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# CROSS TALK

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## Introducing the CrossPuzzle

*How it came to be...*

Most people receiving this newsletter will already be somewhat familiar with the CrossPuzzle. How the word of this puzzle has spread across the countryside is a story in itself, but what I would like to talk about here is how the puzzle came into existence in the first place.

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*It is impossible to get to God by our own works.*

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The puzzle really had its birth in my consideration of a passage in a highly recommended book by Dinesh D'Souza called *What's so Great About Christianity*. In one passage in this book, Dinesh is comparing Christianity with the other religions of the world. He notes that all other religions basically hold that man can get to God by doing various kinds of works. But Christianity is not a religion in this fashion. It holds that there is no way to get to God by your own works. Man can't get to God. God had to come down to man. And He did this in Jesus.

It was this latter statement and the Bible verse that goes with it that I was contemplating while sitting in church at Covenant

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## Transport for Christ

*How the puzzle got to TfC...*

The connection of the CrossPuzzle with Transport for Christ (TfC) seems, like many other aspects of this project, quite accidentally inspired! I was contemplating some way of getting this puzzle into every state in the United States.



That is when Doug Gray, from Franconia Mennonite Church, invited me to a free breakfast at the Heritage Restaurant in Franconia. The speaker at the breakfast was a longtime associate of TfC, Jason Shelley. As he spoke about this ministry, the thought arose in my mind that this would be an excellent ministry to partner with if I wanted to get this cross into the hands of the greatest amount of people over the widest area. After all, truckers are the most mobile group of people in America! They also like technology and are constantly meeting new people. What a perfect group of people with whom share this evangelistic tool.

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*After all, truckers are the most mobile group of people in America!*

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I attended several breakfasts put on by the local Montgomery County chapter of TfC and accompanied Sam

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Community Fellowship in Lansdale during our 25 year Anniversary celebration. I was trying to think of some way that I could make an object lesson the might illustrate this central truth of the Gospel. It was in this moment of contemplation that the Holy Spirit drove the idea of this puzzle into my mind. The basic concept of the puzzle I had seen years before in a toy store. But the inspiration that I was given at that moment was the solution to the problem of physics that needed to be solved to truly turn this puzzle into an object lesson that would illustrate **Ephesians 2:8-10 (NIV)**.

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*For it is by **grace** you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by **works**, so that no one can boast.*

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I went home right after the church service and modeled the idea on my CAD system. I employed Jerry, our Chinese student, to figure out the correct proportions for the cross based on the Golden Ratio. The width of the crossbar must be .618 times the height of the upright! With the solid model of the puzzle completed, I went down to my woodshop and proceeded to make the first prototype. It worked just as inspired! No amount of physical labor was sufficient to get it apart. And yet, with the application of the correct force field, it came apart effortlessly! It could be used to illustrate the redemptive work that Jesus did on the cross to save us from our sins and justify us before God. And it also could illustrate the evangelical nature of this message since, when one finally figures out the secret of the CrossPuzzle, **they are going to want to tell somebody!**❖

## Working with the Puzzle

*How the puzzle can open up conversations...*

### Ken Rutt

Now that you have this tool in your possession, you are going to want to share it with others. I will include some stories in this newsletter and encourage others to send me their stories that I can share as well. Here is a favorite!

Lansdale, PA has what they call "First Fridays" which is the first Friday of each month when they have a bit of a street fair going on. Our church participates by being there and

selling refreshments. I take my crosses. One time there were these two young boys, probably around 12 or 13, who came up to me. The one kid asked me, "Can I have a dollar?" I said, "Why should I give you a dollar?" to which he answered, "I just need a dollar."

So I told him that I would give him a dollar if he could answer me a question. I asked him to tell me what the following is. "What is a multipath, expansible, amorphous, carbohydrate, absorption module, sensitive to differential molecular tension?" After no more than 10 seconds of contemplation he said, "It's not a sponge is it?"

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*What is a multipath, expansible, amorphous, carbohydrate, absorption module, sensitive to differential molecular tension?*

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Amazed, I told him that indeed it is a sponge and that for that answer I will give him two dollars! After commenting on his obvious brilliance I told him that I had another puzzle for him. So I gave him one of the crosses. Before long there were about 15 of the street kids gathered around trying every which way to get these crosses apart.

Earlier in the evening I had been talking with a man in a wheelchair. Not only was he paralyzed in the legs, but he only had the use of one good arm as well. When I saw him sitting eating at the one table near our booth, I took a puzzle over to him. I had him read the instructions and clues and explained to him that one really can't do it by their own efforts, but everyone tries to anyway. But in his case, I said, that even he could do this puzzle using just his one good hand. He was quite amazed when he saw how he could open it by using just one hand.

