

BIBLE TEACHING AND WORSHIP GUIDE



FOR THE HOME-BASED CHURCH

Produced Weekly

Remember the Cross
1 Corinthians 1:18—2:2

Copy this sheet for the Gathering Time, Bible Study, and Worship Experience leaders for the next meeting of the church.

Leaders' Responsibilities:

Important: Each person who will be leading one of the three parts of a session during a Unit of sessions needs to have access to the "Basic Information for Leading the Unit of Study". That information is often provided at the beginning of that Unit of sessions. The weekly session "Background" located in the Teacher Preparation is much more specific to that day's study.

1. **The Gathering Time Leader** will gather all of the people together and help them prepare their minds and hearts for a wonderful worship experience before God. His/her responsibility is to introduce the congregation to the theme (content) and the Scripture that will be central to their worship experience for the day.

2. **The Bible Study Leader** will then help the people understand what the Scriptures have to say and teach us about the content of the study for the day. He/she will guide the people to make a general application of the study (ie: How does this Bible study apply to people today?)

3. **The Worship Time Leader** has the responsibility to use the theme and Scriptures to guide the congregation to make personal commitments to God's will for each one in regard to the study for the day. He/she will use others to lead in the music, taking the offering, ministry moment comments, and other activities and parts of the **Worship Time** that can aid in participatory worship.

Prior to this Coming Session:

Gathering Time Leader:

Make copies of *The Old Rugged Cross* from the copy given at the end of the worship time.

Bible Study Leader:

Have newsprint or white board for youth to use.

Worship Time Leader:

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Ask the person leading the music in your church to include **The Wonderful Cross** to be sung at the beginning and ending of the worship time.

Music Sources:

The Old Rugged Cross, *The Worship Hymnal* #230 and found in many hymnals, CCLI # 19722 Public Domain

The Power of the Cross (Oh, to see the Dawn), *The Worship Hymnal* # 232, CCLI #4490766

Must Jesus Bear the Cross Alone, *The Worship Hymnal* #243, CCLI #121627

The Wonderful Cross, *The Worship Hymnal* #239, CCLI #3148435

1

Copy this section for the Gathering Time leader.

Gathering Time: (Suggested time: 15 minutes)

Remember the Cross

Focal Text

1 Corinthians 1:18—2:2

Background Text

1 Corinthians 1:18—2:2

Main Idea

The cross of Christ offers a right relationship with God and our fellow Christians.

Question to Explore

What is the place of the cross of Christ in our relationship with God and with our fellow Christians?

Teaching Aim

To guide the church to identify the meaning of the cross of Christ for our relationship with God and with our fellow Christians.

Gathering together:

Sing **The Power of the Cross (Oh, to see the Dawn)**, *The Worship Hymnal* # 232, CCLI #4490766

Must Jesus Bear the Cross Alone, *The Worship Hymnal* #243, CCLI #121627
or other songs about the cross

First thoughts:

Sing **The Old Rugged Cross**. Give the words of the hymn to each participant. Have individuals read a stanza and explain what the words mean to him/her.

On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross,
The emblem of suff'ring and shame;
And I love that old cross where the dearest and best
For a world of lost sinners was slain.

Oh, that old rugged cross,
So despised by the world,
Has a wondrous attraction for me;
For the dear Lamb of God left His glory above,
To bear it to dark Calvary.

In the old rugged cross,
Stained with blood so divine,
Such a wonderful beauty I see;
For 'twas on that old cross
Jesus suffered and died,
To pardon and sanctify me.

To the old rugged cross I will ever be true,
Its shame and reproach gladly bear;
Then He'll call me some day to my home far away,
Where His glory forever I'll share.

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.

Words and music by George Bennard, 1873-1960 Public Domain

Closing the Gathering Time:

Today we will focus on the cross as we study 1 Corinthians 1:18-2:2. Jews and Greeks in Paul's day found the message of the cross difficult to accept. Our friends, neighbours and even loved ones often find it difficult to accept as well. We, like Paul, must be faithful to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified.

Take time at this point to mention items of prayer concern for the church, announcements of ministry or activities, and anything else that needs to be shared with or by the congregation. Pray for these needs. Remember to praise God in prayer.

Break time! Take five minutes between sessions. Encourage children to use the washroom so that they won't need to leave during the Bible Study time.

