

Overview



What does the cross of Christ mean to you? We see this image used in a lot of places. It is used as a decoration for houses. People will have a cross hanging on their wall or on their mantle. Crosses are used for jewelry. A lot of people at some point have probably owned a cross necklace or ring. We see crosses outside churches, on top of steeples, or maybe even alongside the highway. The largest cross is in Effingham, Illinois. It is 198 feet tall and 113 feet wide and weighs over 180 tons. We can become so used to the sight of a cross that we become numb to what it actually means. It was used as a form of capital punishment for the Roman Empire. Crucifixion was used as a deterrent by the Romans to warn people not to do the same crime. It was considered such a heinous form of punishment there is little in ancient literature that describes the entire process.

What do you think of when you see the cross? Do you think of Jesus, forgiveness of sins, or a restored relationship with God? I think that sometimes we can get so oversaturated with the symbol of the cross that we forget the meaning of the cross. We can see it as a decoration instead of an act of love. We can view it as a style accessory instead of the creator of the universe sacrificing His one and only Son. We can see it on the top of a steeple and yet not allow it to have any impact on our hearts. It can become a nice object instead of an agent of change for your life. The cross is meaningless without Christ. We can view it as just the old rugged cross or as God saying to each and everyone one of us "I Love You."

Bible Study: Mark 15:21, Titus 2:11-13

1. Read Mark 15:21. Discuss as a group what it would have been like to be picked out of a crowd to carry someone's cross.
2. Read Titus 2:11. Discuss as a group how Jesus is the grace of God.
3. Read Titus 2:12. In what ways does grace do all the things listed in this verse? Why wasn't the law a sufficient way of teaching people how to live?
4. How can a believer get better at saying NO to the things of this world and better at being eager to do the things of God?
5. The Greek word for "teaches" is "paideia." It means a disciplined training for life. As you read Titus 2:12 what are the two areas that grace teaches believers to say no to? What are the three positive things that grace teaches a believer to do?
6. Read Titus 2:13. This verse is addressing the second coming of Christ. Do you consider yourself to be waiting on the second coming of Christ or do you not give it much thought? Why or why not? How is it possible to remain in a waiting posture when everything in life seems so busy?

7. Read Titus 2:14. Do you find yourself EAGER to do what is good out of God's grace or compelled to do what is good just because it is right?