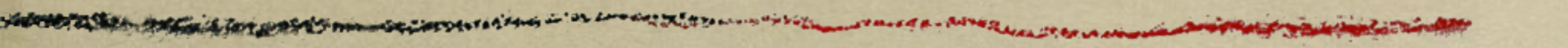




Part two: the cross and our ability crisis

questions often plague the young christian

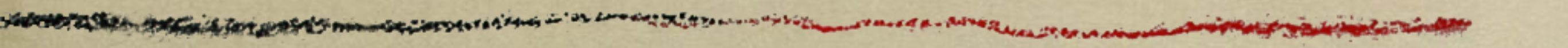
- *i just usually feel like god is displeased with me*
- *i have to deal with so many temptations that i get defeated*
- *i've have some good moments with god but usually find i am up and down like a yo-yo*



*Behind our questions
there is a mystery at
work deep in our lives*

*something's always
saying 'No' and also
saying 'Yes'*

*I have just enough
religion to bug me and
not enough to bless me*

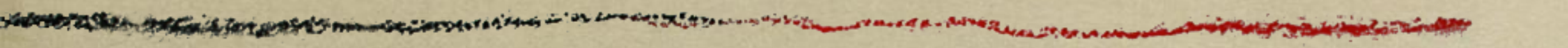


What is going on here?

- *There is a key that
unlocks the riddle but it
only unlocks it to a
seeking heart*

the riddle of the cross

- 1. you can come unto him by embracing his
but can only come after him by embracing yours*
- 2. you cannot bear it by yourself
another bearer waits to help*
- 3. it seems to be heavy but lightens with walking
yet without its weight you're too heavy to walk*
- 4. once taken you are never free of it
but only free under it*
- 5. its shadow so totally eclipses you
but others see son light reflecting in you*



*The question of whether
it's gain or it's loss
can only be answered
by taking the cross*

*Last time we looked at
the work of the cross as
it begins to change our
identity*

The issue of identity

*Whom do you belong to,
the world or the Lord?*

when we first
come to the Lord:

- *There is a very big change - much bigger than we think 2Cor. 5.17*
- *So the cross starts dealing with some outward issues of identity that need changing*

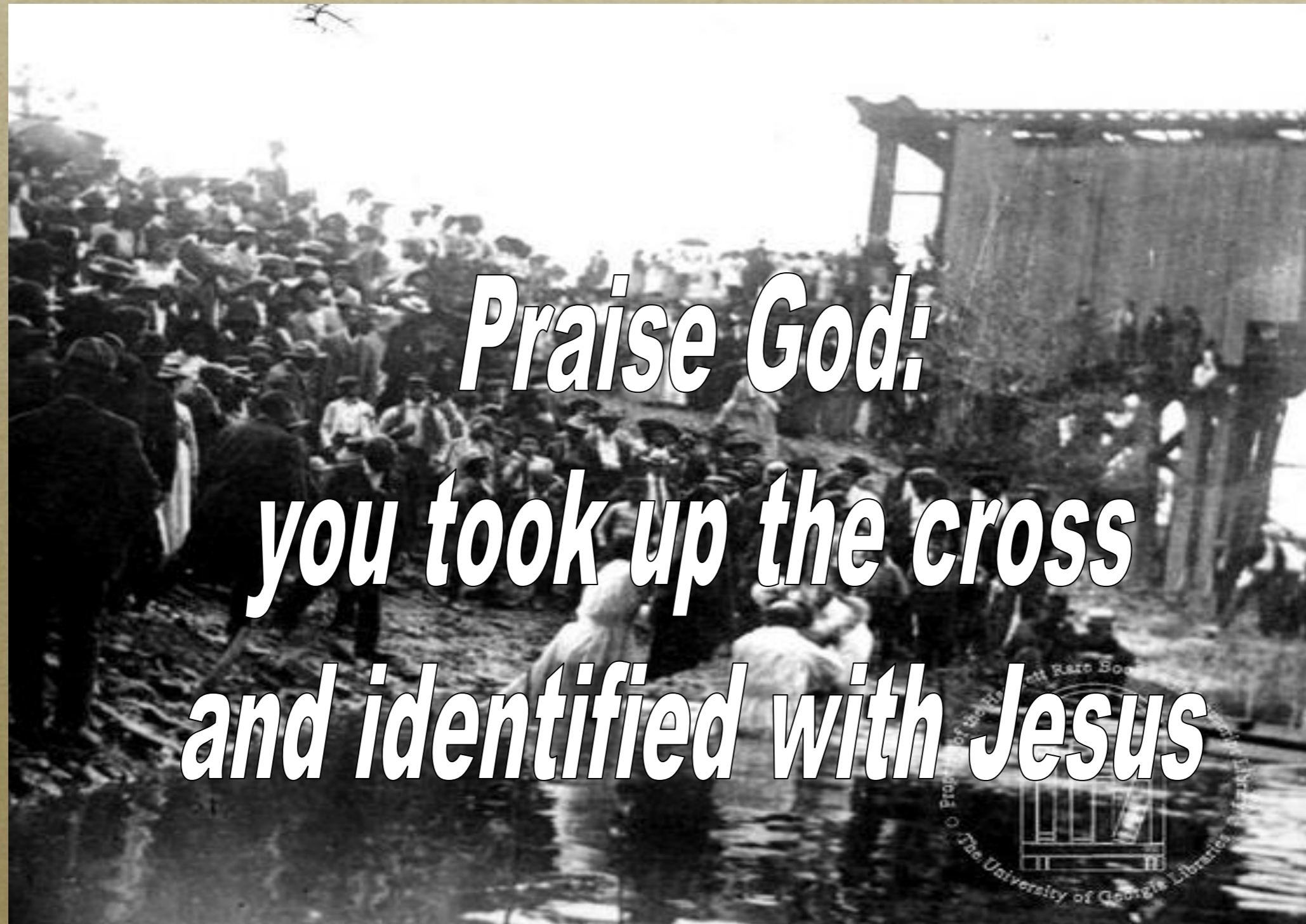
*everytime we obey God our true
identity gets strengthened*

