

# Simon and the Cross of Jesus

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By Justin Morton

What is the hardest thing you have ever done for someone else? In ministry, several tasks can be quite difficult, but one of the more difficult is standing or sitting with a family as they watch their loved one gasp and take their final breath. No matter what challenge may come to your mind, perhaps nothing compares to what Simon of Cyrene was forced to do for Jesus.

“And they compelled a passerby, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross” (Mark 15:21). Very little is said in scripture about this man other than what we read in this verse. And yet, with so little recorded, we learn some valuable lessons from this man.

1. **God can use anyone to help accomplish His will.** Simon was just a passerby who came in from the country, perhaps simply for the Passover celebration. And yet, on that occasion, when he least expected it, God used Simon to help accomplish His will.
2. **Following Jesus will always lead to a cross.** Simon was chosen to help Jesus carry his cross. Luke records Simon carried the cross behind Jesus (Luke 23:26). If we are going to follow Jesus, we are going to have to be willing to pick up our cross and follow Him no matter the cost (Matthew 16:24).
3. **When we know Jesus, our lives will be transformed.** Nothing else is specially said about Simon after this encounter. However, it appears his encounter with Jesus on His way to Golgotha transformed his life. Mark mentions Simon was the father of Alexander and Rufus. At first glance this may seem unimportant, but I don't think anything in the Bible is unimportant. It is commonly believed and accepted that Mark wrote to Christians in Rome. Mentioning the two sons of Simon by name may very well indicate they were well known to the Christians there. Not to mention, in Paul's letter to the church at Rome, he mentions Rufus and his mother (Rom. 16:13).

We don't know much about Simon of Cyrene from Scripture, but it is quite possible he and his family came to know and believe in Jesus. He may not be the most well-known man in all the Bible, but Simon carried a cross and followed Jesus from Jerusalem to Golgotha. Where will you follow Him?