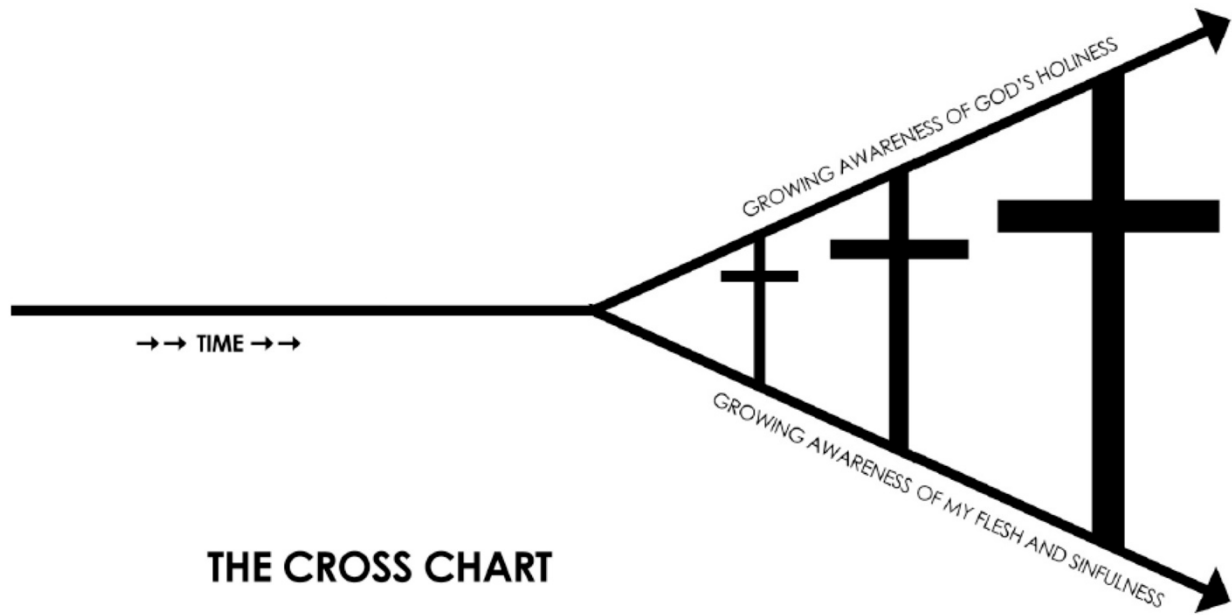


- John returns to a subject he's already mentioned – Christians loving one another ... He starts with distinction: those who don't belong to Christ and those who do belong to Christ ... Cain murdering Abel illustrates the world standing opposed to God and those who belong to Him (Cain opposed doing what was right / righteousness, following God and trusting Him) ... Loving others, particularly other believers, is a clear indication that you belong to Christ ... It's impossible for those outside of Christ to love others like Christ ... Because this love isn't produced naturally; it's a supernatural work of God ... Thus, to exhibit this type of love to others, shows that you belong to God and His Spirit is living within you
- John's trying to help us understand what transformation looks like ... A life that's transforming is going to produce fruit ... If fruit is being seen, then transformation is happening ... This should cause you to rest in the assurance of being in Christ ... Notice John is continually anchoring what he says in the gospel: **14, 16, 18-20** ... Our union with Christ and His gospel, are the foundation of all transformation as Christians ... The image we're being changed into is the Person we're united to by grace thru faith ... Transformation = Sanctification ... **Positional & Progressive**
- **Positionally** – sin is defeated ... **Progressively** – sin is being defeated ... We battle sin from a position of victory – the victory Christ has won on our behalf, that we enjoy because of our union with Him ... Tension between our flesh and the Spirit – earthly pursuits vs Godly pursuits ... We've died to sin with Christ (*positional*); we continue to **crucify the flesh with its passions and desires** (*progressive*): decisively reject sin because we're joined to Christ by faith
 - **Marriage example:** when a couple gets married, they're joined together as one – new life together ... The wife's name is changed – she no longer goes by her maiden name, because she's been given a new name ... The affections of the couple belong to each other – they no longer give away their affections to others ... The couple is to stand against anything that means to threaten the other or their relationship ... Such with each of us united to Christ ... We fight against indwelling sin, and temptations that surround us, because of who we belong to, who we've become, whose image is being created in us and through us
 - As you fight against sin and temptation, don't forget the assurance that's given to you – **18-24** ... Belonging to the Truth, means the One who enables you to love others rightly is the same One who forgives you when you don't love others rightly ... This should reassure your heart whenever you come before God, and when your heart tries to deceive you through shame and self-condemnation ... We should always be resting in the finished work of Jesus, whether we obey or disobey ... None of us stands on our own righteousness
- **Practical transformation** ... If much of the battle with sin and temptation resides in our mind, then what lie are you believing ... What gospel truth are you forgetting ... You seek the Spirit's guidance ... Then go to Jesus: 1) confess the lie, 2) receive His forgiveness, 3) apply the gospel ... Again, this is progressive sanctification ... You're being transformed by your belonging and believing

The Cross-Chart is from *The Gospel-Centered Life*, by Robert Thune and Will Walker, New Growth Press
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