*We know that if we obey him it is by the
grace of God. What does that mean?*

- 1. It means we obey because we know he
loves us*
- 2. It means we obey by faith even
though we are not able or worthy*
- 3. It means when we obey God his life
surges through us enabling us*

*This 'surge' of grace inwardly confirms our
identity as a child of God*

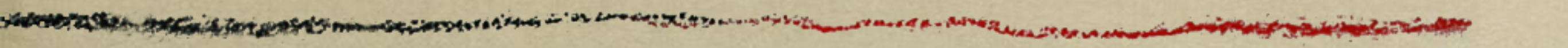
*so baptism is an obedience:
“I belong to God”*



Actively witnessing is an obedience that reveals your identity

1Pet. 2.9 ¶ *But you are A
CHOSEN RACE, A royal
PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY
NATION, A PEOPLE
FOR God's OWN
POSSESSION, so that
you may proclaim the
excellencies of Him who
has called you out of
darkness into His
marvelous light;*





*Today we want to go a
little deeper and talk
about the cross and our
'ability' crisis*

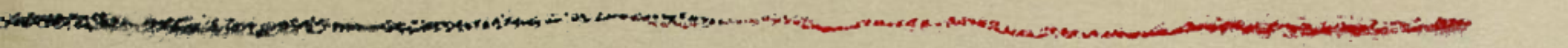
*After we become christians we
continue to feel the cross' work*

- We know it was the epicenter of
salvation history separating the eternal
destinies of all mankind*
- We may not have realized that the cross'
work has become the epicenter of our life
to separate and transform us forever*

*Most believers
eventually hit the 'NO'
wall as they start
serving and living for
God*

An inward sense of Divine Veto (NO's)

- *We sense something wrong (hit the wall)*
 - 1. *Every time we teach something plucked from the Tree of the knowledge of good and evil*
 - 2. *When we see how much we serve God out of self motives and strength*
 - 3. *Everytime we use the world's wisdom to figure out our life's direction*
 - 4. *When our well-intended religious service causes arguments, problems, divisiveness and hurt feelings*



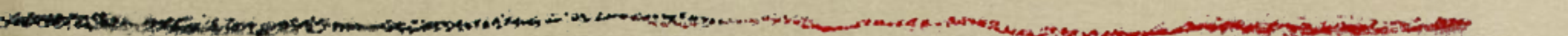
*Why does the cross seem to
block christians in service?*

- Because until they are
dealt with by the cross
they are still living out
of their flesh*

◦ *The cross brings us to an ability crisis*

Rom. 7.18 *For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not.*

Rom. 7.19 *For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want.*



*What stopped us? We
took up our cross and
now we can't follow?*

- *Gal. 3.3-4 Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? Did you suffer so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain?*

*What stopped us? We
took up our cross and
now we can't follow?*

Riddle #2 has kicked in

*2. you cannot bear it by yourself
another bearer waits to help*

*The crisis of our ability
(inability) is only
understood after
battling with carnality*