Distribute youth/adult Bible study outlines or paper for note-taking, if available.

Also hand out the activity sheets for preschool and younger children to use during Bible Study and/or worship.

2

Copy this section for the Bible Study leader.

Note to the Bible Study Leader: Suggested teaching time for the Bible study should be about 35 minutes. Use the “Teacher Preparation” for your personal study during the week before the session. Use the “Bible Study Plan” for the actual session.

Teacher Preparation

Remember the Cross

Focal Text

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Background Text

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Question to Explore

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Teaching Aim

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Introduction to your personal study:

A recent graduate of a small seminary was in charge of worship at a Canadian church which had in its congregation a wide variety of cultural groups represented. As well, the church is a multi-generational church with a larger than usual number of older worshippers. The young man who had come from South Korea to study in Canada still considered speaking in English a challenge. Although he was not a trained musician, he had a great natural gift for singing. On one morning, he sang the old hymn, *The Old Rugged Cross*. His wife, a talented musician, accompanied him on the cello. A young woman played the piano and harmonized on the last verse. As he sang words familiar to some and less familiar to others, members all over the worship area wept openly. The beauty of the music, the profound meaning of the words, the reality of the power of the cross spoke as it has on many occasions.

As you prepare to study for teaching, read or sing the words of the hymn, **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.

Oh, that old rugged cross,
So despised by the world,
Has a wondrous attraction for me;
For the dear Lamb of God left His glory above,
To bear it to dark Calvary.

In the old rugged cross,
Stained with blood so divine,
Such a wonderful beauty I see;
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To the old rugged cross I will ever be true,
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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.

Words and music by George Bennard, 1873-1960 Public Domain

Background:

Please ask for and read the information contained in the **"Introduction"** article found at the beginning of this series of Bible Study and Worship sessions (Bible Teaching #13). The person who downloaded this session should have that material for you, as well.

The cross was central in the preaching/teaching of Paul. He says, "For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified" (1 Corinthians 2:2). In another context he said, "May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Galatians 6:14).

From verse 18 to the end of the first chapter, the Greek word for wisdom *Sophia* is used fourteen times. An overemphasis on worldly wisdom was at the heart of the problem in Corinth. Approaching life from the perspective of human wisdom is contrasted with preaching on the cross. (See Brian Harbour, *Bible Book Study Commentary on 1 Corinthians*, Nashville, Tennessee, The Sunday School Board, 1991, p. 14).

“Originally the Greek word sophist meant a wise man in the good sense; but it came to mean a man with a clever mind and cunning tongue, a mental acrobat, a man who with glittering and persuasive rhetoric could make the worse appear the better reason. It meant a man who would spend endless hours discussing hair-splitting trifles, a man who had no real interest in solutions but who simply gloried in the stimulus of ‘the mental hike’. It meant a man who gloried in a nimble and cunning brain and in a silver tongue and in an admiring audience.” (Barclay, William, *The Daily Study Bible: The Letters to the Corinthians*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1956, p. 21).

People like this speak on talk shows and write books which sell well in today’s world. As Christians we want to be continually learning both about the wisdom of God and the knowledge available in science, art, music etc. But we must be discerning consumers of the information available to us. We tend to be attracted to the colourful book cover, the catchy title or the controversial subject matter. We are also drawn to powerful or popular speakers. One of the great challenges for today’s Christian is discerning what teachers to follow.

“In bold and forceful language Paul contrasts the wisdom of God, which seems folly to the sophisticated Corinthians, with the worldly wisdom that they so admired and that was so ineffective” (Morris, Leon, *1 Corinthians. Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*, Leicester, England: Intervarsity Press, 1990, p. 43).

“If we study the four great sermons in the Book of Acts (Acts 2:14-30; 3:12-16; 4:8-12; 10:36-43) we find that there are certain constant elements in the Christian preaching. (1) There is the claim that the great promised time of God has come. (2) There is a summary of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. (3) There is a claim that all this was the fulfillment of prophecy. (4) There is the assertion that Jesus will come again. (5) There is an urgent invitation to men to repent and to receive the promised gift of the Holy Spirit” (Barclay, p. 19).

