

# RADICAL DISCIPLESHIP

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2 Cor. 5:14-15-*For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them.*

## A NEW MAN IN CHRIST

The beauty of the gospel is in the truth of the word. But the deep truths of the word of God are hidden from so many. The pure truth of what Jesus did on the cross has been lost on many Christians, otherwise they could not possibly live double lives as they do.

Jesus died for everyone. That is clear. But Paul goes on to say, "therefore all died." Jesus died for everyone, therefore everyone also died. I died. You died. This is not a figure of speech. Nor is it an ideal to which you should aspire. It is the fact and the power of salvation and resurrection. You might say, "But if I died, I would be dead. How can this be?" My answer, friend, is: how can any of this be? Jesus was born of a woman who had no intercourse with her husband. How can that be? He was without sin, the only man in the history of the world for this to be the case. How can that be? When He was crucified on the cross, Christ took upon Himself all the sins of the world, yours and mine included. How can that be? And then, three days later, He rose from the dead

because death had no hold on Him. How can that be?

With all this in mind, why is it so difficult to believe what God says in His word? Jesus died. **You died with Him – that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died for them.**

Jesus died. You died. Death could no longer hold Him and it could not hold you, either. But that next statement is the crux of the whole gospel. *Those who live (those who died with Jesus) should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died for them.*

What does this do to your concept of Christianity, friend? If it shatters it, that may be a good thing. According to the word of God, we have no alternative but to stop living for ourselves and to start living for He who died for us. Sad to say, the Church is full of Christians who do not take this Scripture seriously.

We can no longer live for ourselves. That is disobedience at the highest level. Christ died for us and we died with Him. For that short period of time, we participated in the deity of Christ. We entered into His death and received, therefore,

all of the accomplishments that were wrought by that death – victory over the devil; the power of sin broken; the mastery of sin destroyed. We were joined with Jesus in death and, likewise, we are joined with Him in life. We can no longer live for ourselves.

*I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me (Gal. 2:20).*

We can no longer live for ourselves. Why, then, do we do so? It is because we do not believe the fullness of the Scripture. God's word is light to the darkness. It is the truth that shatters all falsity. **It is the word of the Creator of the universe that goes forth in power and shatters any opposition to it.** And we choose to ignore large segments of the word of God, including some of the most vital words of the gospel.

## ARE YOU A NEW CREATION?

Are you a new creation in Christ? Did Jesus die at Calvary and resurrect for nothing? Did you receive His salvation for sin and that's all? What do you do with the rest of the gospel?

Rom. 6:1-2,4-*What shall we say then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?*

*We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.*

The new man that God created, through salvation and resurrection, is not a man of sin. He is a man in whom sin shall have no mastery. Why is sin still your master? It is because you have not believed the truth of the gospel. The word of God says you can no longer live for yourself, but you choose to ignore that Scripture, or, at the least, you choose to disobey it. No wonder sin is still your master! God has made a way for you to live in Christ and you have chosen to live for yourself. You have chosen to believe a lie from one who has no authority to lie to you!

God's word says sin has no dominion over us. We say we would rather allow sin to continue to have dominion over us because we would rather live for ourselves than to be obedient to the word of God and live for He who died for us. Do we see what we have done to the beautiful word and work of our Savior? We have received His salvation gladly, and then

turned our backs on His gift of pure life.

## **BECOMING A NEW CREATION**

When we, by the grace of God, realize what Jesus did and then realize what we did, we will, hopefully, fall on our faces before God in repentance. **God's gift, through Jesus, was not just life in Heaven throughout eternity but also life on earth for the duration of our time here.** And it is to be life lived in Jesus, not life lived to ourselves.

What Jesus Christ did for me did not just save me from sins of the past. It also saved me from sins in the future. He saved me completely and He demands a total commitment from me. I died with Jesus. I was raised to life with Jesus. Now God expects me to live with Jesus. Why would I choose otherwise? And if I choose to live with Jesus, it must be on His terms. God wants me to be pure. He wants me to be holy. He wants me to be perfect. **I can be all of those things in Jesus. I can be none of those things in myself.**

Oh, get hold of the pure totality of the gospel, friend! A perfect life has been created for you through the once-for-all sacrifice of Jesus Christ and His resurrection from the dead. He did not do that for you while you stood by, an innocent bystander. If

that were the case, you would have to receive your salvation by faith and then be left to your own devices to go forward.

No! You died with Christ. You participated in that death. That is why your death to the old man is a sure thing. And you were resurrected with Jesus. You participated in that resurrection and that is why your new man in Christ is also a sure thing. You have a sure thing. Why would you choose to live a life that is full of uncertainty?