There is a deep conspiracy within which derails our spiritual progress

- *This conspiracy is called 'the flesh'*
- *The natural soul life and the body conspire together against the Spirit*
- *'the flesh' is your automatic actions and reactions made without reference to God*
- *This carnality (flesh) is so natural to us and so ingrained that we are unaware of its pervasive nature*

*The only way
our flesh is
exposed is by
'hitting the
wall'
of the cross*



*Our flesh is easily distracted
by the things of this world*



Our flesh is easily distracted

*Every aspect of
life in the world
has a hook that
snags you and
leads from
distraction to
“besetting sin”*



Our flesh is easily distracted

*Because we don't
know ourselves:*

*Christians get
caught*

*Old and young get
caught*

*Our flesh has an
insatiable hunger-
deprive it one way
it pops up another*



*Our religious
flesh eventually
reacts with self-
propelled
fervor*



Our flesh condemns itself



Our flesh rededicates itself



- *Promises to try harder*
- *Feverishly reads and prays*
- *Serves and suffers to 'pay God back'*

Our religious flesh is easily discouraged

- *Plagues of 'doubting' locusts eat up our resolve*
- *Feverish religious resolve dies out in the busyness of personal pursuits, plans and service*
- *Someone 'offends' us and in anger we back off our dedicated life*
- *Condemnation and failure slide us once again into that 'grey fog' in the land of the divine 'NO'*

*The crisis of our ability
(inability) is only
understood after
battling with carnality*

2. *you cannot bear it by yourself
another bearer waits to help*

Let's see what happened

1. *You began to take up 'your' cross with baptism, witnessing and obedience*

- *Gal. 5.7 ¶ You were **running well**; who hindered you from obeying the truth?*

2. *You assumed that you could please God by carrying your cross*

- *Your cross got heavier and inertia set in*
- *Paul's been there as explained in Romans 7*
- *The whole Corinthian church was there in 1 Cor.*

A war rages within between the Spirit and our flesh

- *Gal. 5.17 For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.*
- *Rom. 8.8 and those who are in the flesh cannot **please God**.*
- *Two centers of power are in conflict here*
 - *Either you are in control of your life (flesh)*
 - *Or the Holy Spirit is in control of your life*

*whenever you yield to the Spirit you
experience deliverance from the flesh*

- *Gal. 5.16 ¶ But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.*
- *Rom. 8.13 for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.*

*Unfortunately our 'default' mode
is to live by our flesh*

I can do it!



I'm a good person

I'm trying to be crucified

*God needs me
to do His work*

Here's the mystery

*Until the victory of
His cross becomes fixed
in us by revelation
we cannot carry
our cross very far*

3. *it seems to be heavy but lightens with
walking yet without its weight
you're too heavy to walk*

- *Our flesh is too heavy with self-centeredness to carry our cross very far*
- *The finished work of His cross is the power that enables us to walk by His life*
- *The two-fold riddle must be experienced:
you cannot bear it by yourself
*another bearer waits to help**

The crisis of our ability

- Gal. 2.20
*“I have been crucified with Christ;
and it is no longer I who live,
but Christ lives in me;
and the life which I now live in the flesh
I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave
Himself up for me.*
- *We all know the verse but not all have come to
the actual ‘exchange’*
- *This only happens in our experience after self
has exhausted its options*

The crisis of our ability

- *Why did God give man the LAW?*
 - *So that man could hit the wall of flesh*
 - *Gal. 2.16 "...since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified."*
- *Why did Jesus give the 'sermon on the mount'?*
 - *So that disciples would hit the wall trying to:*
 - *"be perfect as your Father is perfect"*
 - *"exceed the righteousness of the pharisees..."*

The crisis of our ability

- *Why can't we just live in the new covenant?*
 - *Because it is an inward covenant of spirit and we are used to living by outward covenants of flesh*
- *Why can't we just live in obedience to the Word and obey?*
 - *Because the Word always works in combination with the holy Spirit*

