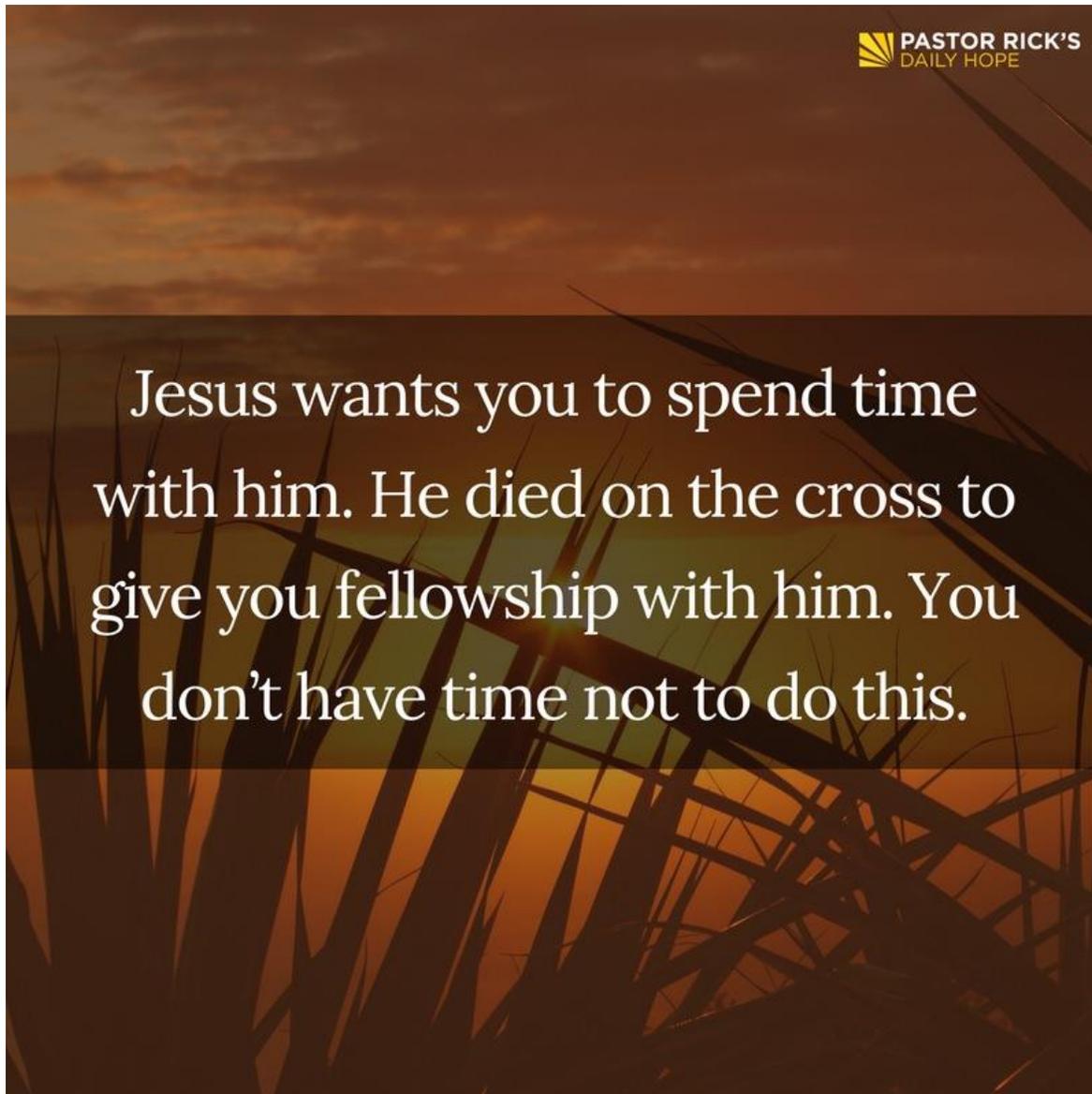


**Daily Life with Christ. Love-27: Understanding the objective, universal, unchanging, eternal nature of love: 2nd Person Personal Relationship with Jesus Christ—problem of a reductionism that is based on one’s linguistic community (Dasein).**



(Pdf copy at <http://www.fbcweb.org/Doctrines/040518.pdf>; for background and complete series, see <http://www.fbcweb.org/doctrines.html>).

