

Life Trails Small Group Study Guide

Lesson 27 – The Cross Walk 4

From Sunday, April 24

Warm Up:

We have another quiz to start with. Each person keeps their own score to see who gets the most answers correct. Correct answers are bold.

Which is stronger?

- **Tiger** or lion
- Aluminum or **steel**
- Cement or **concrete**
- **Diamond** or titanium
- Dollar or **euro**
- **Epoxy** or super glue
- **Cappuccino** or latte
- **Nylon** or polyester
- **AM** or FM
- **Life** or death

Discuss

- When we talk about power or strength, how do we usually define it in the physical world?
- How would you define power in the relational or emotional world?
- How might we define it in the spiritual world?

Debrief:

Truth only transforms us as we take action. A small group discussion can help us think more clearly, but we also need to challenge each other to take steps of faith. Taking time to debrief reminds us that faith needs to be lived out every day.

From April 3

- Most of us would be likely to say that we trust God in general, but is there some specific area of your life where spiritual trust is difficult? Once you have identified the area, can you address it? Maybe that means a heart-felt conversation with God. Maybe that means taking a step of obedience. Maybe that means finally surrendering an area of your life. If possible, share your response /action with your group next time.

From April 10

- As a group identify three (or more) positive responses that a person might choose when faced with an injustice. When an injustice comes in the next week, seek to pursue one of those responses – and then share your experience with the group next time you meet.

From the message:

- When we say “walk in power,” how would you explain that to someone else?
- The issues of self can fall into several categories. What examples can you think of for how we pursue self in each of these categories? Can you think of ways that they leak into the church and into our relationships with others?
 - Self-importance and self-absorption
 - Self-sufficiency and self-dependence
 - Self-protection and self-preservation
 - Self-indulgence and self-gratification
 - Self-actualization and self- governance
- Many examples were given of how God’s wisdom turns the world’s wisdom upside down. Can you think of others?
- Secularism is a belief system that excludes God, and instead lifts man as the ultimate authority. Can you think of any examples in today’s world? Why is this such a threat?

From the passage: *1 Corinthians 1:10-31*

- (from vs. 17) How can the cross be emptied of its power? And what role do we play in doing so?
- *See 1 Corinthians 3:1-5.* Paul returns to the issue of division in the church and makes a big point about the fact that people like him and Apollos were merely servants. What is he trying to get the Corinthians to understand?
- How was this passage both a rebuke and comfort to the Corinthian Christians?
- Talk about vs. 31 – What does it mean to “glory in the Lord”?

For discussion:

- How would you explain the power of the cross to someone? (How is this different from the previous question about “walking in power”?)
- What experiences have you had where you have felt like God has given you power to live in victory? How did that work?
- On the flip side, have you ever had the experience of trying to change but not having much success? What do you think contributed to your failure?
- Where do we see celebrity-ism in today’s church? Why is it so common? Why is it so dangerous?
- Why are we so quick to follow people, to idolize others, and to let ourselves be influenced by people around us?
- Why is power so important to us? What are some of the ways that people try to gain power? How about create power? What might the exact opposite look like?
- Can you think of other passages that talk about God’s power? (The Growth Guide has some examples.) What is the difference between the power of the cross and the power of the resurrection – or it is the same thing?
- What are ways that we can be very much about ourselves without even realizing it? Share some examples.

Activation:**Sin and self.**

1. What is an area in your life where sin keeps tripping you up? How can you take steps to confront and overcome it using God’s power? What would that look like?
2. Ask God to make you more aware of the “self” issues in your life – and then deal with them. How can you trust God more in your life?

Choose one or the other – and give some thought/focus/attention to it and then share with your small group what you have learned – and how the power of the cross is changing you in those areas.