

OpEd: Campus Crusade Defends Name Change



On Monday, posted an op-ed from Michael Youssef questioning the timing of Campus Crusade for Christ's pending name change. Mike Adamson, director of communications for the organization, believes the article contained significant error. Here he offers a deeper explanation of the name change.

I understand that magazines and websites are not able to fact-check everything that gets reprinted. But unfortunately, today that resulted in the repetition of statements that are simply not true. Thanks for the opportunity to correct and clarify those.

First, Michael Youssef indirectly quoted Campus Crusade for Christ Vice President Steve Sellers as saying the name of Christ was hampering our effectiveness. That was never said. It is not remotely true. It does not reflect, in any way, our thinking and motivation. It's our hope that Youssef was himself repeating an unverified fallacy from another source.

What is true? The words *Crusade* and *Campus* were limiting our effectiveness as we take the initiative to approach people with the love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ. *Crusade* was a flashpoint that carried negative associations that were at odds with the heart and message

of Jesus. *Campus* was confusing to those who were looking for options to live out their faith beyond the university.

Twenty percent of non-Christians willing to talk about the gospel with us were less willing to continue the conversation once they heard our name. Ten percent of believers were less willing to live out their faith in the context of our mission once they heard our name.

The only hurdle to the gospel should be the cross itself. That cross is part of our new logo. As we live out our calling to proclaim the name of Jesus and to share with people the good news of our desperate need and God's magnificent provision, we changed our name, simply out of love for the people who need Jesus.

We understand not everyone will like the new name. Change is always difficult, especially when it's something so dear to our hearts. It's vital to know that we are not running away from Jesus, but moving intentionally toward lost people in Jesus name. Our new tagline prominently describes us as "a caring community passionate about connecting people to Jesus Christ."

Second, Youssef also wondered if Campus Crusade for Christ's leaders may "feel so secure with their sizable endowment that they no longer feel wholly dependent on Christ." Nothing could be farther from the truth.

Campus Crusade for Christ is a faith-based missions

agency. Each of the missionaries who carry the gospel to the world raises their support from like-minded individuals and churches. This includes the president, Steve Douglass. Most often these missionaries have little margin in their accounts and they trust God to provide for them on an ongoing basis. In addition, some followers of Jesus will directly fund specific evangelism and discipleship efforts. There simply is no sizable endowment. Youssef made an inaccurate assumption, which led to false conclusions.

On a more personal note, to hint that our “allegiance and affections” have shifted from dependence on Christ to something else is simply unkind and unsubstantiated. To “wonder” in print as if it were true, in order to make a teaching point to the audience feels inappropriate. It was not speech seasoned with grace.

As followers of Jesus we welcome the privilege of “walking in the light” and of taking our thoughts (and actions) captive to Christ. We also believe that “it is to a man’s glory to overlook an offense” and we hold no ill will toward Michael. We simply ask that a leader of his influence think carefully before he leads readers down paths that are unjustifiably hurtful to others in the body of Christ.

Today, as much as any point in our history, we in Campus Crusade for Christ approach the world on our knees and in the power of the Holy Spirit. We stand arm-in-arm with the body of Christ, including

Michael Youssef,
to proclaim the gospel with the knowledge that only God can
open eyes that are
blind and turn hearts of stone into hearts of flesh. This will
only happen as
God chooses to draw men and women to Himself in response to
our obedient faith.
It's always a miracle.

In light of the billions of people who currently have
not experienced the saving grace of Jesus, it's our prayer
that we as believers
trust God for whatever it takes to reach them. May God give us
all the grace to
represent Him in ways that extend far beyond the name on the
door. May we all
trust Him as we take the initiative daily to connect people
with Jesus through
our words and actions. May God honor our obedient faith and
draw men to
Himself.

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