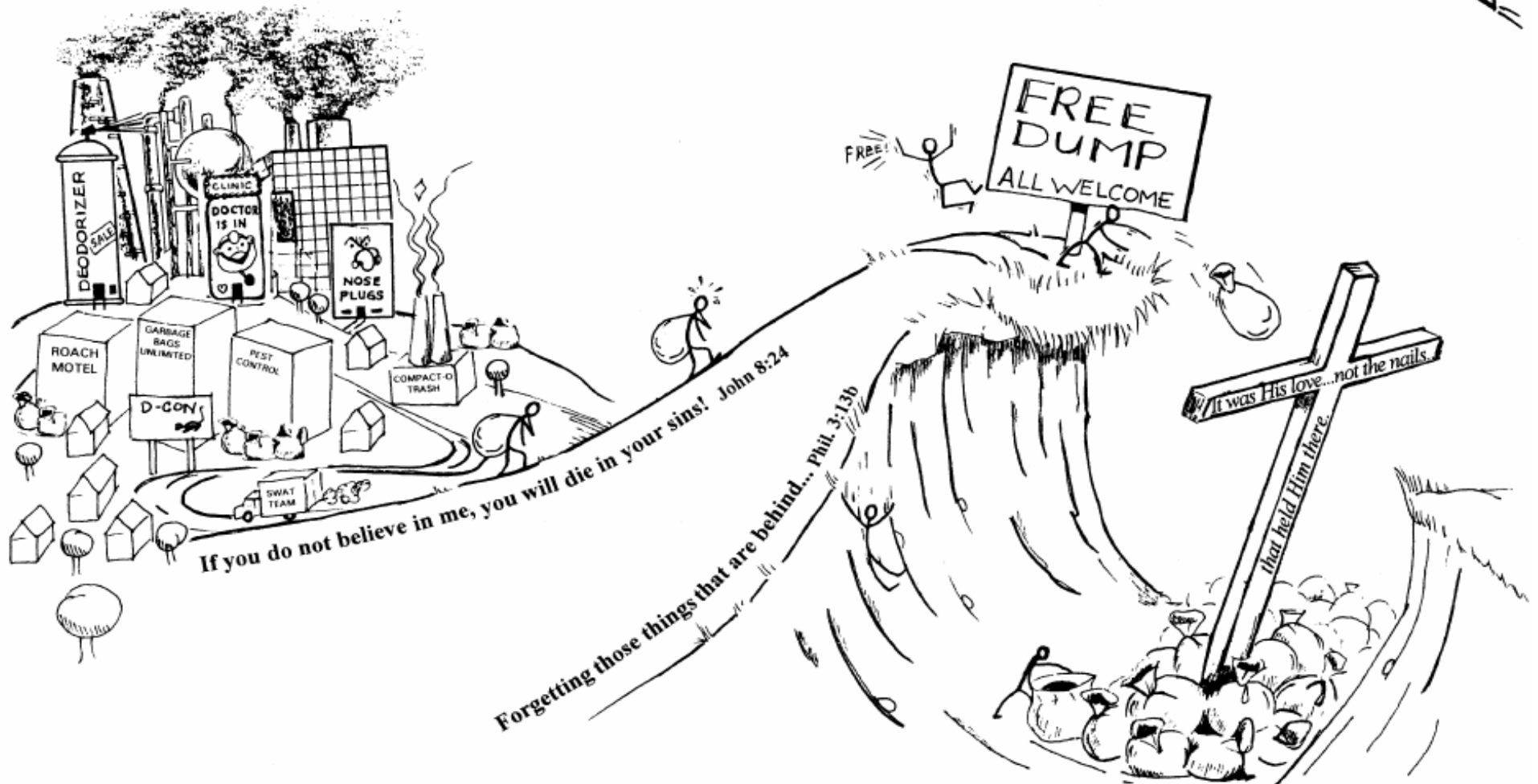


DUMP IT! AT THE CROSS

Have you forgotten the cleansing of your old sins...? 2 Pet. 1:9

Such were some of you, but you are washed... 1 Cor. 6:11



Foolishness? Power of God! Foolishness? Power of God! Foolishness? Power of God! Foolishness? Power!

