



When Rumors Aren't True

MARCH 2021



An upcoming movie charges that Cru, along with a number of churches and other Christian organizations, have departed from the Gospel and replaced it with the Social Gospel. While that is *not* true of Cru, it is a serious enough rumor that we thought it should be addressed in our newsletter.

Bill Bright started Campus Crusade for Christ in 1951 [left] with one goal: win students to Christ today, disciple them to reach others tomorrow. He talked repeatedly about the Great Commission and bringing the Gospel to everyone.

Over the years CCC (now Cru) was rumored to be a number of things:



1950s-1960s “CCC wants to become a denomination.”

Rumor: *Campus Crusade for Christ is secretly planning to become a huge global denomination.* Not true..... However, there WERE leaders within Campus Crusade who did in fact want it to become a denomination.

They said “The Church isn’t doing its job and we can do it better; we don’t like the institutional church and we are out to be radical in our Christianity.” They went to Bill Bright and said “Become a denomination or we will all leave.”

Bill refused; he believed CCC should be a support to God’s church, not become one. Much of the leadership left, forming the Evangelical Orthodox Church. Campus Crusade continued to focus on evangelism and discipleship of students so they would in turn use their training in their churches upon graduation.



1960s-1970s “Campus Crusade is a front for the CIA.”

Rumor: *Campus Crusade is actually an arm of the CIA.* Some CCC staff members worked in secret in Communist and Middle Eastern countries, despite the risks, because they wanted everyone to know Jesus.

Critics said that no Christian could *possibly* be motivated to live like this because of the love of Christ – they *must* be spying and using Campus Crusade as a cover for being with the CIA....That rumor was not true. They wanted people in every country, even closed ones, to know Jesus..... P.S. Jason Bourne denies ever being on CCC staff (*at least officially*)



1970s-1980s “Campus Crusade is a cult”



Rumor: *Campus Crusade* staff blindly follow Bill Bright. Followers of Jim Jones (*left*) created Jonestown in the early 1970s, and their mass suicide in 1978 had everyone talking about cults. People began looking at dedicated Christians and Christian groups with suspicious eyes.

Critics said that no Christians could possibly be so motivated and dedicated by the love of Christ to devote their lives to it; Campus Crusade must be using mind control, etc to convince their staff to live like that. “After all,” they said, “religion shouldn’t be taken too seriously.”

Originally a businessman, Bill Bright encouraged staff to think for themselves, to innovate, and to find new ways to share Christ and disciple others. He often spoke about never losing one’s first love for Christ (Rev 2:4) and living for the praise of God, not individual leaders or organizations.

2020s “Cru embraces the Social Justice Gospel”



Rumor: *Cru* has departed the Gospel for the Social Gospel. The movie *Enemies Within the Church* will accuse Cru and a number of other organizations of departing from the Gospel. It may be released in theaters in April.

We did have Cru19, a national conference (*left*), where some outside speakers promoted a Social Justice agenda. The film makes it appear that this is now the position of Cru. It isn’t, but like the push years ago to change Cru into a church, some staff are advocating for Cru to change its mission.

Personally we don’t believe inviting these keynote speakers was a good idea. Our leaders said they wanted staff to be exposed to alternative viewpoints –but having them speak at our largest meetings seemed to imply their endorsement.

Advocating justice -- even from a Biblical standpoint --- is not the mission of Cru. Cru continues to be committed to the Great Commission; to evangelism and discipleship of faculty and students, pointing people to Christ.

The apostle Paul changed his methods, but not his message, becoming all things to all men so that by all possible means he might save some (1 Cor 9:22). A year of Covid has led to new methods of ministering ----but not a new message. We still talk about the true and only Savior, who was rumored to be dead but is very much alive. Happy Easter.

Steve and Sarah