The Disciples’ Study Bible (Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 1988) contains the following comment on 1:18 “Salvation is God’s atonement for sin through the cross of Christ. That message is the dynamite (Greek *dunamis*) of God which transforms those who are being saved. Paul spoke here of salvation in the present tense. God’s salvation is past (justification), present (sanctification) and future (glorification). God has acted to save us, and we have accepted salvation through faith in the past. We are experiencing salvation daily through the power of the Spirit in the present. We will know the fullness of salvation at the resurrection.”

Verse 22 speaks of Jews demanding miraculous signs and Greeks looking for wisdom. During the time in which Paul was writing there were many false Messiahs who had beguiled people into accepting them by the promise of wonders. In A.D. 45 a man called Theudas had emerged. He had persuaded thousands of people to abandon their homes and follow him out to the Jordan, by promising him that, at his word of command, the Jordan would divide and he would lead them dry shod across. In A.D. 54 a man from Egypt arrived in Jerusalem, claiming to be the Prophet. He persuaded 30,000 people to follow him out into the Mount of Olives by promising that at his word of command the walls of Jerusalem would fall down. (See Barclay, p. 20). Certainly, looking for signs and wonders is not limited to the Jews of Paul's days. Modern day false teachers exist and people follow them.

The intellectual Greeks could not imagine a God who felt emotion. The first characteristic of God was *apatheia*. This was a stronger word than *apathy*; it meant a total inability to feel. For God to feel would indicate that man has influenced God and is therefore greater than God. The very idea of incarnation, of God becoming a man, was revolting to the Greek mind. (Barclay, pp. 20-21).

So that no one can boast God has provided a way that people can have a relationship with Him that involves no human effort or achievement (v. 29). He uses weak people to influence powerful people and unlearned people to influence the intellectuals. He has provided in Jesus everything that is necessary for people to have a relationship with Him (vs. 1:26—2:2).

In these verses Paul glories in the fact that for the most part the church was composed of the simplest and the humblest of people. There were many slaves, but certainly not all early believers were slaves. There were people of influence as well. Dionysius at Athens (Acts 17:34); Sergius Paulus, the proconsul of Crete (Acts 13: 6-12); the noble ladies at Thessalonica and Bercoa (Acts 17: 4, 12); Erastus, the chamberlain, probably of Corinth (Romans 16:23). In the time of Nero, Pomponia Graecina, the wife of Plautius, the conqueror of Britain, was martyred for her Christianity. In the latter half of the first century, the cousin of the Emperor himself was martyred as a Christian. But many of the early believers were simple and humble people (Barclay, p. 23). Paul rejoices in this fact.

The slave was a living tool – a thing and not a person at all. A master could fling out an old slave as he would throw away an old spade or hoe. He could amuse himself with them; he could kill them. Marriage did not exist; even the children belonged to the master. The glory of Christianity changed that; in Christ all people are sons and daughters of God.

The horrible reality that the slave trade exists and is growing in this century must be addressed. The very heart of the gospel is the worth of every person. For God so loved the world that whosoever believes in him shall be saved.

Paul makes sure we do not overlook God's plan in all of this: "you were called"; "God chose the weak things to shame the strong. He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things to that no one could boast." God was the initiator.

In chapter 2: 1-2, Paul emphasizes the plain message that he came to preach – Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

We speak of the post modern mind as if the rejection of truth were a reality of the 21st century. We act as if sharing the gospel today is harder than any time in history. We wonder if there is any hope for the church. As we examine today's passage, we must realize that people have always rejected the gospel. Yet we continue to preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

Paul uses the expression "the message of the cross" in v. 18. This is the theme of this passage. Consider several things about the message of the cross.

Focusing on the Meaning

Criticisms of the message of the cross: 1) It is foolish! A Jew dying on a cross can provide forgiveness of sins for everyone? This is the objection of the philosophers and intellectuals. 2) It is weak! A Messiah suffering and dying? The Messiah is to conquer his enemies and reign in power. This is the rejection of the Jews (vs. 18-25).

The answer of the message of the cross: Christ is the wisdom of God and the power of God (v. 24). People were not able to find God through human wisdom. Also, in spite of all the miracles in the history of the Jews they wanted more and bigger ones to convince them of the truth.

God's raising Jesus from the dead never to die again is a demonstration of the greatest wisdom (God declared all guilty so that all could be forgiven the same way) and the greatest power (coming alive again after death has taken place).