Dump It At The Cross

“He carried the burden of our sins in his own body, so that we might abandon our sin. It was the suffering that He bore which has healed you” (1 Peter 2:24).

“Remember that you were at that time far from Christ...you were in the world without hope and without God. But now in Christ Jesus ye who were so far away, through the blood of Christ are with us inside the circle of God’s love in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:12-13).

“But now, after you have learned to know God, or rather, after God came to know you as His own, how can you turn back to the weak and helpless elemental false gods, whose slaves you want to be once more” (Gal. 4:9).

“But I do concentrate on this, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before...” (Phil. 3:13b).

“For whoever lacks these qualities is blind--or short-sighted--and has chosen to forget that he has been purified from his sins of the past” (2 Peter 1:9).

“And such were some of you, but now your sins are washed away, you are set apart to God, and He has accepted you because of what the Lord Jesus and the Spirit of our God has done for you” (1 Cor. 6:11).

“And to you who were once dead...to you God gave Life in giving life to Christ! He pardoned all our sins!” (Col. 3:13).

“I said therefore to you, that you shall die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am He, you shall die in your sins” (John 8:24).

“For the preaching of the cross is to them who are perishing foolishness, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God” (1 Cor. 1:18).

Note: Selected from various translations from The Word; Mathis Publishers.

GRACE for the Rest of Your Life

DUMP IT AT THE CROSS!

PRESENT-TENSE GRACE: Ignorant of Provision; Free Provision Available; Scavenging Prohibited; Go and Tell!

Portrayed on this card is the following:

Let's suppose a city was being built according to the city planners. Careful surveying determined the location of the roads, houses, businesses, parks, schools, etc. Every detail was carefully blueprinted. Strategically located at one end of the city, far out of sight and up on a knoll, provision was made for the city dump. When the construction was complete, people started moving in and businesses started booming. However, one important detail was neglected—no one was notified where the trash could be disposed. Over time, the people gathered up their garbage, piled it up at the curbs and in alleys, doing the best they could with it on their own. Other businesses started up to help deal with the problem: Compact-O-Trash. Pest Control. Swat Teams. Roach Motel. Bags Unlimited. De-odorizer and Nose Plug Factories. The list went on.

However, the problem grew increasingly worse. Other businesses were created to handle the increasing stench and emotional strain. Human Counseling. Support Groups. Crisis Management. All kinds of well-meaning people tried to address the garbage problem. Some even brought in cats from other cities to handle the menacing rodent overpopulation.

One innovative person wrapped his garbage in a gift box complete with ribbons and purposely left it in his car. As he had hoped, when he returned to his car, it was gone!

Ignorant of Provision

All the while, the city planners had calculated the dump deep enough so that it would handle the refuse for years to come. Adequate provision was available! All was carefully engineered. However, one thing was lacking—no one was notified of its existence. ***And the garbage continued to pile up.*** Town meetings were called trying to find new solutions. ***And the garbage continued to pile up.*** As time went on, a few “happened” upon the dump and returned to the city informing the people. Others tried to prove the existence of the dump by sending out flyers to every home and business. Some listened and followed, but others did not; they were too preoccupied with the growing crisis. ***And the garbage continued to pile up.***

Free Provision Available

Note on the card: we see one figure climbing up the knoll carrying a large bundle, and another figure dumping his bag of trash down the embankment. He is excited! He must tell others! There is enough room here for all the garbage of the town! How sad it was that few there were that found it! But how grateful were those who had found it! What a relief! What a WELCOME sight! And, it is FREE!

Jesus stated it simply, “If you do not believe in me, you will die in your sins [garbage]” (Jn. 8:24). So, can we conclude that if we do believe in Him, we won't die in our sins [garbage]? Is it as simple as that? Sounds like FOOLISHNESS? Yes, to those who

do not believe, but to us who believe, it is the POWER OF GOD (1 Cor. 1:18). “When Jesus Christ died for you, it was as if all the trash cans of the world were dumped on His head.” Those 22 words changed the life of Pam Moore who assisted Corrie ten Boom after the latter suffered a stroke.

