

## Why Me?

### ➤ **Intro: tone = positive (assume doing)**

- Why me? Why didn't this happen to someone else? Why did this happen to me? Why is my life harder than other people's?

- thoughts we've all had when have something difficult to do, endure

- **illus.:** like a baby who is born without arms or legs, never have a "normal" life, always different

- **illus.:** like a young man who's in car wreck, loses both legs, can't compete in sports, not think attractive

- **illus.:** like a young woman who becomes Christian, her friends don't like her anymore, boyfriend breaks up with her, has to make new friends

- **lesson:** bearing your cross

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### ➤ **Because you're a Christian – every Christian has a cross to bear – no exception**

- **Lk. 9:23** you are bearing a cross, daily, lose life, being a sacrifice for Jesus (**Rom. 12:1**)

### ➤ - **Lk. 9:24-26; 14:26-27** we all have a price to pay as a Christian

- **Why me?** – because you're a Christian – there's a price to pay

- **Jesus: slave not great** than His master

- **count cost before becoming Christian:** bear cross whole life

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### ➤ **Because you're different from the world – hated, but blessed**

- **2 Cor. 6:14** can't have the same relationship with unbelievers as they have with themselves – **result**

- **Jn. 3:19-21** darkness hates light, because light exposes evil – **result, hatred**

- **Jn. 15:18-19** world hated Jesus, hates His disciples – **cross bear as disciple**

- **illus.:** young men's class, say a kind word to lunch room lady who serves you, lift her up

- **cross to bear: ridicule from many other students – why: exposed their hatred by showing love**

### ➤ - **Lk. 6:22-23** but you're blessed by carrying these crosses – **because of reward in heaven**

- **illus.:** Jesus, betrayed, tried, humiliated, scourged, crucified – **blessed:** rose victorious, ascended, reigns

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### ➤ **Because God is making you stronger**

- **Jn. 15:2** one way God "prunes" us, to make us stronger, more fruitful in kingdom

### ➤ - **Rom. 5:2b-5** rejoice (exult) in tribulation, hope, not disappoint – **salvation**

- **illus.:** freshman, college, tested with fire to weed out those not serious, make everyone else stronger

### ➤ - **Ja. 1:2-4** rejoice, trials, produces endurance, **perfect result**, complete, lacking nothing

- **illus.:** exercise, muscles burn (**hurt**), build stronger muscles – **no pain no gain**

- **illus.:** high school football player, Navy Seal – pushed to limited repeatedly, trials make perfect

- **Rom. 8:28** God works all things together for good – **grow stronger every time**

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➤ **Because you love your fellow man – obeying God, love, result is cross**

- **Rom. 12:14, 17a, 18, 19a, 20-21 cross:** love your enemies, and you'll be unpopular with everyone else
- **illus.:** pretend, man at work, bullying everyone else, deceiving the boss to make himself look good and everyone else look bad - **What will co-workers think about you when you are nice to the bully?**
- **saying:** have to be different to make a difference – **result: cross to bear**

➤ - **Ja. 1:27a cross:** take care of the helpless, you'll not have what all the selfish people have

- **illus.:** a young man in high school, saving for 1<sup>st</sup> car, a class mate is diagnosed with cancer and has to have 50k before can get treatment, school has fund raiser but falls short 2k day before treatment, young man drives to the bank and withdraws all his money, covers the shortfall – **not true, but heard similar stories**
- **what Christian would do**
- **illus.:** some people divorce terminally ill spouse after years of marriage
  - **but not Christians**, stay and bears cross, taking care of spouse – **till death do we part – Rom. 7:2**
- **illus.:** some people adopt children who don't have parents – **Ja. 1:27**
  - **sacrifice, take up cross they didn't have to**
- **illus.:** some people care for the elderly – home, hospital, nursing home – **Ja. 1:27**
  - **sacrifice, take up cross they didn't have to**

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➤ **Because you are strong enough to do it**

- **1 Cor 10:13** God never give you a cross you can't bear – **always strong enough to bear your cross**

- - **Gal. 6:1-2** not every Christian strong enough to bear every cross – spiritual, bear one another's burdens
- **certain things need to be done in the kingdom, not everyone is strong enough**, if you're faced with doing it you are strong enough – someone else might not be strong enough

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➤ **To give you an opportunity to reach someone with the gospel**

- **Lk. 21:12-13** sometimes God uses persecution for an opportunity to teach others
- **illus.:** Jesus, crucifixion, affect had on centurion at Gethsemane, affect has on whole world
- **illus.:** first persecution of Christians, brethren scattered throughout world, gospel preached everywhere
- **suffering is a powerful testimony of the power of God** in Christians – many look at those who continue to have joy in their lives while suffering and want the same strength – Christ
  - **illus.:** the last lesson we'll teach another is **how to die in faith**, no fear, peace, confidence in salvation
- **people living in difficult situations still need to gospel**, so someone has to suffer in that difficult situation to reach them
  - **illus.:** brethren in 3<sup>rd</sup> world countries – **our cross is to help them (2 Cor. 8-9)**

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➤ **Summary / Inv.**

- **Don't ask, "Why me?" Ask, "Why not me?" – bearing crosses**
  - every Christian must bear a cross – **you**
  - work of the kingdom must be done – **someone has to do it, it might as well be you**
  - **if you weren't strong enough**, God wouldn't put it on you, and wouldn't let you put it on yourself
  - **know that good will come from it:** stronger, help people, reach more people with the gospel

- **inv.:** start bearing your cross today - bear it today on earth, or bear it for eternity in hell  
- **song, #286:** Must Jesus Bear His Cross Alone