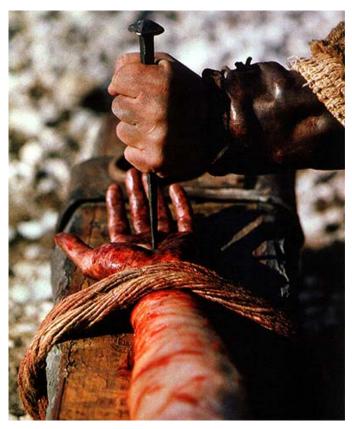*"And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And* **He That Taketh Not His Cross***, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life* **For My Sake** *shall find it."* *Matthew 10:36-39* KJV

The Romans used to make those condemned to die by crucifixion carry their own cross to the place of their death. A man who took up a cross was a "dead man walking." It was an execution. We are instructed to take up our cross and follow Christ. *"Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof."* Crucifixion was a slow agonizing death. It used a man's natural instinct of survival to torture him. Men were affixed in such a way that their arm and neck muscles would actually asphyxiate them with their own body weight. The only relief they could get was to push down repeatedly against the spikes in their feet to breathe. This continued, often for days, because the body's will to live is strong. Many believers have yet to crucify the flesh and its lusts. We must heed the plea; *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a LIVING SACRIFICE, Holy, acceptable UNTO GOD, which is your reasonable service."* Just as Christ defeated death by dying, believers must crucify lust to live. *"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who Loved me, and gave Himself for me."* Immortality came with a price; the death of Christ. He doesn't want us to die for Him, but to live! *"I am come that they might have Life, and that they might have it MORE ABUNDANTLY. I am the Good Shepherd: the Good Shepherd giveth His Life for the sheep. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have Power to lay it down, and I have Power to take it again. As many as received Him, to them gave He Power to become the sons of God, even to THEM THAT BELIEVE on His Name"* We must daily die to our lusts if we are to live unto God! *"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify (crucify) the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."* It's a long slow process, but the reward is eternity with Christ!

> The Cross was death to Christ our Lord,
> And those who trust upon His Word,
> For we must follow His Command,
> And not allow our lusts to stand. –CGP

Sin dies hard, because our body is *"carnal, sold under sin."* We must endure the agony of pushing up to breathe the Breath of God until He resurrects our body and *"we shall all be changed!"*

> *"Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but WE SHALL ALL BE CHANGED, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the Last Trump: for the Trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."* 1 Corinthians 15:51-52 KJV