

THE REALLY GOOD LIFE

(Life of Christ Series)

The Gospel of Luke

Cross-Talk ('XT')

Sometimes when you are talking on the phone, can you hear another conversation between other people in the background? Although it may be interesting from a snooping aspect, it is distracting at best and an invasion of privacy (by somebody) at worst. Communication technicians diagnose this phenomenon in cryptic language of their own as *close proximity electronic paths accidentally converging upon each other* or 'XT' (cross talk).

In communicating about the symbol of the cross, there is a cacophony of contradictory voices, 'cross-talking' definitions and connotations. The 'talk' ranges from secular, to whom the cross is nothing more than an accessory to adorn everything from their jewelry to their tattoos, to religious voices with chat varying from crucifix kissing to crossing your heart. 'XT' (initials for 'cross-talk') is resolved by professional technicians by either **1) separating the distance between electronic paths of communication** or by **2) switching to 'shielded cable' to insulate better, each electronic path**. When it comes to spiritual conversation, definitions and appreciation for 'the cross' there needs to be clarification through similar spiritual procedures.

To keep the cross special to followers of Jesus, how about separating our lifestyles from the increasingly debauched world we live in to avoid the profane, convoluted religious blither of secular society (**2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1, 1 John 2:15-17**); We can also shield our heart and mind with God's Word and prayer to repel the religious cross-talk of biblically weak religious leaders, heretical false teachers and the spiritually anemic 'fluff' of some popular evangelicals today (**Ephesians 4:11-16, 2 Timothy 4:1-5**). Biblically, the cross is symbolic of the shocking, humiliating, torture endured by our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ when He suffered and died for our sins. Secondly, the cross is also figurative for the self-denial and sacrifice we make for the Lord with our time, talent, and treasure because we love Him and those for whom He died.

Integrity would have it unthinkable to wear a cross and be doing nothing for the One Whom it is about. It should symbolize loving, altruistic sacrifice for others in desperate need of help as it did to Jesus. It should be a reminder to go to work in bringing people back into right standing with God. It can be summed up as an heroic act of self-denial that, like a 'plus sign', join people and God together into one new, correct, eternal answer about the meaning of life. Jesus' cross was a once and for all and forever act of redemption that must be believed personally to be saved. Our lighter cross to bear is a good attitude and regular service of ministry to God's people and church that costs us time, energy and money to bring others closer to the Son of God, through the Word of God. May the Lord help us be *living sacrifices* who DAILY, deny our selves and physically give all we can to show our loving appreciation for all Jesus did on His cross for us.

At the Cross-Roads

(The Intersection of Decision)

Luke 9:18-26 (see also: **Matthew 16:13-27 & Mark 8:27-38**)

HIS Cross *(His Ultimate Sacrifice For You)*

"And it happened, as He (Jesus) was alone praying, that His disciples joined Him, and He asked them, saying, "Who do the crowds say that I am?" So they answered and said, "John the baptist, but some say Elijah; and others say that one of the old prophets has risen again." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered and said, "The Christ of God." And He strictly warned and commanded them to tell this to no one, saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed, and be raised the third day."

9:18-22

Join Jesus in prayer & be enlightened!

(Ephesians 3:14-21)

Who is Jesus to you?

(Romans 10:9-13)

The 'gag order' is lifted – Go tell others!

(Galatians 6:14)

HE was raised for us; we (believers) will be raised by HIM!

(Revelation 7:9-13)

Cross-Purposes:

If you aren't truly a Christian, having turned from your sinful lifestyle to Him in faith, the cross of Christ must be your 'crossroads' decision to proceed into heaven. In your mind's eye envision the cross with Jesus dying on it for you personally. Imagine Him saying to you, *"This is for you, because I love you and want to forgive you of all the things that will most certainly keep you out of My heaven. If you are willing to forsake your sin and live righteously for Me, I will come into you by My Spirit and help you. Tell Him something like this from your heart or just forget it and walk away. He has been waiting a long time for you to ask Him to come into your life. If you do ask Him in, please let Pastor Tom or elders know so we can help you get to know Jesus better.*

Your Cross

(Your Living Sacrifice For HIM)

*"Then He said to them all, **"If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.** For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him **the Son of Man** will be ashamed **when He comes in His own glory, in His Father's, and of the holy angels.**"*

9:23-26

Desiring to follow HIM? *(an implied 'walk' of spiritual progress, fruitfulness and Christ-likeness)*

(Ephesians 5:8-14)

Denial of yourself? *(giving up some personal pleasure, activity or expenditure for God and your church family) (Romans 12:1-2, 3-11)*

Dedication daily? *(some form of regular ministry, witnessing opportunity or work that has eternal significance to God) (Galatians 5:16-26, 6:6-10)*

Delight in HIS coming? *(If Jesus comes before Christmas, will you be exuberant or ashamed before HIM? / 1 John 2:28-3:3) (Revelation 22:12-20)*

Cross-Training

We could be very near the Lord Jesus' return for His church in these last days. Why not consider giving Him what He has asked for in this passage – How about full commitment and dedication in one or two areas at CBF? **Call it an early Christmas present for God!** Yes, it will require sacrifice of something that is currently keeping you from serving the Lord in ministry to His people here. However, making this commitment will benefit YOU in many spiritual growth ways, will bring you great satisfaction, rewards, honor and joy when He comes again? Please let us know how you want to get involved at CBF, ASAP!