

LIVING THE CRUCIFIED LIFE

Discovering the secret of the cross

It was one of the weekly Agape meal times in a Jesus Fellowship house. The members of the church household were together for the covenant meal which includes the sacrament of bread and wine.

During the worship time, with many young men present, one of them began to "psalm" about the power of the Cross. ("psalming" is impromptu singing under the Spirit's direction). At length, he began to sing repeatedly, "I want to die". These words were taken up by all present.

In the Holy Spirit's anointing, they were powerfully applied to every heart as a word from God. And all who sang them knew that they must live them.

"I WANT TO DIE"

I want to die to my flesh, to all envy and pride,
To lose my old self, live with You crucified,
To be dead to this dark world's enticement and charm,
To the old sins and habits which do me much harm.
I want to die, I want to die, I want to die, I want to die.
I want to live in Your life, I want to stay in Your will,
To go through the struggles, endure with You still.
Old things which seemed gain to me, counting as loss.
All filled with the Spirit, I live through the cross.
I want to live, I want to live, I want to live, I want to live.

BURIED INTO CHRIST'S DEATH

We are buried by baptism into Christ's death, united with Him in the cross and grave.[Rom 6:4][Col 2:12] The Holy Spirit applies this unity with His death, to our souls. We know that our old self has been crucified with Christ.[Rom 6:6] God has brought about and requires us to "know" it and to "reckon" it.[Rom 6:11] In this identification with the cross, we die to sin and to the self-life. We "rise with Christ" and are "alive to God".[Col 2:12][Rom 6:8] We live baptised, applying the power of the cross to our lives daily and so living as "crucified with Christ".[Gal 2:20]

■ We must die to self

We are called by Jesus to self-denial.[Mark 8:34] Our self-life has died with Him. We must now agree to this. We must, as it were, sign our own death sentence. We must choose to dethrone self. It is only as we are united with Christ's death in the spirit of faith that we are cut off from the corrupting power of the self-life.

It has been said: "We are so addicted to self, so wrapped up in self, so entwined with self, so infatuated with self, that our spiritual natures cannot be centred in God in a deep union of love, without a violent contradiction of our old natures. This is the secret of the cross. It does violence to corrupt human nature. It slays the old life." (FJ Huegel)

We must die daily to all self-righteousness, self-seeking, self-pity, self-justification, self-esteem, and every other self-glorying manifestation of the self-centred flesh.

■ We must "lose our lives" in order to find them.

Jesus said that only as we were willing to lose our lives could we save them and become His servants.[John 12:25] He spoke of the "corn of wheat" which must fall into the ground and die in order to germinate and produce growth and harvest.[John 12:24]

He thus spoke of His need, and our need, to die on the cross. Every vestige of our old self-motivated natural life must be "lost". Those things which we have counted as gain to us, we must count as loss in order to win Christ. Such "gains" may include our culture, our upbringing, our attainments.

■ Crucifying the flesh and the world

Those who belong to Christ Jesus must crucify the self-centred flesh with its desires.[Gal 5:24] Only when this is done can the individual soul and the church of Jesus flourish.

We must not "love the world or the things of the world",[\[1 John 2:15\]](#) nor must we have "prides of life".[\[1 John 2:16\]](#) We are to "boast in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ through which the world is crucified to us and we to the world".[\[Gal 6:14\]](#) We are no longer of the world's spirit, but of the Spirit of God.

■ **The dying of Jesus in our bodies**

Living the crucified life means we absorb pressure, accept opposition, face disappointment and fellowship with Jesus in His sufferings. This is the "dying of Jesus" in our bodies.[\[2 Cor 4:10\]](#) And as we share the wounds of Jesus, life flows from us.[\[2 Cor 4:12\]](#)

■ **We must "will" to die**

So many Christians, after baptism, forget to use their will to stay dead, buried and living with Jesus. No wonder there are many backsliders. As we continue "living the crucified life", we are "alive to God" and will "walk in the Spirit",[\[Gal 5:25\]](#) enjoying the victorious life of Jesus.

But we must use our will! Do it now. Pray this prayer:

Lord Jesus, I am united with You in Your death and Your life. I now yield my old self into Your death. I now declare it "crucified with Christ". I will continue to die daily to this self-centred flesh. I will die to the spirit of the world. I am alive with You. I will be alive with You day by day. I will live united with Your life.