The message of the cross is, "Christ died for our sins...was buried...(and) he was raised on the third day." (1 Corinthians 15:3).

Where does baptism fit in? Baptism provides the believer an opportunity for a public declaration of faith. By being put under the water and being raised out of the water he gives a picture of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. By Paul's discussion (vs. 13-17) we can conclude that baptism is not a part of the salvation experience and that it does not matter who baptizes the new believer.

Your Goal as the Leader of this Bible Study:

This focus on the cross will speak to believers and non-believers alike. Christ died on the cross for our sins; he was buried and then rose from the grave. It is an amazing

story that must be believed by faith. Our topic “Remember the Cross” calls us to do just that – remember what the cross means individually, to the Christian community and to the lost world.

The aim of the study is: To guide the church to identify the meaning of the cross of Christ for our relationship with God and with our fellow Christians. You may need to make additional emphasis on the impact the cross has on our relationships to others.

For Personal Reflection:

What have I learned from this study?

What personal experience does this lesson bring to mind?

What is one action I will take this week to apply this Scripture passage to my life?

Bible Study Plan (Suggested time: 35 minutes)

Remember the Cross

Regroup the church after the Gathering Time and break by singing a chorus that young children can relate to—or another praise chorus if your congregation does not have children. Children who go to their own Bible teaching session should stay with the group until after this song. Have the preschoolers and children accompany the hymn with rhythm sticks, maracas, bells, etc.

Begin by helping the group locate the Focal Text in their Bibles. Also, share with them the Main Idea to be learned from the Scriptures, and the Questions to be Explored by the group.

Focal Text

1 Corinthians 1:18—2:2

Background Text

1 Corinthians 1:18—2:2

Main Idea

The cross of Christ offers a right relationship with God and our fellow Christians.

Question to Explore

What is the place of the cross of Christ in our relationship with God and with our fellow Christians?

Teaching Aim

To guide the church to identify the meaning of the cross of Christ for our relationship with God and with our fellow Christians.

Connect with Life:

Introduce the Bible study with this: Most human beings wonder if there is a God and if there is can we know Him or have a relationship with Him. People wonder if there is life after death. If so, is there a different destination for good people and bad people? People wonder how a person can be assured of blessing after death and not damnation. This study provides some answers for those questions.

Guide the Study:

Have someone read the entire passage: 1 Corinthians 1:18—2:2

From the background material discuss the Greek attitude toward wisdom.

Ask: How do we decide what information will guide our teaching/learning process? (Discuss the impact of information technology, the popularity of some preachers and teachers, the number of Christian books available). Note: If this question is not relevant in your culture or environment, move on to the next point.

Ask: How important is regular, consistent Bible teaching/learning?

Ask: In the light of so much information being available, how important is regular, consistent Bible teaching/learning?

Search the group for an answer: Why would the Greeks consider the preaching of Christ foolishness? (Salvation requires simple faith, not great learning. The concept of Christ dying for the sin of the world is difficult for the logical, rational mind to accept).

Comment: We face the same challenge as Paul as we share the gospel in today's world.

Have someone read again Verse 18.

Encourage discussion on what is meant by the "message of the cross".

As appropriate include the following elements given by Barclay.

(1) There is the claim that the great promised time of God has come. (2) There is a summary of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. (3) There is a claim that all this was the fulfillment of prophecy. (4) There is the assertion that Jesus will come again. (5) There is an urgent invitation to men to repent and to receive the promised gift of the Holy Spirit" (Barclay, p. 19).

However, do not spend too much time discussing this because the message of the cross, "Christ died for our sins...was buried...(and) he was raised on the third day." (1 Corinthians 15:3) is not difficult to summarize.

Have someone read verse 22.

Discuss the desire of the Jews for miraculous signs.

Inquire: Do people today see for signs? (They look for authoritarian leaders to say what is right and wrong; they flock to see the unusual and exciting; they consult astrology and are interested in the occult)

Ask someone to read verse 23.

Comment: This is a powerfully encouraging verse which we should add to those we commit to memory.

Have someone reread verses 26-31 and briefly summarize the teaching here.

Comment that many slaves were Christians although some important people were Christians as well.

Look for comments on: What does Paul mean when he says “so that no one may boast before him”?

Return to read verse 26.