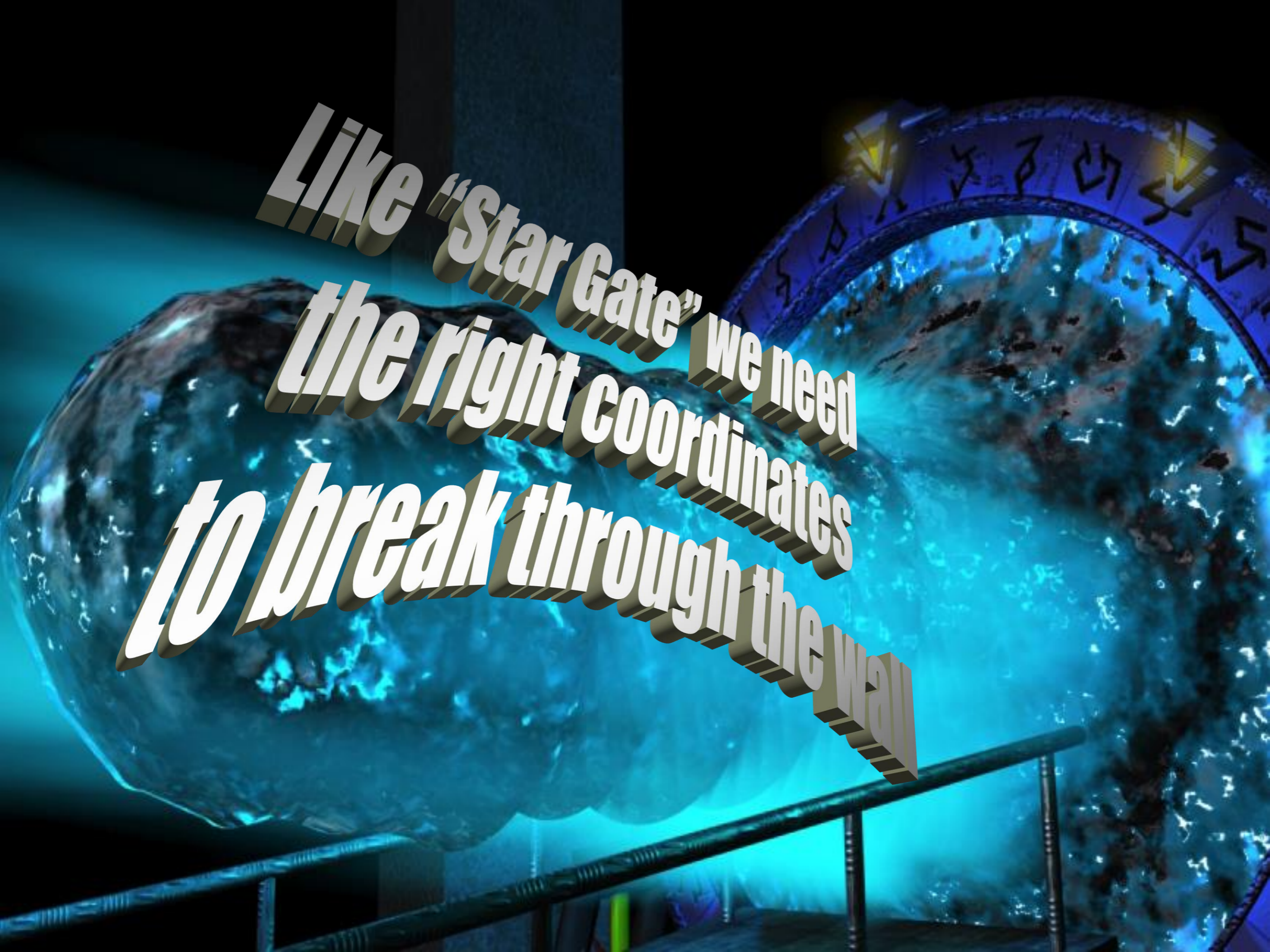
The crisis of our ability

We will try everything before 'exchanging our lives' as in Gal. 2.20

The disciples tried to prevent Jesus going to Calvary because they thought they could reform their flesh with more teaching

The Holy Frustrator (Spirit) has to expose our self-confidence, self-sufficiency, self-deception, self-effort and self-centeredness at our core

- What we want to do we can't accomplish*
- What we don't want to do we end up doing*



