

Selected readings from Morning and Evening: Daily Readings, By
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Reading 102

“Take up the cross, and follow me.” Mark 10:21

You have not the making of your own cross, although unbelief is a master carpenter at cross-making; neither are you permitted to choose your own cross, although self-will would gladly be lord and master; but your cross is prepared and appointed for you by divine love, and you are to cheerfully accept it; you are to take up the cross as your chosen badge and burden, and not to stand grumbling at it.

This night Jesus bids you to submit your shoulder to his easy yoke. Do not kick at it in petulance, or trample on it in vain-glory, or fall under it in despair, or run away from it in fear, but take it up like a true follower of Jesus. Jesus was a cross-bearer; he leads the way in the path of sorrow. Surely you could not desire a better guide! And if he carried a cross, what nobler burden would you desire? The way of the cross is the way of safety; fear not to tread its thorny paths.

Beloved, the cross is not made of feathers, or lined with velvet, it is heavy and galling to disobedient shoulders; but it is not an iron cross, though your fears have painted it with iron colors, it is a wooden cross, and a man can carry it, for the Man of sorrows tried the load. Take up your cross, and by the power of the Spirit of God you will soon be so in love with it, that like Moses, you would not exchange the reproach of Christ for all the treasures of Egypt. Remember that Jesus carried it, and it will smell sweetly; remember that it will soon be followed by the crown, and the thought of the coming weight of glory will greatly lighten the present heaviness of trouble. The Lord will help you to bow your spirit in submission to the divine will before you fall asleep this night, so that waking with tomorrow's sun, you may go forth to the day's cross with the holy and submissive spirit which beautifies a follower of the Crucified.