**George:** What is reductionism?

**Stephen:** Reductionism is when you reduce the whole truth of about something to just one aspect of its truth.

**George:** Can you give me an example?

**Stephen:** Sure, consider Galatians 2:20 where Paul says *“I have been crucified with Christ; 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 for me.”* In reductionism one would reduce the co-crucifixion with Christ, the indwelling life of Christ, Christ’s love to only being for Paul since Paul applies these truths only to himself. Paul does not say Christ loves everyone, he says Christ “loved me and gave Himself for me.”

**George:** Yes, but we have other passages that teaches that Christ loves everyone: the whole world—John 3:16!

**Stephen:** Of course! So, if one took just one passage, one truth, just Galatians 2:20, and taught that Christ only died for Paul he would be guilty of reductionism.

**George:** Where in the Bible does it teach a believer can pray to Jesus?

**Stephen:** There are dozens of passages that implicitly teach this. As far as explicit teaching of praying to Jesus, consider 1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Cor 12:8-10; 1 Cor. 16:22; Rev. 22:20; Acts 7:56; 4:24; 1 Tim 1:12. Besides, how can anyone have an intimate 2<sup>nd</sup> person relationship with Jesus Christ apart from direct and unmediated conversation to Him? Do you believe that one can thank Jesus Christ? There are many passages of giving thanks to the LORD, and LORD in context is Jesus Christ, and this LORD is also the LORD of the Old Testament who was the object of prayer. In 1 Tim. 1:12, Paul thanked Jesus—He did not tell God the Father to thank Jesus for him. Again, I just don’t see how anyone can have a 2<sup>nd</sup> person relationship with Jesus Christ apart from daily communication with Him—seems like to reject praying to Jesus would reduce relationship with Him to a 3<sup>rd</sup> person “He,” which by nature cannot be personally intimate.

**George:** So, you are telling me that all the Charismatics and prosperity gospel types, who have no Bible doctrine and are theologically illiterate, are right when they go around calling on the name of Jesus? I have never liked all that superficial praising Jesus for everything—only to make themselves look more spiritual. Furthermore, many of these groups are heretical about a number of Christian doctrines.

**Stephen:** Are you telling me that you instinctively have a distaste for the idea of talking to Jesus because you do not like the activity of certain Christian groups? Are your strong negative feelings about those groups cause you to dislike the idea of praying to Jesus? Your dislike for being like them affects what the Bible says about a personal relationship with Jesus Christ?

**George:** But many of them are heretical.

**Stephen:** Yes, I agree, but we must learn to, as they say, “eat the chicken and leave the bones.” I would hate to think that my negative attitude to certain believers caused me to have an unbiblical attitude with Jesus Christ. I think it is crucial for every believer to develop a strong devotional life, time set aside away from everything else, when it is just the believer and the LORD. This includes time with Jesus Christ. It should be the most exciting time of every day—the most transcendent of the day. What would your response be if you heard that Jesus Christ was going to literally be in one of the rooms of your house at a certain time to meet with you? Would that not excite you? Well, He is there and everywhere else too. It is just that we get so busy with the

details of life throughout the day that it is impossible to have the same kind of relationship with Him in the midst of activities as we can when it is just us and Him—not TV, no phone, no Facebook, no distractions at all. Just 2<sup>nd</sup> person time with Jesus to open your soul's appreciation and love of Him.

**George:** This sounds kind a creepy or mystical.

**Stephen:** My guess is that you view it as creepy or mystical because of your idealism (Dasein from linguistic community), not because of reality as such (Scripture). Such negative feelings did not come from God, it came from your dispositions, attitudes, and dislikes—all developed within your Dasein. They have become part of who you are so much that you cannot even see, let alone appreciate, what the Bible says a communicative 2<sup>nd</sup> person relationship to Jesus. Your religious feelings are blinding you to what it means to have a real intimate relationship with Christ as taught in the Word of God that you claim to love.