Explain: Throughout the New Testament we read passages referred to our being called. Emphasize the initiative of God in drawing us to himself.

Have someone read verses 1-2 of Chapter 2.

Question the group about how Paul described his ministry to the Corinthians.

Involve the group in discussing the importance of Paul's declaration in verse 2 and its meaning for us today.

Explain that for Paul the basic message people need to hear and believe is that Christ died for our sins; he was buried, and God raised him from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:3-4).

Tell the group: Jesus said, “***I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through me***” (John 14:6).

Question: **Do any of you ever find yourselves having difficulty accepting this – that there is only one way to know God and have eternal life?** Encourage discussion.

Explain: In a way, public criticism is correct. Born again Christianity is “exclusive” is both true and false. The Biblical teaching that there is only one way to God (through faith in Jesus the Christ) is true. What is false is the assumption that this way is not available to everyone. This belief in only one way to God allows all people the opportunity to know God. It is not a matter of doing enough good deeds or participating in enough religious ceremonies. It is a matter of believing Jesus took the punishment for what we did wrong and accepting God's offer of forgiveness because of what Jesus did.

Make this observation: Most people believe there are many ways to God and that all religions lead to God. They believe that as long as a person is sincere it does not

matter what he/she believes. When they are presented with the message about Jesus they often think Christians are narrow- minded and bigoted.

Inquire if any of them have encountered this attitude.

Now ask: What we are to do when that happens? Give opportunity for response. Allow for enough discussion for the suggestions to be thought through.

Make this observation: Anyone who believes in Jesus experiences a transformation. For some it is more dramatic than for others depending on the behaviour in which the person had been involved.

Ask if anyone would be willing to share with the group the change(s) Jesus has made in his/her life. Give opportunity for response, but do not press the issue. You might share your own story.

Point out that there have always been negative responses to the message about Jesus.

Also observe: There will always be people who will hear and believe.

Encourage Application:

If you have two or more youth, this is the time to give them the **Youth!!! Take Ten** page and allow them to move away from the adults and apply the lesson by and for themselves.

Encourage the people to be faithful in sharing their story trusting God to convince others of the truth.

Remind the group that the cross experience changes the way we relate to others. We share the gospel with those who do not know Christ. We love them. We also love our fellow Christians and seek to live harmoniously with them.

Ask someone to close the Bible study with a prayer for courage to regularly share the Good News of faith in Jesus, the Christ.

Take a five minute break to separate the Bible Study and Worship Time. Children may need to use the washroom again before worship.

Youth!!! Take Ten

Bible Study Application for Youth

You may wish to move away from the adults for the final five to ten minutes of the Bible study and help each other as youth to apply the lesson to your own needs.

Remember the Cross

1 Corinthians 1:18—2:2

A youth will lead the following activity and comments. No adults need to be present. If possible, teens should take turns in leading the application time.

Cross? Rugged? Old?

You may not be as familiar with the hymn **The Old Rugged Cross** as older members of your group. There are, however, many praise songs which speak of the cross.

Talk together about some of your favourites.

What words are especially meaningful to you.

Write phrases from the songs that directly or indirectly refer to the cross on which Jesus was murdered. Use newsprint or a whiteboard if available.

Consider singing one of your favourites in the worship time.

Worship Time (Suggested time: 30 minutes)***Remember the Cross***
1 Corinthians 1:18—2:2**Beginning the Service:**

The Wonderful Cross, *The Worship Hymnal* #239, CCLI #3148435
Other songs about the cross

Offering:**Praying for the World:**

A 42 year ruler, Mahomad Kad–hafi (Muammar Gaddafi), was killed in Libya in October, 2011. Many people alive in Libya have never lived under another ruler for he was the 4th longest-serving non-royal leader since 1900 and the longest serving Arab leader. Pray for the government of Libya as they seek to provide leadership in a fragile environment of uncertainty. Pray that the message of the good news of Christ will reach many in this country.

Sharing Guide:

This sharing guide is written to assist the person who directs the worship time to reemphasize the teaching for the day and help guide the congregation to respond to God's call and will for their lives in regard to the scripture studied. The leader may choose to follow the guide closely. Or, he or she may wish to only use it to give direction and a concept for preparing an original message. The leader is free to choose other ways to communicate and share the concepts presented here.

