

do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

Jesus lived the cross. In a sense He carried the cross His whole life. However, when it came time for Him to face the physical cross, both Christ as the son of man and Peter, His best friend, tried to talk Christ the son of God, out of it.

Matthew 16:21-23

21 From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.

22 Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!"

23 But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men."

The people around you, your friends and family and your own flesh, will try to keep you from carrying your cross, preaching the cross and thus living the cross. However, Jesus overcame Peter's opposition and the opposition of His own will and surrendered completely to the Father's will and endured the cross.

Luke 22:42

42 Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.

Our cross is the will of the Father; whatever His will may be for us. Everyone's job, ministry, walk in the

Spirit, walk of obedience to the will of God, is different. It is individual; it is a personal cross that leads to a personal salvation. This is the other half, our half of the message of the cross. It is obedience to the will of the Father through a daily surrender of our self will to His.

Luke 9:23

23 Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.

We carry our cross and live the message. This is what daily puts to death the old man and raises the new man to life in the Spirit. This daily living the cross and therefore preaching the message of the cross by our doing, our works of faith, is what makes manifest the power of God.

Paul was constantly dealing with opposition to the message of the cross. He was opposed by Christians who were in fact false Christians. Christians he called **false brethren**.

2 Corinthians 11:26

26 in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;

Philippians 3:18-19

18 For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: 19 whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly,

and whose glory is in their shame—who set their mind on earthly things.

When Peter tried to turn Christ back from the cross, Jesus rebuked him, calling him Satan and saying that *he was mindful of the things of men*. Notice that these enemies of the cross, Paul is talking about in Phil. 3:19, are also *mindful of earthly things*. They put the flesh, the sin nature, before the will of God. Self is on the throne of their hearts. Their *god is their belly*. They have set their hearts on the love of this world. They hate the message of the cross. To them it is foolishness. They prefer religion. They have a form of godliness, an empty shell without the life of the seed inside. They are wells without water. Christianity without the death and therefore life of the cross becomes an empty shell a ritual. *A form of godliness*, without the power.

2 Timothy 3:5

5 having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

Christianity without the cross becomes an act, a drama, a play with actors. It is theater without the reality of the power of God. Without the cross of personal obedience to the Father's will, Christians become actors. Christ warned His disciples about the acting, the pretense of the scribes and Pharisees. In Matthew, chapter twenty three, He calls them **hypocrites** seven times. The word hypocrite comes from the Greek word hupokrites, it means **'actors'**. (See *The Leaven of the Pharisees*)

Matthew 23:25

25 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence.

It is only when you obey the Spirit of God that Christianity becomes real. It is here at the cross of obedience, when you are face to face with the call of God to obey and die to self, that if heeded, the aroma of Christ is evinced. The sacrificial love of Christ for the Father is revealed again in the earth. However, it is now you who is the one revealing it. If you obey the death sentence that is on your flesh, your sin nature and follow Christ in obedience, the incense burns and the fragrance of Christ rises. When you, as a follower of Christ, choose to die to self, as Christ did, you manifest the savor of Christ before the Father's throne. You begin to smell like Jesus and now you are truly dieing/living/preaching the true gospel of the cross and the true power of God unto your own salvation and the salvation of others.

2 Corinthians 2:15-17

15 For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. 16 To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life.

To those who are not being saved it is all foolishness. It looks like death leading to death. To those who are being saved it looks like life leading to life. Even though there is the dying of the pride, the rebellion, the self, there is the living of the real you, the man of the spirit. The Christian sees that the dying is just the dying of the sin, the old man, the flesh, or the sin nature and that the