When the Cross Seems Too Heavy

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INTRODUCTION:

i. We cannot escape the reality of the cross
   • Many frequently want its rewards, but few wants its burdens or responsibilities – Matt. 7:13-14
   • We are called to take up and bear our cross – Luke 9:23; 14:27

ii. There are times when the cross seems too heavy to bear and we are tempted to lay it down – cf. Luke 23:26

DISCUSSION:

I. LIVING AS A NEW CREATURE AMONG SINNERS

A. Walking as a new creature means living differently than others (often a lonely existence) – Eph. 4:17-24
B. The world will indeed think us strange for living this way, adding to the weight of our cross! – 1 Pet. 4:1-5

II. PREACHING RIGHTEOUSNESS IN A SINFUL WORLD

A. The constant call to preach the gospel can easily become a toilsome burden – Mark 16:15-16
B. Preaching righteousness in the face of persecution and rejection makes it even more burdensome – Acts 8:1-4
C. Yet, we are mindful of Noah and his work as a preacher of righteousness – 2 Pet. 2:4-5

III. ASSEMBLING AND WORSHIPPING AMIDST DISTRACTION

A. The reality of a warning not to forsake expresses the potentiality of such becoming a burden – Heb. 10:23-25
B. Does assembling and worship make us glad or is it a weariness to us? – cf. Psa. 122:1 w/ Mal 1:6-13

IV. SACRIFICING FOR HIM WHILE OTHERS DO NOT

A. Sacrifices for the cross come in all shapes and sizes. Are we willing to make them (even when the smallest of sacrifices starts to feel like too much)? – Mark 10:21-31

V. FACING REJECTION FROM WORLDLY FAMILY AND FRIENDS

A. When your family and friends become your enemies for the sake of the cross, the cross will feel incredibly heavy – Matt. 10:32-38

CONCLUSION:

i. Consider the consequences of not taking up and bearing your cross...
   • Enjoying the passing pleasures of sin – Heb. 11:24-26
   • Reaping what you have sown – Gal. 6:8
   • Denying Him leads to being denied – Luke 12:8-9

ii. The struggle of the cross is real. Are we willing to endure? – Heb. 12:1-2