

THE MEANING OF "X"

(A Message for Adult Open Air Presentation)

INTRODUCTION:

Fill in the words: "The Meaning" and talk about words having definite meanings especially when they are found in context.

Illustration: The evening I proposed marriage to the girl I was dating she thought I was wanting to break up with her. My words about change were being misunderstood. I finally was able to convince her of my true intentions and what I meant by "change." I did not want to be misunderstood (It is good if you have a personal story that will give your audience the importance of words having specific meanings).

Fill in the words: " of X" and talk about even a letter can have a specific meaning in the right context.

Point I

Finish the math problem: $7 + 5 = 10$. And then put an X by the 10

Ask the crowd what X means.

Fill in the word: Wrong

Point II

Talk about getting a card on your birthday and seeing the letters XOXOXOXO after the signature.

Write: XOXOXOXO on the board

Ask the crowd what XOXOXO means in this illustration. Most people say hugs and kisses. So you can ask what hugs and kisses mean. Eventually...

Fill in the word: "Love" in the box

Point III

Talk to the crowd about buying something expensive, and the salesman puts a piece of paper in front of you with an X.

Draw in X and line on the contract. What does the X mean here? If they say it means signature, ask why they want your signature. Of course this would mean you are making a commitment to purchase an item.

Write in the box: "Commitment"

Someone handed you a map with a dotted line and a X...

Draw in dotted line and a X

What does X mean here? Eventually someone will say treasure or something valuable.

Transition:

THE CROWD HAS SEEN how just a single letter can have various meanings depending on its use in context. Now I would like to talk about a symbol that is recognized the world over but is often misunderstood, (like the way my wife misunderstood me the evening I proposed to her.)

I WILL APPLY all four of these meanings to the symbol because in context these meanings apply.

PUT THE CROSS up over the X in your heading

THE CROSS MEANS something is wrong, terribly wrong. The cross is a symbol of death. Meaning someone did something terrible to deserve such a cruel and painful death. What had Jesus done wrong. Robbers were placed on either side of Jesus (Mt. 27:38). Two noted criminals. But what had Jesus done wrong? Two Roman rulers, Pilate and Herod both said they could find no fault with Him. What had Jesus done that was so terribly wrong? Why would God allow His beloved Son to so suffer if he had done nothing wrong (Matt. 17:5)?

THE CROSS MEANS God was demonstrating His love towards us (Romans 5:8). God hates sin and his justice demands it be punished (Romans 6:23). It was my sin and your sin that deserved the death penalty, and Jesus was suffering the punishment in our place (2 Cor. 5:20). Jesus had kept all His Fathers laws "in Him there is no sin." 1 John 3:5. At this point you can go through any number of the 10 commandments to reveal guilt and sin. If God showed such great love for us, (John 3:16), then what do I have to do to be saved or forgiven?

THE CROSS MEANS I need to make a commitment in order to receive this wonderful gift of eternal life (Romans 6:23).

HOW? Repent (Turn) I must agree with God that I should have received the punishment I deserved for my sin. To turn means an inward brokenness over my sin and a willingness to turn from sin to God. This commitment means faith (Ephesians 2:8,9). It means I will trust with all my heart that Jesus' death was sufficient punishment to pay for all my sins. The proof that God accepted His Sons payment is the empty grave. When I believe like this, I receive the greatest treasure of all.

THE CROSS MEANS I have eternal life and will go to heaven when I die. I will live in God's kingdom forever. Matthew 13:44 describes a man who found hidden treasure. So valuable was this treasure that he sold everything he had to buy the field the treasure was in. Don't let pride keep you from pursuing and obtaining this treasure called eternal life. Repent today and trust in the death and resurrection of Jesus as payment in full for your sins.

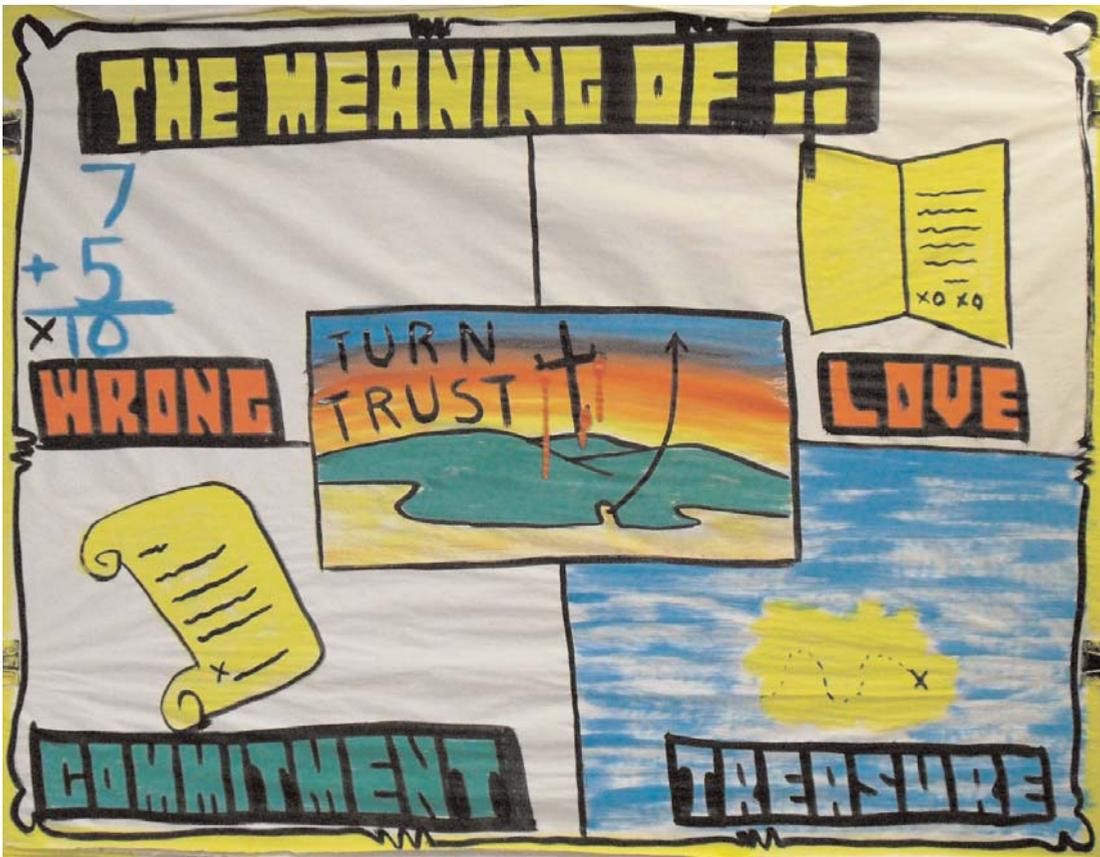
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