

Simon Carries the Cross

Station 4

Was it fear that Jesus could not carry His cross all the way to Golgotha because of the extra lashings the soldiers gave Him? Was it a cruel way to mock the crowd on the journey to Calvary to pull a man away from his two sons and force him to carry Jesus' cross? Traditionally it is thought that Jesus fell on His way to the hill of His crucifixion. All we know is that the soldiers selected Simon, the father of Alexander and Rufus to carry Jesus' cross.

Simon was seized to carry the cross against his will, but picture this: Jesus helping us carry our own personal cross (which can look like physical ailments or challenges, difficulties in prayer, mental illness, emotional distress, or any number of unwelcome events).

Look at what Jesus said: Matt. 11:28-30 (ESV)
28 Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Surely Jesus was grateful to Simon for providing some relief during the Passion, and for helping Him on the walk to Calvary on His journey to redeem humanity. As difficult as our own challenges are to deal with, and just as Simon shared Jesus' burden – Jesus shares our burdens, and we are also called to help carry the burdens of others.

Gal. 6:2 (ESV) 2 Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Think of someone that may need help in their journey. How can you assist them carrying their cross? What might Jesus be asking you to do this Easter season?

This may have been Simon's only encounter with Jesus, if he had not been called to carry the cross he may never have known Him. We know Simon was a traveler. In being recruited for this job he was thrown right into the presence of Jesus. If Simon stayed around to watch he would have realized very quickly that this man was like no other. Mark mentions that Simon was the father of Alexander and Rufus. Why does Mark name these men? Did they become followers of Jesus? Were they known to the original audience of Mark's Gospel?

AS YOU GO FROM HERE:

Put yourself in Simon's shoes.

Imagine the pain Simon must have felt watching Jesus struggle to even lift His own cross. To see Jesus too weak to even walk beside him while he carried that cross up the hill.

Finally, rest in the fact that Jesus walks along with you in your journey and He shares your burdens/cross.

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