

The Way of the Cross

Humans were created for
fellowship with God.

The Westminster Shorter Catechism
says it well, *“The chief end of man is to
glorify God and enjoy Him forever.”*

*We all want to be happy, but we
don't know what will make us
happy.*

Some pursue happiness through a version of Christianity that is more about “what does following Jesus do for me?” than it is about “what does following Jesus lead me to become because of what Jesus already did for me?”

When I say that God wants to do Immeasurably More in your life than you could ever ask or imagine, what kind of things do you imagine? Are the things that you imagine the exact same things that a nonbeliever would imagine?

Jesus did human better than
anyone else has ever done
human.

Matthew 16:24

**24 Then Jesus said to his disciples,
“Whoever wants to be my disciple must
deny themselves and take up their cross
and follow me. 25 For whoever wants to
save their life will lose it, but whoever loses
their life for me will find it.**

Matthew 10:37-39

37 “Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. 38 Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. 39 Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.

Jesus calls us to a way of life that He describes as “taking up your cross” and “Lose your life to save your life.” Do we ignore this?

“The thief comes only to steal & kill & destroy; I have come that they may have life, & have it to the full. (John 10:10)

28 “Come to me, all you who are weary & burdened, & I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you & learn from me, for I am gentle & humble in heart, & you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy & my burden is light.” (Matt. 11: 28-30)

“Ask me and I will give you living water,
and whoever drinks the water I give them
will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give
them will become in them a spring of
water welling up to eternal life.” (John
4:14)

The way of the Cross is a way of life that involves sacrifice, dying of self, “Losing my life to save it,” and simultaneously, it leads to abundant life—The Good Life.

“It is significant that the earliest label for Christianity was the Way. Before Christians were called Christians, they were called followers of the Way. It is also significant that Jesus described himself as ‘the way’. Yet many of us may not think of Christianity like this, as a way that encompasses our entire lives.

If we do see Christianity as a way of life today, we often mean just whatever manner of living Christians share with those of similar social, cultural, and economic backgrounds. Our concept of human flourishing and the good life looks pretty much the same as that of our neighbors, except we go to church on Sunday and to heaven when we die. Otherwise, there is nothing distinctive about our way of life.” (Rankin Wilbourne and Brian Gregor.)

Happiness is communion with God. And the way to that communion is the way of the cross.

What we learn about being Fully Human from Jesus

1) Jesus lived a life of humility

The best way to be human is to be humble

What we learn about being Fully Human from Jesus

2) Jesus was compassionate, placing the needs of others above self-concern.

The best way to be human is to be compassionate.

What we learn about being Fully Human from Jesus

3) Jesus was not worried about His reputation.

Best way to be human: truly live to please God and not people.

What we learn about being Fully Human from Jesus

4) Jesus's entire life was marked by suffering.

Best way to be human involves "taking up your cross."

Do we believe that Jesus was telling us the truth—the way things actually work in the universe we are living in? If we believed some of these things that Jesus said so plainly, wouldn't it change what we were afraid of and anxious about and ambitious for?

(Rankin Wilbourne, Brian Gregor)

John 12

23 Jesus replied, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. 24 Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.

John 12

25 Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

*Everything must be interpreted in light of the cross.
What does a life worth living look like...in light of the
cross?
What sort of life should we aspire toward...in light of
the cross?
What should you value for yourself and those you
love...in light of the cross?
What does freedom mean...in light of the cross?*

I wonder what fruitfulness would look like for me if I became that single seed that died so that other seeds would be produced. I wonder what that would look like for you.