God gave you the keys to a Rolls-Royce. Why do you insist on driving a Corvair? God gave you the keys to Heaven on earth. Why do you insist on living in earth on earth? Accept the totality of what Jesus did and now begin to live for He who died for you. Get hold of this truth, friend. To completely understand what Jesus did at the cross and through His resurrection is a life-changing truth. It is not just salvation. It is the beginning of a restoration process that God intended from the beginning of time; and He is ready to perfect it in you – now! It is a life-changing experience. It converts you from the old, dead man to a new, alive man, a man alive in the Spirit. The flesh has gone the way of the Nehru jacket. The Spirit is now where the life is. Stop living for yourself. You are wasting God's resurrection power!

## LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

So, what does it mean to live in the spirit? It means to transcend from the natural order of things to the divine order. God is a spirit and He wants us to experience life in the same way that He does. He made us in His image. Part of that image is the fact that we, too, have a spirit. We must allow the spirit to take control of our lives. That means that the flesh must be crucified in experience as it already is in fact.

With a flesh that no longer interferes with our ability to serve God on His terms, we rise up to the place of the spirit and we experience life with the Father, with Jesus and with the angels of God.

Jesus constantly said, "I am in the Father and the Father is in Me." What did He mean? He meant that, though He chose to live as a man here on the earth, as opposed to living as God, He also chose to see through His spiritual eyes instead of His earthly eyes. He chose to enter the spirit realm so that He could experience life with the Father and the angels of God.

It is to be no different with us. We, too, have a spirit; and we, too, need to experience the full baptism of the full power of the Holy Spirit, as did Jesus. We need to be in Jesus as Jesus was in the Father. Didn't He tell us that was what He wanted to see in us? Yes, He did!

**We can choose to enter the spirit realm and see through our spiritual eyes instead of through our earthly eyes.** If we see only through our earthly eyes, we will only see earthly things. If we, however, see through our spiritual eyes, we will see things as God sees them.

The word tells us that the Holy Spirit searches the heart of God to know His thoughts and His will. And the Holy Spirit is our teacher. He is the One who shares with us the deep things of God. We must have ears to hear and eyes to see.

## LIVING IN THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD

As we begin to live in the presence of the Lord, we will begin to see things as He sees them. We will begin to experience deeper spiritual understanding, the result of which is that we will see the things of earth differently. We will see through Jesus' eyes.

What must we do to have these kind of experiences? We must yield all to the Lord. God wants everything, not just some things.

Luke 14:33-*Any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.*

What do you do with a Scripture like that? Was Jesus kidding? I don't think so! God wants it all. We must allow God to be God in His

relationship with us. That means that we must yield everything to Him. We must choose to pay the price of radical discipleship regardless of what that price entails.

If it means persecution, suffering, torture or imprisonment, can we still say "yes"? If it means the loss of everything we have, can we still say "yes"?

If we want to live in the continual presence of the Lord, we must die completely to ourselves. We must become nothing so that the everything that God is can operate through us without interference.

We can, and must, get to the place where we realize that "all things" work together for good. In other words, nothing comes our way except that it comes by the hand of God. God not only has absolute control over everything that is occurring in the world, but the devil, regardless of what we see with our natural eyes, is no more than a pawn in the hands of his Creator.

Not only does the devil have to ask God for permission to harass us, but when he gets that permission, he can only do that which God chooses for him to do. And God chooses him to do those things (under God's control) that conform us to the likeness of His Son.

That is why there is nothing to fear. That is why we can live in the presence of the Lord and serve God in the

spiritual realm – regardless of what is occurring in the natural realm.

Most of you know my situation. I have pancreatic cancer and have had it for four years. I have been given up for dead six different times by the doctors; and on each occasion, God chose to miraculously keep me alive, even though He also chose not to heal me. The cancer is still there, worse than ever. It was only a few months ago that I was, once again, given only a few days to live; and only a few weeks ago that I was told the same thing yet again.

That is what we see with our natural eyes. With our spiritual eyes, however, we see that God is doing a different thing today, different than at any time in history, and He is doing so with me, too. The physical toll can keep me from living a healthy life but it cannot keep me from living a victorious life. I can, spiritually, soar into the Heavens and operate in the spiritual realm, by the grace of God.

I can walk in the presence of the Lord and live under the power of the Holy Spirit of God; and when the devil shows up with his latest diabolical plan to kill me, I know that he can do nothing without God's approval. And God's approval is always to my benefit.

So, Paul says: What shall we say in response to this? If

God is for us, who can be against us? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? No! In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

**NEW INFORMATION**  
**Tuesday Radical Discipleship meetings will now be broadcast, via internet, world-wide, in real time. You can log on to my website to access the program.**

**These meetings will continue every Tuesday evening, at 7:15PM at Cornerstone Fellowship Church, 66 Waverly Drive (behind the Fredericktowne Mall, next to Ollie's Outlet). All are welcome.**

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**BE RADICAL FOR GOD!!!**