Evangelist Paul Rader often used the following example, “Imagine if you will, for a moment, that God took a sponge and sopped up all the sins of the whole world; then placed it over Jesus’ head and squeezed out all the sins of the whole world onto Him—including yours and mine.”

Notice the cross at the base of the dump. Jesus invites us to **“COME UNTO ME”** (Matt. 11:28). Why is it so hard to come? Oswald Chambers wrote, “Is it not humiliating to be told that we must come to Jesus! Think of the things we will not come to Jesus Christ about. If you want to know how real you are, test yourself by these words—‘**Come to Me.**’ In every degree in which you are not real, you will dispute rather than come, you will quibble rather than come, you will go through sorrow rather than come, you will do anything rather than come the last lap of unutterable foolishness—Just as I am.”

There is still room at the cross for everyone’s garbage! How few take advantage of the provision!

Since there is a place for all the garbage, we need not be creative and imaginative to find ways to handle it on our own. Why not come to the more than adequate place provided at no charge. Why delay and try to do it our own way? *“Jesus carried our sins in His own body on the cross”* (1 Pet. 2:24). **It was His love—not the nails—who held Him there.** *“Herein is love, not that we loved Him, but that He loved us, and sent his Son to be the atoning victim for our sin”* (1 Jn. 4:10). *“Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us”* (1 Jn. 3:16). *“God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, shall not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved”* (Jn. 3:16-17).

“God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself” (2 Cor. 5:19). To reconcile means re-connect or re-unite. The Greek word “katallasso” means reconcile and by placing the prefix “apo” before “katallasso,” it emphasizes the perfection of the reconnection. God took the initiative in reconciliation. **All is complete on God’s side! Our part is to COME to Him.** There is no more action needed on His part, but His invitation remains open for us to respond and **COME!**

The following quotes are from Oswald Chambers:

SIN is not man’s problem, but God’s. God has taken the problem of sin into His own hands and solved it, and the proof that He has is the cross of Calvary. The cross is the cross of God. On the ground of the Redemption I can *“wash my robes, and make them white in the blood of the Lamb.”* ...Are we thinking along this line, or on the pagan line which makes out that the basis of things is rational, and leaves out God, and Jesus Christ, and the Redemption altogether?

“SIN is a red-handed mutiny against God. The climax of sin is that it crucified Jesus Christ, and what was true in the history of God on the earth will be true in your history

and in mine. In our mental outlook we have to reconcile ourselves to the fact of sin as the only explanation as to why Jesus Christ came, and as the explanation of the grief and sorrow in life.”

Scavenging Prohibited

The Old Rugged Cross is still the only final resting place or closure for our sins and other baggage. How wonderful to enjoy relief and freedom as we utilize the provision. But wait! Do you see the figure sliding down the embankment? What is he doing? Perhaps he is following his friend who is already down near the cross picking through his already dumped garbage to “investigate,” “dissect” and “analyze” it.

Why do you suppose he is doing that? What kind of satisfaction is he receiving from picking through it again, analyzing and dissecting every piece? The Apostle Paul encourages us to “*forget those things that are behind*” (Phil 3:13); he asks, “*how can you turn back to the weak and helpless elemental false gods*” (Gal. 4:9).

Note the airplanes on top right of card pulling banners to serve as reminders. Paul reminds us that “*such were some of you, but you are washed*” (1 Cor. 6:11). Peter also adds his reminder, “*Have you forgotten the cleansing of your old sins*” (2 Pet. 1:9). Why not enjoy the more than adequate place provided at no charge. The way of salvation is FREE; and the way of sanctification (daily life) is the same way...FREE! “*How soon we are removed from the simplicity that is in Christ*” (2 Cor. 11:3). If there is a place sufficient for our “garbage/baggage,” why should we let it go to waste (pun intended), by not taking advantage of it? “*Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage*” (Gal. 5:1).

And when we come to Him, all the garbage is dealt with! As Jim May put it, “I couldn’t figure out what to toss and what to keep. It was confusing. I didn’t know what trash I had so I had to let Him pick it up. His judgment was perfect, complete, loving, and full of mercy. My only regret was that I didn’t let Him take care of it sooner!”