**Like "Star Gate" we need
the right coordinates
to break through the wall**

The 7 “stargate” coordinates through the wall of ability

1. God commands
us

2. We find we
can't do it

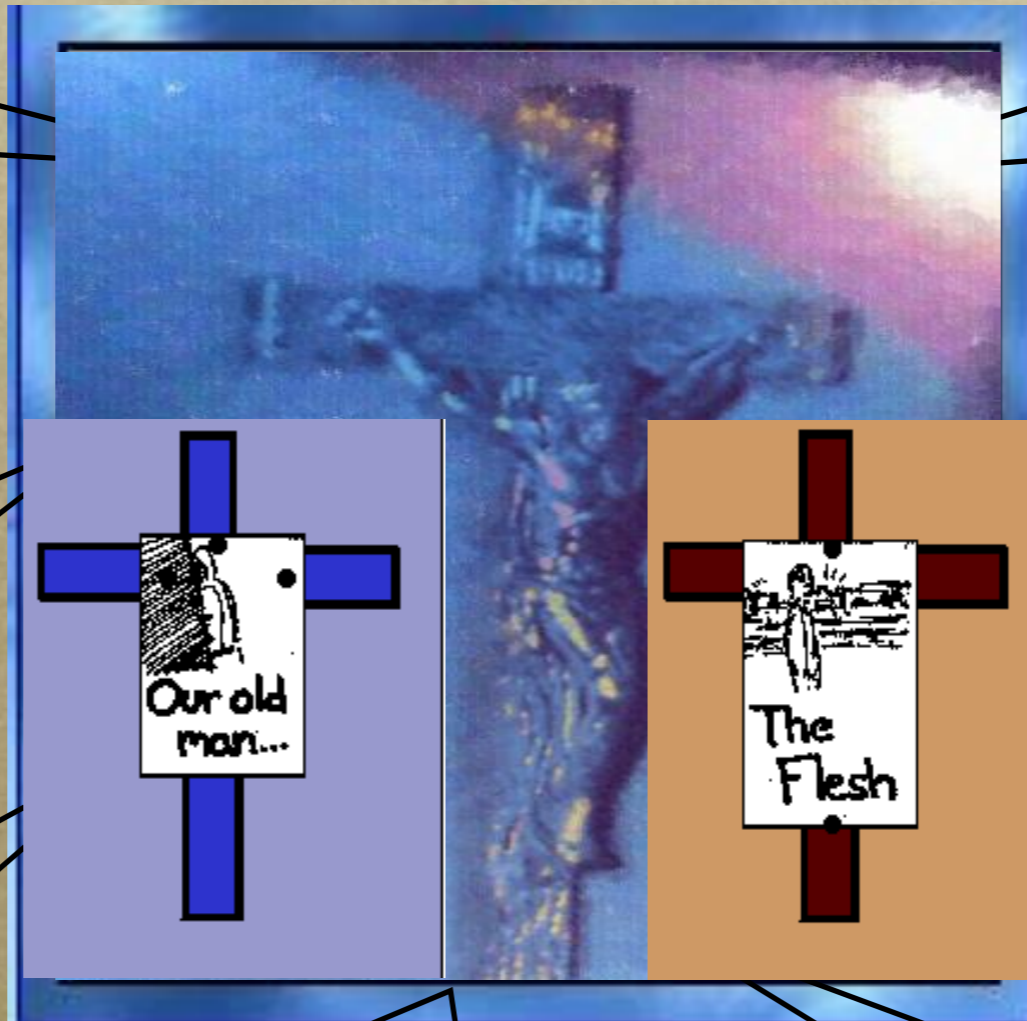
3. The Spirit
unceasingly
convinces us

4. We grow
to hate our self

6. Despite our
failures
we want
Him desperately

7. The 7th
coordinate takes
us through

5. We realize the
Frustrator is after
something bigger



How the crisis is resolved

- *We see as finished that our old man 'has been co-crucified with Christ' (Rom. 6.6)*
- *We start to live by an 'abiding Life within' that lifts us into 'the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus' (Rom. 8.2)*
- *We set our mind on the Spirit and walk in His power as the flesh is neutralized (Rom. 8.13, Gal. 5.24)*

Your identity is 'fixed' in Christ



- *Once you were Jacob operating out of self-strength*
- *Now you are Israel learning to operate by God's life*

Your identity is 'fixed' in Christ

- *'you have died and your life is hid with Christ in God' (col. 3.3)*
- *'one died for all, therefore all died...that they that live should no longer live for themselves but for Him...' (2cor.5.14-15)*

Your ability is fixed in Christ

- *‘yet not I but Christ lives in me and the life I now live...’ (Gal. 2.20)*
- *‘I can do all things through Him who strengthens me’ (Phil. 4.13)*

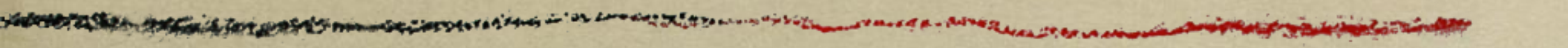
*Now, because of His
cross, you are able to
pick up your cross and
follow after Him*

Now you understand riddle #2

*you cannot bear it by yourself
another bearer waits to help*

*Now you understand
half of riddle #3*

*it seems to be heavy
but lightens with walking
yet without its weight
you're too heavy to walk*



*And with each work of
the cross there comes*

GRACE

GRACE

GRACE ABOUNDING

But wait!
After the two crises
there still remains
one more process
which 'daily'
works upon us



***Part three: the cross and
the process of 'dying daily'***