



The Padded Cross

Well, here I am, Lord. you said, "Take up your cross," and I'm here to do it. It's not easy, You know, this self-denial thing. I mean to go through with it though, **yes, Sir!** I'll bet You wish more people were willing disciples like me. I've counted the cost and surrendered my life even though, like the song says, "It's not an easy road . . ."

Do you mind if I look over these crosses? I'd kind of like a new one. Not that I'm fussy, You understand, but a young disciple should be able to *relate*, You know. I was wondering -- are there any that are padded, and maybe covered with something like vinyl? I'm thinking of attracting others, You see, and if I could show them a comfortable cross I'm sure I could win a lot more. I ought to keep relevant with how people are feeling and all. And I need something durable so I can treasure it always. Oh, is there one that's sort of flat so it would fit under my coat? One shouldn't be too obvious. Surely You don't want me to stand out and be different.

There doesn't seem to be much choice here. Just coarse, rough wood. I mean *that would hurt!* Don't you have something that looks a little nicer, Lord? I can tell you right now, none of my friends are going to be impressed by this poor workmanship! They might think I've gone nuts! And my family will be totally mortified!

What's that? It's either one of these or forget the whole thing? But Lord, I want to be Your disciple. I mean, just being with You, that's all that counts; but life has to have a balance, too . . .

But You don't understand, nobody lives that way today. Who's going to be attracted by this self-denial bit? I mean, **I** want to, but let's not overdo it. If I get fanatical they'll haul me off to a mental institution -- know what I mean?

I mean, being a disciple is challenging and exciting, and I want to do it, but I do have some individual rights, You know! Like, no blood, OK? I just can't stand the thought of that, Lord.

. . . Lord? **Jesus**. . . ? Now where do you suppose He went?

"And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads . . . These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." Revelation 14:1, 4

