

“TAKE THE RIGHT TURN”
Mark 15:21-22

Jesus said in Matthew 7:13-14, “Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads the destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.”

“Then Jesus said to His disciples,” in Matthew 16:24, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.”

Right Road

Simon must have felt like he was on the wrong road. He had come to Jerusalem to observe Passover. He had come all the way from Cyrene. Suddenly his life is interrupted. He doesn't realize it, but he is on the right road of a Divine appointment.

We can have things like this happen in our lives. We have our plans and things are in motion toward achieving those plans. Then suddenly, our lives are interrupted. Interruptions can come in the form of changes in health, heart break, relocations, financial disasters, loss of job, divorce, death of a loved one, etc.

I have personally witnessed people whose lives take a turn for the worst. Yet, God takes that worst case scenario and makes something beautiful out of it. I've seen people get involved in church because of changes like I just mentioned. Then the Holy Spirit begins to do a work in their lives and they come to know the Lord. They felt like they were on the wrong road, but discovered they got on the right road.

Right Direction

“And they pressed...” This means they “kept on pressing.” Simon didn't want to receive their direction. It didn't seem right. He resisted. But the direction he was given was the right direction.

Why Simon? Why did these guards press Simon when the streets were full of people? What was it about Simon? Could it be that he looked strong and could carry the cross? Could the soldiers have thought, “Here is a man with the physique to carry such a load?” You see, even the strongest need to carry the cross. The cross is not for the weak and feeble as some in the world suggest. It takes strong men to bear the cross. Any weakling can turn from the cross and walk the way of the world.

What did this strong man do? He knelt down and took the cross. He humbled himself in the open sight of all and carried the cross!

Some people are “pressed” to go to church. Some people feel “pressed” with the gospel message. They may have a friend that keeps witnessing to them and refuses to let up. Some young person may feel like that today. You are only here because your parents “press” you to be here. Someone else may feel “pressed” because their spouse insists on them being here.

Listen, you are “blessed” if you are “pressed.” Davis said in Psalm 142:4, “*Look to the right and see; for there is no one who regards me; there is no escape for me; no one cares for my soul.*” Can you imagine no one caring for your soul?

Those of you who feel pressed can't say, “No one cares for my soul.” Proof of care for your soul is in the press! The press for Simon was the right direction even though he did not want to go!

There are some in here who have been saved because someone cared enough for your soul not to give up. They kept pressing. Thank God for the press! Oh, I know, it doesn't feel at first. But once we meet Jesus, we are grateful that special someone cared enough to press!!!

Right Way

“And the brought Him to the place Golgotha...” Golgotha is the Hebrew/Aramaic equivalent to the Greek word *kranion* which means skull. The term Calvary comes from the Latin word *calvaria* which means cranium or skull.

The place of the Skull referred to a particular sight that had the appearance of a skull. Such a place exists today just a short distance from Jerusalem’s northern wall known as Gordon’s Calvary. It was at that place where Jesus was crucified. That’s where Simon ended up. Simon went the right way...all the way to the cross.

What did Simon see once he arrived at Golgotha? He witnessed the continued mistreatment of Jesus. He saw the soldiers drive nails in to His hands and feet. He watched as the soldiers gambled for Christ’s clothes. Then the sign, the sign which read THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS. He heard the taunting “If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.”

Simon must have thought, King of the Jews? Son of God? Who is this man? He listened.

“Father forgive them, for they know not what they are doing.”

To Mary His mother and John Jesus said, “Woman, behold your son, Son, behold your mother.”

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, today thou shalt be with me in Paradise.”

“I am thirsty.”

“My God, My God, Why hast thou forsaken Me?”

“It is finished.”

“Father, into Thy hands I commit My Spirit.”

Simon must had thought as he listened, “Who can forgive but God? Who would be concerned for his mother and friend while in such excruciating pain? How can this man tell another he would be with Him in Paradise? Thirsty? That’s it? That’s all He wants for Himself? What is finished? It? Father? I commit my Spirit?”

Those words and thoughts must had brought Simon to belief. There at Simon was saved. There is no other place from which a man can be saved. And there is no other name given among men whereby we must be saved. Jesus saves. He saves because He took our place at Calvary.

Right Results

The Bible says Simon was “the father of Alexander and Rufus.” Now we have to understand that the holy Spirit has reason for every word in the Scripture. Alexander and Rufus must have been known to the first century church. Romans 16:13 says Rufus was a member of the church at Rome. Simon’s journey to the cross produced significant results. He had to have become a believer because he raised children who became believers. The mother of Rufus, which had to be Simon’s wife, was dear to Paul because he referred to her as his mother.

A journey to the cross brings right results. Why? Because once we have made the right turn to the cross, we seek to lead others there.