

Simon of Cyrene



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**A chance encounter with Jesus
can change a person's life.**

**Has your life changed since you
began following Jesus?**

**Study the Physical Evidence and
the Circumstantial Evidence**



Physical Evidence

Matthew 27:31-33 31 And when they had mocked Him, they took the robe off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him away to be crucified.

32 Now as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. Him they compelled to bear His cross.

33 And when they had come to a place called Golgotha, that is to say, Place of a Skull

Physical Evidence

- Came out of the palace of Herod
- Compelled
- **Matthew 5:41** And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two.
- No Roman or Jew wanted to carry the cross
- Why did they pick Simon?

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Luke 23:24-26 24 So Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they requested.

25 And he released to them the one they requested, who for rebellion and murder had been thrown into prison; but he delivered Jesus to their will.

26 Now as they led Him away, they laid hold of a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, who was coming from the country, and on him they laid the cross that he might bear it after Jesus.

27 And a great multitude of the people followed Him, and women who also mourned and lamented Him.

Physical Evidence

- He walked behind Jesus
- He was trapped in the crowd
- He was aware of what was going on

Physical Evidence

Mark 15:20-22 20 And when they had mocked Him, they took the purple off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him out to crucify Him.

21 Then they compelled a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, the father of Alexander and Rufus, as he was coming out of the country and passing by, to bear His cross.

22 And they brought Him to the place Golgotha, which is translated, Place of a Skull.

Physical Evidence

- He was just passing by
- He was going out of the country
- This was a chance encounter
- Mark names his two sons, Alexander and Rufus
- Why does Mark name the two sons?
- Mark is written to the Roman world – to Christians in Rome

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- IS THERE ANY MORE TO THIS STORY?

Circumstantial Evidence

- **Acts 11:19-20** 19 Now those who were scattered after the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to no one but the Jews only.
- 20 But some of them were men from Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they had come to Antioch, spoke to the Hellenists, preaching the Lord Jesus.

Circumstantial Evidence

- **Acts 13:1** Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.
- Barnabas is from Cyprus
- Lucius is from Cyrene
- Simon (called Niger – black) – Is this the same Simon of Cyrene?

Circumstantial Evidence

- **Acts 2:10** Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes,
- On Pentecost there were people from Cyrene
- They are included with those from Egypt and parts of Libya
- Was Simon present on Pentecost?

Circumstantial Evidence

- **Romans 16:13** Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.
- Paul had not been to Rome.
- Paul had met men from Cyrene in Antioch – Acts 11:20 and Acts 13:1
- How would Paul know Rufus and his mother?
- Is this Rufus the son of Simon?

Circumstantial Evidence

- Within the next 20 years north Africa would be one of 5 major centers of Christianity.
- Cyrene was in what is now Lybia (north Africa)
- Nearest large city – Alexandria which became one of the major centers of Christianity
- How did this happen?
- 2 possible – Ethiopian (Acts 8) and Simon of Cyrene
 - **Can we connect the dots?**

Lessons to Learn

- **The Bible is a fascinating book.**

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- **Make sure you don't just pass by Jesus.**

Lessons to Learn

- **WHAT IF:** You were in that crowd, compelled to carry the cross? How would you react?
- Anger, resentment, Why Me?
- Stand it awe at the faith of the people around Jesus? Become a believer?
- Would you go home and tell everyone?