The Wonderful Cross

Leader: Begin by quoting this:

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died
My richest gain I count but loss
And pour contempt on all my pride

Forbid it Lord that I should boast
Save in the death of Christ my God
All the vain things that charm me most
I sacrifice them to His blood

See from His head His hands His feet
Sorrow and love flow mingled down
Did ever such love and sorrow meet
Or thorns compose so rich a crown

Were the whole realm of nature mine
That were an offering far too small
Love so amazing so divine
Demands my soul my life my all

CCLI Song No. 2648981
© Public Domain
Isaac Watts

The words of the old song **When I Survey the Wondrous Cross** by Issac Watts have been sung by Christians since he first wrote them in the 17th century. Isaac Watts (17 July 1674 – 25 November 1748) was an [English hymnwriter](#), [theologian](#) and [logician](#). A prolific and popular hymnwriter, he was recognised as the "Father of English [Hymnody](#)", credited with some 750 hymns. Many of his hymns remain in use today, and have been translated into many languages.

Dozens of other songs have incorporated the ideas or stanzas from the original **When I Survey the Wondrous Cross**. One of those is written by Chris Tomlin, J. D. Walt, Jesse Reeves and Lowell Mason. Perhaps your group has just sung that song and the words are yet in your mind

O the wonderful cross
Bids me come and die and find
That I may truly live

O the wonderful cross
O the wonderful cross
All who gather here by grace
Draw near and bless Your name

CCLI Song No. 3148435

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Chris Tomlin | Isaac Watts | J. D. Walt | Jesse Reeves | Lowell Mason

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Oh, the wonderful cross.

Yet the cross was anything but wonderful to the Jewish people. Paul reminds us of that in Galatians 3:13 “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us for it is written: ‘Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree’”. He refers to Deuteronomy 21:22-23 “If a man guilty of a capital offense is put to death and his body is hung on a tree, you must not leave his body on the tree overnight. Be sure to bury him that same day, because anyone who is hung on a tree is under God’s curse.”

Jesus on the cross was a horrific thing for a Jew to contemplate. Only a murderer would be crucified. That was a just punishment for a horrible deed and was a justifiable punishment in the Jewish mind. It is true that the Roman government had crucified Jews who opposed them. Still, few Jews could imagine that an innocent person could be crucified.

Today’s modern society considers the possibility that the justice system could make mistakes and some countries have outlawed the death penalty for that reason. But that is very recent thought. For centuries, punishment by death for serious crime was accepted as the only way for a society to function.

Jesus on the cross was not a wonderful thing for the Jew. “To the Jew the fact of the crucifixion, so far from proving that Jesus was the Son of God, disproved it finally. It may seem an extraordinary fact, but even with Isaiah 53 before their eyes, the Jews had never dreamed of a suffering Messiah” (Barclay, p. 20).

Nor is a wonderful thing for most people in the world today. It is still “foolishness to those who are perishing” (1 Corinthians 1:18). But for us “who are being saved it is the power of God”.

We may enjoy wearing a cross on a chain around our neck or rejoice to see a cross on a church. Recently this writer parked in a little used parking lot behind a discount store. It was a surprise to see in the distance the cross on the top of a church. It was especially comforting and meaningful in that context.

The fact of the cross is the power of God. Christ's sacrifice on the cross paid the price for our sin. It provided the way for our relationship with God to be made. For that reason it is the wondrous cross. The horrible means of death became the way to life.

We rejoice today in the wondrous cross.

Call to Commitment:

Sing **The Wonderful Cross** again.

Concluding the Service:

Have someone lead in prayer, thanking God for Jesus who willingly died on a cross that we could live eternally.

Make copies to be used in the Gathering Time

The Old Rugged Cross

On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross,
The emblem of suff'ring and shame;
And I love that old cross where the dearest and best
For a world of lost sinners was slain.

Oh, that old rugged cross,
So despised by the world,
Has a wondrous attraction for me;
For the dear Lamb of God left His glory above,
To bear it to dark Calvary.

In the old rugged cross,
Stained with blood so divine,
Such a wonderful beauty I see;
For 'twas on that old cross
Jesus suffered and died,
To pardon and sanctify me.

To the old rugged cross I will ever be true,
Its shame and reproach gladly bear;
Then He'll call me some day to my home far away,
Where His glory forever I'll share.

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.

(George Bennard, Public Domain)