

apr 14

and so we approach the day our Lord stepped out of eternity and entered the space continuum called time, being something which He also created. (continuum meaning a beginning and an end.)

He willingly took upon His self all that had driven a wedge between the Creator and the creation. this had been decided before even time was created. He knew this "special" creation in His own image would fall short of His glory.

He would display the magnitude of His mercy and goodness by doing the unthinkable. He would enter into the realm of time which now encapsulated His special creation and set them free. He would choose not only to suffer and die but also accept their ridicule and spite without defense. then He would know. He would know who would receive His love and who would reject it. these He would allow into His own realm!

He would do all this not to assure Himself. He knew the end from the beginning. He would do it to help us know the truth. if we had never known there was good and a bad, could we really have made a choice? could we appreciate love if we had never known hate?

choice! it's something we all have to make. i have now known sin and darkness. i have known goodness and truth. my choice has been made. "as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." jos 24:15

as the song says: "i have decided to follow Jesus, no

turning back, no turning back. the cross before me,  
the world behind me, no turning back, no turning back."

and now, a story about that cross.

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"a man named simon from cyrene, the father of alexander  
and rufus, was coming from the fields to the city. the  
soldiers forced simon to carry the cross for  
Jesus" (mark 15:21)

simon grumbles beneath his breath. his patience is as  
scarce as space on the jerusalem streets. he'd hoped  
for a peaceful passover. the city is anything but  
quiet. simon prefers his open fields. and now, to top  
it off, the roman guards are clearing the path for some  
who-knows-which-dignitary who'll march his soldiers and  
strut his stallion past the people.

"there he is!"

simon's head and dozens of others turn. in an instant  
they know. this is no dignitary.

"it's a crucifixion," he hears someone whisper. four  
soldiers. one criminal. four spears. one cross. the  
inside corner of the cross saddles the convict's  
shoulders. its base drags in the dirt. its top  
teeters in the air. the condemned man steadies the  
cross the best he can, but stumbles beneath its weight.  
He pushes himself to His feet and lurches forward  
before falling again. simon can't see the man's face,  
only a head wreathed with thorny branches.

the sour-faced centurion grows more agitated with each diminishing step. he curses the criminal and the crowd.

“hurry up!”

“little hope of that,” simon says to himself.

the cross-bearer stops in front of simon and heaves for air. simon winces at what he sees. the beam rubbing against an already raw back. rivulets of crimson streaking the man’s face. His mouth hangs open, both out of pain and out of breath.

“His name is Jesus,” someone speaks softly.

“move on!” commands the executioner.

but Jesus can’t. His body leans and feet try, but He can’t move. the beam begins to sway. Jesus tries to steady it, but can’t. like a just-cut tree, the cross begins to topple toward the crowd. everyone steps back, except the farmer. simon instinctively extends his strong hands and catches the cross.

Jesus falls face-first in the dirt and stays there. simon pushes the cross back on its side. the centurion looks at the exhausted Christ and the bulky bystander and needs only an instant to make the decision. he presses the flat of his spear on simon’s shoulders.

“you! take the cross!”

simon dares to object, “sir, i don’t even know the

man!”

“i don’t care. take up the cross.”

simon growls, balances the timber against his shoulder, and steps out of the crowd onto the street, out of anonymity into history, and becomes the first in a line of millions who will take up the cross and follow Christ.

he did literally what God calls us to do figuratively: take up the cross and follow Jesus.

“if any of you want to be my followers, you must forget about yourself. you must take up your cross each day and follow me” (luke 9:23 cev)

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