

Must Jesus Bear The Cross Alone?

by Steve Higginbotham

In 1693, Thomas Shepherd wrote the song entitled, "Must Jesus Bear The Cross Alone." Two of the verses of that song read as follows:

Must Jesus bear the cross alone,
And all the world go free?
No, there's a cross for everyone,
And there's a cross for me.

The consecrated cross I'll bear,
Till he shall set me free,
And then go home my crown to wear,
For there's a crown for me.

I like that song for several reasons, but one is that it teaches one's cross comes before one's crown. That fundamental truth seems to have been lost to many people, for how often do you hear of people giving up and quitting when difficulty arises?

How often have you heard of preachers who quit preaching, elders who quit shepherding, deacons who quit serving, Bible teachers who quit teaching, and Christians who quit following Jesus because of some difficult circumstance? It happens far more frequently than it should. Let someone hurt one's feelings and he quits. Let someone criticize one's work, and he quits. Let someone forget to thank one for his work, and he quits.

The common thread that runs through all of these situations is that someone has forgotten that one must bear a cross before he is privileged to wear a crown! Don't lose sight of this truth. Work comes before rest. Sacrifice comes before reward. Struggle comes before victory. And humility comes before exaltation (2 Cor. 4:17).

So what about you? Are you bearing your cross in this life, or are you spending your time kicked back, daydreaming about how your crown is going to fit? Let's get to work. There's much to do. We have a cross to bear. Or, must Jesus bear the cross alone, and all the world go free? No, there's a cross for everyone, and there's a cross for me.