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Men's Table Talk

1. The first time that crucifixion is mentioned against Jesus is recorded in all four gospel accounts as ion Pilate's courts: (John 19:5-6) *So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Behold the man!" When the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no fault in him. "*
 - a. Jesus had spoken of it throughout his ministry. He had foretold it over and over in his final year of ministry.
2. The cross event is the classic paradigm of Christianity
 - a. At heart there are two deaths
 - i. The death in God of the Messiah
 - ii. The death of every disciple who is truly "in Christ"
 - b. There are also three glories
 - i. The glory of God in the crucified
 - ii. The true glory of a person in Christ
3. The false glory sought by many in the name of Christ. To confess "Jesus is Lord" is, to the point, what we believe! Jesus we profess as not only "fully human," but also that he is "true God from true God," (to use the old language of the creeds.) But to say that "Jesus is Lord" is not merely to affirm his deity; it is also to make the claim that every human authority is finally subject to Jesus. Even though the world may not acknowledge it yet, every governing official, every religious leader, indeed every human claim to authority must finally acknowledge the authority of Christ (**Phil. 2:10-11; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 11:15, 19:16**). This confession has throughout the ages been the backbone of Christian resistance to evil and the hope that has sustained the church through its darkest hours.
4. First: The One who died is the One who was incarnate and is God among us. We can only discuss the crucifixion of Christ in its divine aspects if we have settled the historical question that Jesus asked not only those who were with him in ancient times but also every person who turns to him: "Who do you say that I am?" If Jesus is God, then we have the question "What does the cross mean since this is God himself who dies?" (**Colossians 1:20; 2:14; Hebrews 12:1-2; I Peter 2:24; Ephesians 2:15-16; Galatians 6:14**)
5. It can openly be said that it is impossible for God to die. The very nature of God is that he is the "Living God." God is described as eternal. Death is in fact, separation from God or absence from God. God is alive so, we must now ask "How is it that God can die?" This mystery is the message of the Bible. Both the old and new covenant begins by heaven telling the first mothers [Sarah and Mary] that "Nothing is impossible to God."
6. Hebrews 12:2-3 *Focus your gaze upon Jesus, the leader and perfecter of faith. He, for the sake of the joy that lay before him patiently endured the cross, while despising its shame, and is enthroned at God's right hand. Ponder him who endured terrible hostility against himself by sinners.*
7. When Jesus was alive, and preaching among us, he spoke of the cross as not only something that would happen to him, but also an event that involved every true follower of his. We are not only to be saved by the One who died on the cross; we are commanded to become participants in the cross ourselves. To follow Christ means to be cross-bearers. One cannot truly follow Jesus unless one is at the same time participating in the fellowship of the cross. Such a fellowship of the cross, the apostle Paul writes about. (**Galatians 2:20**)