Carving Ears, Calling Angels, Cutting Out, Crucifixion

 Matthew 26:51-56

Introduction:

1. Jesus gives the plan for being His disciple. Luke 9:23
2. What is taking up a cross?
	1. Sickness?
	2. Accident?
	3. Flood, fire, tornado?
3. Cross bearing is not for entertainment and recreation.
4. All I know about cross bearing is what I learn from Jesus.
5. Let's observe Jesus and those around Him as He went to the cross to see what we can learn about cross carrying, about being His disciple, and how to apply that in our life. Matthew 11:28-30; Matthew 4:19
6. THE CROSS IS CENTRAL IN THE GOSPEL MESSAGE.
	1. Preaching. 1 Corinthians 2:2; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4
	2. Plan of salvation. Romans 6:3-7
	3. Christian life. Luke 9:23-25; Galatians 2:20; Galatians 6:14; 1 John 3:16-18
	4. Worship. 1 Corinthians 10:16; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26
	5. Church growth. John 6:44, 45; John 12:32
	6. Hope. Romans 5:1-9
7. WHY DOESN'T EVERYONE WELCOME THE OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE UP THE CROSS?
	1. Cross bearing is not pleasant and popular.
		1. Not many people choose the narrow way. Matthew 7:13,14
		2. Even good people run, avoid, try to find a way around cross-bearing.
	2. Alternatives to cross bearing.
		1. Carve ears. Matthew 26:51
			1. When faced with suffering, I can burst out in anger and hurt others. Ephesians 4:26
			2. Results: die by the sword. Matthew 26:52
		2. Cut out, run away.
			1. I don't want to face the pain. Matthew 26:56
			2. This is not the last time people will react in this way. 2 Timothy 4:10, 16
		3. Call angels. Matthew 26:53
			1. I can do something good, religious instead of taking a cross.
				1. Visit instead of dealing with painful problems at home.
				2. Preach to others instead of work on myself. 1 Corinthians 9:27
			2. There's nothing wrong with angels.
				1. Birth of Christ. Luke 2:9-15
				2. Temptations. Matthew 4:11
				3. Gethsemane. Luke 22:42-44
			3. But calling angels will not substitute for crucifixion when the will of God is for crucifixion. Matthew 26:54

Conclusion:

1. Jesus can help us take up the cross.
	1. Those who have avoided the cross.
		1. Cut ears, He can repair the damage. Luke 22:51
		2. Cut out, they came back. Acts 5:29
		3. Call angels, fulfill scriptures. Matthew 26:53, 54
	2. Those who choose the cross, resurrection. Romans 6:6; 1 Corinthians 15:58
2. How will you and I face the cross?