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**Introduction**

As the moment of the crucifixion draws near, someone else is ordered to carry Jesus’ cross and follow him to the execution site. While Simon was compelled to do so, Jesus said in Luke 9:23-24 that if you wanted to follow him, you would have to pick up a cross and follow him. Have we chosen to carry a cross?

**Discussion Questions**

1. There are moments in life where you just know things aren’t going to be the same. Can you tell us about one of those for you?
2. Read Luke 23:26 & Mark 15:21 What do we know about Simon? Why does Mark tell us who his children are? It’s purely speculation, but how do you think carrying Jesus’ cross affected Simon?
3. Read Luke 23:32-34 There is a lot going on in these verses; the actual crucifixion, the presence of and execution of 2 thieves, and the soldiers gambling for Jesus’ garment, and Jesus first phrase from the cross – “forgive.” How do you think those words of Jesus affected those who were present? Considering Jesus in this moment – is there anything too difficult to forgive?
4. Read Luke 23:35-43 What’s the most difficult part of this passage for you to understand/reconcile? Jesus promise of paradise to the one thief was obviously not for this life; do you think he expected his immediate circumstances to change?
5. The thief on the cross has sometimes become a flashpoint in arguments about baptism. How is that missing the point? Why does Luke tell us about this exchange?
6. Jesus’ response to being mocked was to be silent. How difficult of an example is that for you to follow?
7. What is the most difficult part of Jesus call to pick up a cross and follow for you?

**Shaping Your Mind –** ***“****Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they don’t know what they are doing****.”*** *Luke 23:34*

**Moving Forward –** May you choose to pick up a cross and follow Jesus where he leads.