George MacLeod of Scotland wrote, “I simply argue that the cross should be raised at the center of the marketplace as well as on the steeple of the church. I am recovering the claim that Jesus was not crucified in a cathedral between two candles, but on a cross between two thieves; on the town’s garbage heap; at a crossroad, so cosmopolitan they had to write His title in Hebrew and Latin and Greek...at the kind of a place where cynics talk smut, thieves curse, and soldiers gamble. Because that is where He died. And that is what He died for. And that is what He died about.”

God’s part is complete. He took the initiative and made provision for us through Jesus Christ. Our part is to respond to His gracious initiative and accept His provision...FREE!

A religious parade performed during Easter time in an Asian country involves “flagellantes”—men who strip themselves to the waist, wear white trousers and carry a “flagellante” whip. This three-foot woven whip has pieces of leather thongs on the ends entwined with broken glass or razor blades. As the men walk towards the final “crucifixion site,” they whip themselves from side to side across their backs, leaving bloody cuts which drain onto their white trousers. By this public scourge of contrition and suffering, they believe they are paying for their sins.

Martha Snell Nicholson expressed the following in her poem entitled “Remembered Sin”

I made a lash of my remembered sins.
I wove it firm and strong, with cruel tip.
And though my quivering flesh shrank from the scourge,
With steady arm I plied the ruthless whip.

For surely I, who had betrayed my Lord,
Must needs endure this sting of memory.
But though my stripes grew sore, there came no peace,
And so I looked again to Calvary.

His tender eyes beneath the crown of thorns
Met mine; His sweet voice said, “My child, although
Those oft-remembered sins of thine have been
Like crimson, scarlet; they are now like snow.

“My blood shed here has washed them all away,
And there remaineth not the least dark spot,
Nor any memory of them, and so
Should you remember sins which God forgot?”

John the Baptist, upon seeing the Lord for the first time, exclaimed the grandest truth of all, “**Behold, the Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world**” (Jn. 1:29).

Song

Gone, gone, gone, gone!
YES, my sins are gone!
Now my soul is free and
In my heart’s a song.

Buried in the deepest sea,
YES! That’s good enough for me!
I shall live eternally, praise God!
My sins are G-O-N-E, GONE!

*“Come now, and let us reason together, says the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool” (Isa. 1:18). “I write unto you, little children, because your sins are **forgiven** you for His name’s sake” (1 Jn. 2:12). “I, even I, am He who **blotteth out** thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins” (Isa. 43:25). “Blessed is he whose transgression is **forgiven**, whose sin is **covered**” (Ps. 32:1). “...Let him return unto the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God; for He will abundantly **pardon**” (Isa. 55:7b). “I will **cleanse** them from all the sin they have committed against me and will **forgive** all their sins of rebellion against me” (Jer. 33:8).*

Go and Tell!

Now that we are free from our own garbage/baggage, we are free to tell others of the awesome provision available! There’s room at the cross for all the garbage/trash of the whole world. What a great God to provide this great **rescue plan** for the garbage we have created! He had it all planned out from the beginning of the world! **To God be the glory!**

The following is excerpted from *Walking With God* by W. Phillip Keller, pp. 101-03.

“God’s will is not for us to wallow around in the old mud holes of muddled thinking. It is not to be bogged down in the bestial behavior of a corrupt, rotten culture. It is not to have the mind-set of a materialistic society. It is not to indulge ourselves in old grievances; hostile grudges; angry animosities; hostile attitudes of hate and despair; jealous rage or selfish self-pity.

“These and a thousand other damaging, destructive emotions have no part in our performance. God by His Spirit calls us to jettison this junk from the knapsacks on our backs. We are to travel light. We are to travel swiftly, surely, on the high road of wholesome, healthy, holy emotions. Get rid of the garbage—bury it in the ground of God’s forgiveness. Move onto a high plane of lofty thought and noble living.

“Be sensitive to God’s Spirit within you. He will guide your energies. He will motivate you. He will manage your emotions. He will moderate your moods. He will generate the dynamic thrust that will make you a power for good.

