your Dead Self

Luke 9:23 (NIV 1984)

Then he said to them all: “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

“We all have our crosses to bear”

The Time to Follow Jesus **is Now**

Luke 9:57-58 (NIV 1984)

As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, “I will follow you wherever you go.”⁵⁸ Jesus replied, “Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.”

Luke 9:59-60 (NIV 1984)

He said to another man, “Follow me.” But the man replied, “Lord, first let me go and bury my father.”⁶⁰ Jesus said to him, “Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God.”

Luke 9:61-62 (NIV 1984)

Still another said, “I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say good-bye to my family.”⁶² Jesus replied, “No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.”

Elisha

Foolishness or **The Power of God**

1 Corinthians 1:18-31 (NIV 1984)

For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹ For it is written:

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise;
the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate.”

²⁰ Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹ For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. ²² Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, ²³ but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴ but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ For the foolishness of God is wiser than man’s wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man’s strength. ²⁶ Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth.

²⁷ But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. ²⁸ He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, ²⁹ so that no one may boast before him. ³⁰ It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. ³¹ Therefore, as it is written: “Let him who boasts boast in the Lord.”

*Who else but God could take a cross that represented defeat –
and turn it into a symbol of victory?*

*Who else but God could take a cross that represented guilt –
and turn it into the symbol for grace?*

*Who else but God could take a cross that represented condemnation –
and turn it into a symbol of freedom?*

*Who else but God could take a cross that represented pain and suffering –
and turn it into symbol of healing and hope?*

*Who else but God could take a cross that represented death –
and turn it into a symbol of life?*

What God Did For the Cross, He Can Do for You

1 Corinthians 1:27...*But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise;
God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.*

2 Corinthians 12:9-10 (NIV 1984)

But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. ¹⁰ That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

“What’s your greatest weakness?”

1 Corinthians 15:31 (NIV 1984)
I die every day—

The hardest part about carrying a cross **is to die daily.**

Mark 8:34-35 (NIV 1984)

.....“If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. ³⁵ For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it.