



[Matthew 10:38](#)

(38) And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.
New King James Version

The cross of Christ can mean two different things: It can be a symbol of what [the crucifixion](#) produced (forgiveness, etc.), or it can represent Christ's own example of self-denial and losing His life for a greater purpose—a symbol of great personal cost.

Paul writes in [1 Corinthians 1:18](#), "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." Consider, though, that many who claim to be Christian today do not consider the idea of forgiveness through crucifixion to be foolishness. They glory in what the cross produced. What is foolishness to them is His example of complete surrender, which we are to imitate. As a result, nominal Christianity has become tolerant of sin, increasingly human-centered, and less inclined to actions that might involve discomfort or inconvenience. Even conservative denominations will not follow Christ with regard to the seventh-day [Sabbath](#). They appreciate what the cross of Christ produced, but balk at the cost to follow in His footsteps. Observing the [fourth commandment](#) as [Jesus](#) and the apostles did seems foolish to them!

But for those who are being saved, that message and example of total surrender—of carrying whatever is placed upon us until we die—is the power of [God](#). Consider the power unleashed when Jesus surrendered completely: The Most High God not only raised Him back to life, but He has put all things under Him. There is no greater power.

This was Paul's solution for the division in Corinth—the example of the Creator being willing to die. Following that example of self-sacrifice is what could have allowed the Corinthians to be reconciled to each other. The carnal mind says that surrender is folly, because it creates a vulnerability or the possibility of loss. But the same carnal mind is blind to the vital reality that God is on His throne, overseeing the outcome—gladly using His power on our behalf if we will but trust Him with our lives.

The Berean: Daily Verse and Commentary for Matthew 10:38 (<http://www.theberean.org>)

The message of the cross is not merely about forgiveness of sins. It is also about our response to God *after* we have been forgiven. If we are to be worthy of the Creator who humbled Himself to die a shameful death, our response must likewise be one of self-denial, complete surrender, and reckoning ourselves as already dead to this present, evil age so that we might live for Him.

— David C. Grabbe

To learn more, see:

[What Does It Mean to Take Up the Cross?](#)

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