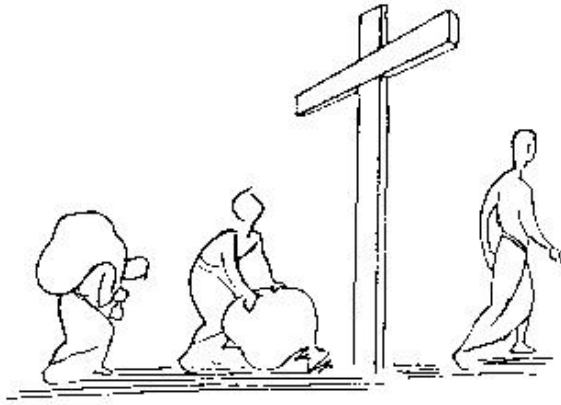
“You can be God’s person in His place for His purposes.

“Ask Him often, earnestly quietly, ‘Oh, my Father, let me relish Your presence this hour in every emotion that engulfs me!’ He will. Focus your faith on His wondrous person. He will be so pleased!

“An ancient legend recounts how the giant Hercules could not cleanse the huge Aegean stables of their accumulated dung deposited by thousands of horses for so many years. In a flash of inspiration Hercules went into the mountains. He found a sparkling glacial stream. With care, he diverted its course down the hills and through the stinking stables. In short order, they were cleansed and swept clean by the flushing, flooding action of the sparkling stream.

“Allow God’s gracious Spirit in the same way to seep into your sordid, soiled, soulish emotions. Soon He will cleanse, refresh and remake you. Then out of you will flow streams of benefit [Living Water=Christ] to the ends of the earth.”

Review and reinforce this lesson by incorporating the following notes and quotes pages and by reading the Scriptures.



The death of Christ upon the cross accomplished something much more than your redemption from the penalty of sin. It put your pride on the scrap heap and YOU in the dump.
See Philippians 3:7-9

Will you wallow in your squalor? Without hope and without God in this world?
Ephesians 2:12

“When Jesus Christ died for you, it was as if all the trash cans of the world were dumped on His head.” Those 22 words changed my life, says Pam Moore, former assistant to Corrie ten Boom.

“I saw an ocean of darkness and sin, but then I saw an ocean of light and love covering that ocean of sin. That was the moment Jesus died on the cross.”
George Fox

Sin is not man's problem, but God's. God has taken the problem of sin into His own hands and solved it, and the proof that He has is the cross of Calvary. The cross is the cross of God. On the ground of the Redemption I can “wash my robes, and make them white in the blood of the Lamb.” ...Are we thinking along this line, or on the pagan line which makes out that the basis of things is rational, and leaves out God, and Jesus Christ, and the Redemption altogether?

Oswald Chambers

Is it not humiliating to be told that we must come to Jesus! Think of the things we will not come to Jesus Christ about. If you want to know how **real** you are, test yourself by these words – “Come to Me.” In every degree in which you are **not real**, you will dispute rather than come, you will quibble rather than come, you will go through sorrow rather than come, you will do anything rather than come the last lap of unutterable foolishness – “Just as I am.”

“Come to Me.” When you hear those words you will know that something must happen in you before you can come. The Holy Spirit will show you what you have to do, anything at all that will put the ax at the root of the thing which is preventing you from getting through. You will never get further until you are willing to do that one thing. The Holy Spirit will locate the one impregnable thing in you, but He cannot budge it unless you are willing to let Him.

How often have you come to God with your requests and gone away feeling – Oh, well, I have done it this time! And yet you go away with nothing, while all the time God has stood with outstretched hands not only to take you, but for you to take Him. Think of the invincible, unconquerable, unwearied patience of Jesus – “COME TO ME.”

Oswald Chambers



There's room at the cross for YOU!

“Imagine, if you will for a moment, that God took a sponge and sopped up all the sins of the whole world; then placed it over Jesus’ head and squeezed out the sins of the whole world onto Him, including yours and mine.”

Virginia Latham
(As told to her by Evangelist Paul Rader)

“He (God) shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied” (Isaiah 53:11).

