

“THE OLD RUGGED CROSS”
1 Corinthians 1:18-25

Introduction:

1. One of the best loved hymns is “The Old Rugged Cross.”

“On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross,
The emblem of suffering and shame;
And I love that old cross where the dearest and best
For a world of lost sinners was slain.”
2. Other popular hymns express a similar sentiment:
 - a. “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross.”
 - b. “The Way of the Cross Leads Home.”
 - c. “At the Cross,” etc.
3. It is not the physical cross that is celebrated in these hymns, but the salvation that was accomplished by Jesus’ death.
 - a. The cross was a cruel instrument of capital punishment.
 - b. Some have made an idol of the cross (kissing the crucifix).
 - c. Others have made a fetish of it (a good luck charm such as a rabbit’s foot).
4. As the crescent is the symbol of Islam, so the cross has become the symbol of Christianity to the world.
5. What is the meaning of the cross in the Scriptures?

Discussion:

- I. OUR REDEMPTION FROM SIN WAS PURCHASED ON THE OLD RUGGED CROSS.
 - A. Two verses sum up what Jesus accomplished on the cross.

“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace” (Ephesians 1:7).

“... Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness - by whose stripes you were healed” (1 Peter 2:24).

B. Let’s look at the meaning of these verses:

- 1. All accountable people have sinned (Romans 3:23).**
- 2. Our sins separate us from God (Isaiah 59:1,2).**
- 3. The wages of sin is death (Gen. 2:16,17; Rom. 6:23).**
- 4. We are under a death sentence because of our sins, but Jesus paid the price for us (Romans 5:6-8).**

II. WE MUST BE CRUCIFIED IF WE WOULD FOLLOW JESUS.

A. Paul gave up the Law of Moses in order to follow Christ.

“For I through the Law died to the Law that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives 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” (Galatians 2:19,20).

B. What is Paul saying and what does it mean to us?

- 1. Under the Law Paul had a privileged position (Philippians 3:4-7).**
- 2. Salvation is not possible through the Law of Moses for no one can keep it perfectly (Galatians 3:21-25).**
- 3. Paul gave up all the things that were gain for him under the Law that he might have Christ.**
- 4. His old life had been crucified - put to death.**
- 5. He now lived for Christ trusting in Him for salvation.**

III. WE MUST GLORY IN THE CROSS, NOT IN OURSELVES.

- A. A Bible correspondence teacher who was kindly rebuked for teaching error responded by boasting of how many students she had taught.**
- B. Paul did not boast in what he had done, but what Christ did when He died for us on the cross.**

“But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation (*does avail*)” (Galatians 6:14,15).

IV. WE MUST BEAR OUR CROSS DAILY IN ORDER TO FOLLOW JESUS.

- A. Jesus clearly stated the cost of being His disciple.**

“If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul” (Matthew 16:24-26)?

- B. Note the specifics of discipleship:**

- 1. One must “*deny himself.*”**

- a. We must seek first the kingdom of God above all other things (Matthew 6:33).**
- b. We must have the “*mind of Christ*” (Phil. 2:5-11).**
- c. We must put the welfare of others before ours.**

“Be kindly affectionate to one another with

brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another” (Romans 12:10).

“Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem others better than himself” (Phil. 2:3).

- 2. One must take up his cross *daily* (Luke 9:23).**
 - a. This is not a literal cross (one man had rollers on his cross that he dragged behind him).**
 - b. We must follow Jesus every day because the Christian faith is a full time faith!**

C. The consequences of not being a disciple of Jesus are stated in the following verses (Matthew 16:25,26).

- 1. He who desires to save his life (lives it for himself) will lose eternal life.**
- 2. Whoever loses his life for Christ (gives it up in the service of Christ) will gain eternal life!**
- 3. “A wise person is the one who gives up that which he cannot keep in order to gain that which he cannot lose.”**

Conclusion:

- 1. The goal of embracing “the Old Rugged Cross” is stated in the chorus:**

**“So I’ll cherish the old rugged cross,
Till my trophies at last I lay down;
I will cling to the old rugged cross,
And exchange it some day for a crown.”**

- 2. Will you come to the One Who shed His blood on that “Old Rugged Cross” that you may have eternal life (Acts 2:36-38)?**