So as the boys were trying to get their puzzles apart, this guy in the wheelchair goes rolling by. I hollered at him to come over and show these kids how to unlock the puzzle using only his one good hand. He picks up the puzzle, but before unlocking it, he goes through the whole object lesson about how this cross illustrates that we can't get to God by our own works. God needed to come to down to us in the form of Jesus so that we could have salvation and be able to have a relationship with God. I don't know if the wheelchair man was even a Christian, but he sure was a quick learner! And when he performed the unlocking using only one hand, these kids were in awe. They all wanted to take a puzzle home to show and amaze their friends (and I hope to share the underlying story just as the wheelchair guy did!) ❖

## A FISHERMAN'S DELIGHT

While staying in a hotel across the street from the convention center in Orlando, I was sharing the cross with one of my friends in the hotel lobby. A guy walking by whom neither of us knew noticed the cross and got intrigued by what I was sharing with my friend. All three of us ended up working through the helpful instruction pamphlet that comes with the puzzle. When we finally got it unlocked, this guy sits back in amazement and says, "Wow! All week long I have been across the street at the Bass Fishing Convention. I've looked at all these new fishing gadgets that they are displaying there. And this is the best fishing gadget yet! ***With this one I can tell my friends about Jesus!***"

Needless to say, he became the recipient of a brand new fishing gadget! ❖

## WHAT DOES IT SAY??

I hate to ruin the thrill of discovery when someone is working hard to get the cross apart. Figuring it out for one's self is such a reward for hard thought and labor. If you've worked the puzzle yourself, you will be aware that even after you break the seal and read the clue, it is still a riddle. Everything that you need to solve the puzzle is in that clue verse. But most people will read the verse and still not understand. They need me to stand there beside them saying over and over "What does it say?" And isn't that how the Holy Spirit works to show us His truth in the Bible. Everything we need for salvation is written there on the pages of that Bible. But it is the Holy Spirit standing there beside us as we read it nudging our hearts and saying, "What does it say?" that we need to really understand it.

I hope to be able to include a little scripture study in this section of the newsletter where we will do just that with portions of the Scripture; we'll ask over and over, "What does it say?" and see what nuggets we can uncover. Life is often full of seemingly locked doors, (or locked crosses!). But even a big door can be unlocked with a little key. Let's trust that the Lord can provide some keys! ❖

Rittenhouse, another longtime associate with the ministry, on a visit to one of the newly commissioned chapels in Elkton, Maryland. In our discussions, we agreed that this might be an excellent tool for TFC to use to open up spiritual conversations with drivers and equip them to share with their families and friends. Other leaders within TFC agreed that this would be an exciting tool for chaplains to have in the mobile chapels across America and Canada. It could also give members of the local sponsoring churches for the chapels an opportunity to labor together to produce the crosses! So it was decided to make up a CrossPuzzle for each of the existing TFC chapels. These would be distributed to each of the chapels at the beginning of the summer of 2014. Resourcing for how to use the puzzles will be made available by means of this newsletter, my website, or even visits to various chapel sites and sponsoring churches if desired.

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Visit my website at [www.thecrosspuzzle.com](http://www.thecrosspuzzle.com) to find more information about the crosses as well as ordering information for more crosses.

I am interested in hearing your stories. I was just asked if I could explain what faith was. I responded that I thought faith was a little like the horizon; you never quite reach it! But we are all standing on someone else's horizon. You can see things from where you are standing that I can't see from where I am standing. Sharing our stories is a great way to encourage each other in our faith walks. So I welcome your stories from your perspectives!

## THE CROSSPUZZLE SPREADS

### CHILD EVANGELISM FELLOWSHIP (CEF)

The crosses are being used as one of the primary evangelism tools by the BucksMont Child Evangelism Fellowship organization (CEF) this summer. They will be distributing and training hundreds of young people to use the cross as an opening for engaging in spiritual conversation with others. They will then be spreading out across the globe sharing the Good News.

### TRANSLATION INTO CHINESE

The pamphlet which accompanies the CrossPuzzle has been translated into Chinese so that the puzzle can be understood in that language as well. This required a crucial replacement of the key verse, Luke 12:27, with the verse Job 37:12 so that the important clue word was evident in the Chinese language! Great catch by my Chinese translator!

### THE MANUFACTURING SPREADS

The CrossPuzzle has taken off in many area which means that the making of them must also take off. And it has; out of my shop into other partner's shops. Others are seeing the joy of helping in this means of spreading the Gospel and are lending their labor to mine to produce these high quality, handcrafted fishing tools. And that is just one of its many delights; the opportunity to be workman together for Christ!

KR Creations

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

## Something to Share

*The most unusual gift...*

I took a drive to Philadelphia one Sunday afternoon just looking for an opportunity to bless someone. After wandering the streets of the downtown for a while, I spotted this homeless guy who was sitting there with a poster asking for anything and with a "God Bless" on the bottom. He seemed to be a pretty cognizant gentleman. I told him that I had something for him that was going to make him a very unusual person on the streets of Philadelphia. I was going to give him a secret so that he would have something that he could share with others.



I placed the CrossPuzzle in his hands and began reading the words of the instruction sheet to him. He repeated everything after me as I said it. I think it was a memory device that he used to help him remember the words and show that he was being attentive. He was immediately impressed that it was a cross. And he quickly understood it as an analogy of how the good and the evil are locked together inside of us; that one part is firmly anchored in this world while the other part wishes to fly free. When I finally showed him how to unlock it and get the pieces apart, his eyes became as big as saucers. He held up the cross and said that it was such a wonderful gift. He would sit it on his TV and tell his landlady about it. I told him that he was the only one in the whole of Philadelphia who knew the secret of this puzzle and he should make sure that he told the secret to lots of other people. He should also be sure to tell them that it is Jesus who can unlock one's life. ❖

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