“Christ suffered for sins that He might bring us to God” (1 Peter 3:18).

“God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself” (2 Corinthians 5:18-21).

“And to you who were once dead, by reason of your sins... God raised to share His life. For He forgave us all our transgressions. Christ has utterly wiped out the damning evidence of broken laws and commandments which always hung over our heads, and has completely annulled it by nailing it over his own head on the cross. And He disarmed the Principalities and the Powers (which fought against Him); He exposed them, shattered, empty and defeated in His final glorious triumphant act!” (Colossians 2:13-15).

Selected from various translations from The Word; Mathis publishers

Note the following quotations from Daniel Webster:

The **Cross** is God’s main clue in that long treasure hunt of man which we call history.

The **Cross** touches life at all its points of felt need. The Cross is still full of meaning for daily living and relevant for all who are consciously sinful, consciously guilty, and in a mess!

The **Cross** is planted firmly in the midst of our disappointments.

The supreme irony is that when God offers men His greatest gift for their greatest need, they simply waste Him and throw Him away.

Christ made of man’s foulest crime the revelation of God’s greatest glory.

Whenever we worship at the foot of the **Cross**, we experience both horror and wonder; shame and gratitude.

The **Cross** will lead us down into the squalid cellars of our own souls where psychiatrists can roam and rummage, but only God can rehabilitate.

The **Cross** will make us realists as nothing else can; realists about ourselves, others, the world, and GOD.

A longing for wholeness presupposes a **CROSS** at the foundation of our being.

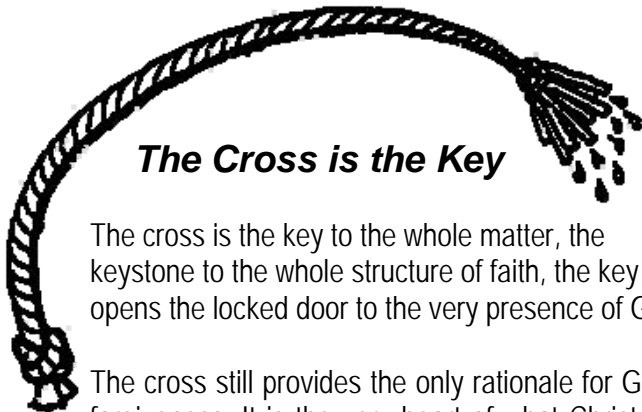
And the following from Oswald Chambers:

“SIN IS A RED-HANDED MUTINY AGAINST GOD... The climax of sin is that it crucified Jesus Christ, and what was true in the history of God on the earth will be true in your history and in mine. In our mental outlook we have to reconcile ourselves to the fact of sin as the only explanation as to why Jesus Christ came, and as the explanation of the grief and sorrow in life.”



For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

A twelve-foot high cross stands along the side of the road near Reed City, Michigan. Inscribed on that cross are the words, "The Old Rugged Cross' Home of George Bennard (1873-1958), composer of this beloved hymn." Bennard received inspiration as he was going through an especially trying time and wrote the famous hymn. EFCA Bulletin

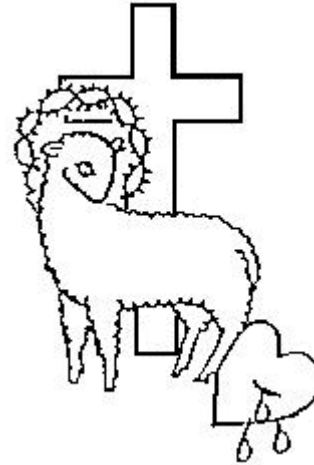


The Cross is the Key

The cross is the key to the whole matter, the keystone to the whole structure of faith, the key that opens the locked door to the very presence of God.

The cross still provides the only rationale for God's forgiveness. It is the very heart of what Christ did, and we must never trivialize its power nor neglect its importance. It is still the answer to the sinner's shame and the gulf that separates us from the presence of the Father. Yes, there is no other way home!

Guidelines



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.

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

O 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,
A wondrous 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.

George Bennard

