

## Home Bible Groups Bible Study

### From Fear To Faith: The Journey To The Cross

#### Lesson 6: Is Your Cross Too Pretty?

### Lesson 6 Discussion Questions

#### Week 1:

1. Why is the cross a symbol of the Christian faith? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
2. Name a few of the places/ways that we as Christians display this popular symbol? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
3. Do you ever wear a cross? In what form? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
4. Describe the cross(es) you wear. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

- **Do these decorative crosses, along with your other religious apparel/paraphernalia, serve... :**

	YES	NO	SOMETIMES
A. to give you a more beautiful appearance?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
B. to make you look cool?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
C. to make other people think that you are spiritual?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
D. to make you seem like a “good person”?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
E. to change your heart from the inside?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
F. to cleanse you from sin?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
G. as a physical symbol of a spiritual reality?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. Is it possible to wear/ display a symbolic cross, and remain unchanged in every other aspect of your **physical and spiritual reality**? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Is it your desire that wearing/ displaying a symbolic, or pretend, cross will cause others to identify you with Jesus Christ? \_\_\_\_\_

- **Read the following passage:**

**Matthew 16:24-28:**

“**24** Then Jesus said to his disciples, 'If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. **25** For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it. **26** What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? **27** For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done. **28** I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.'”

7. When you look at the crosses you wear/ display, do they remind you of the sacrifice that Jesus made when He died on a cross for your sin? \_\_\_\_\_

8. In your mind, does the symbolism stop there, or do you also go on to be reminded of *your* commitment to take up a cross and follow Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_

9. If you want to save your life, will you take up the cross that Jesus is talking about? \_\_\_\_\_

10. What does it mean to want to “save your life”, as Jesus says? \_\_\_\_\_

11. In your own life, are you still concerned with such things? \_\_\_\_\_

12. According to Jesus, what do you have to do with your life — your hopes, dreams, friends, finances, future in this world — if you want to find it? \_\_\_\_\_

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- In our existence, we have two realities to speak of:
    - 1) A physical reality
    - 2) A spiritual reality
    - **Physical reality is temporary.**
    - **Spiritual reality is eternal.**
    - **A symbol is something that *points to* something in reality-- something that is real.**
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13. In **Matthew 16:24-28**, is Jesus referring to a **symbolic** (pretend) cross, or is He instructing his disciples to take up their cross in **reality**? \_\_\_\_\_.

14. Does that mean that Jesus' disciples will always die on a **physical** cross? \_\_\_\_\_.

- If we want to be a disciple, we need to determine whether we are taking up our cross as a **symbol** or a **spiritual reality**.
- In order to do this, let's look at the following passage to learn about things that are **of the spirit**.

**John 3:8:**

“The wind [spirit] blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.”

15. Being that wind is invisible to the human eye, what **evidence** do we have that wind exists in our reality? \_\_\_\_\_.

16. If things that are **of the spirit** — or **spiritual** — are, like wind, invisible to the human eye — then what evidence do we have that spiritual things exist in our reality? \_\_\_\_\_.

- **Just as we can detect invisible wind by the effect it has on visible things, so we can detect the invisible things that are of the spirit, or spiritual, by the effect they have on the things we can see.**

- Earlier, we examined the effect that taking up a **symbolic cross** has on our lives. Now, let's look at how that effect *differs* from the effect of taking up a **real cross**, by looking at the *effect* that the cross had on Jesus.

- **Read the following scriptures:**

Isaiah 53

Matthew 27:27-43

Hebrews 2:9-10

- **According to these scriptures, did the cross that Jesus bore serve... :**

	YES	NO	SOMETIMES
A. to give Him a more beautiful appearance?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
B. to make Him look cool?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
C. to make other people think that He was spiritual?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
D. to make Him seem like a “good person”?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
E. to make Him prosperous in the things of the world-- <i>e.g.</i> money, power, and glory in this life?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
F. to make Him perfect in God's eyes ( <b>Hebrews 2:10</b> )?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
G. to overcome the power of sin and death, both in His life and in ours?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
H. to provide for the righteous forgiveness of our sins?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

17. How does the **effect** that your cross produces in your life compare with the **effect** that Jesus' cross produced in His? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Meditation questions:**

**\*Take this week to honestly examine the effect of your cross and the evidence that it affords, and meditate on these three questions:**

- 1) Is my cross **symbolic**, or is it a **spiritual reality**?
  
- 2) Knowing the effect of taking up a real cross, am I willing to ask God to help me move into that reality?
  
- 3) What are the benefits if I do so?