

## Dead Man Walking

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

Paul in one of his earliest writings in the NT has this rather shocking verse that would have arrested the attention of the reader of that day. Jesus was tortured and killed by way of crucifixion; a horrific event we recall with somberness every Good Friday and symbolically every time we take communion. This kind of death was ugly and yet it was the fountain of life for all who believe. And with this verse, Paul puts you and me on that cross to die. We identify with the crucifixion of Jesus not as an onlooker who watches from a distance. No, we see the cross and as an awareness of sin bursts forth into our hearts and gives way to faith which trusts Jesus, we actually climb up on that cross to have our old nature die with Him. We are crucified with Jesus not for punishment, but for the way to life everlasting.

Jesus says that all who want to follow him must die. "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it (Matthew 16:24)." And so Paul says in Galatians, "I no longer live." The old nature has been pulled off the throne of my life and sits on the ground disempowered from ruling me anymore. But, if my old nature is no longer in charge, then what am I to do? And Paul answers this question with the latter part of this verse: "Christ lives in me."

This is the great news about Christianity and that which makes it totally unique amongst other world religions. Christianity is not ultimately about trying. It is ultimately about trusting. Effort to be good does not make us holy. Rather, we are being made holy from the inside first and that causes us to want to be good. This is what Paul means when he says that Christ lives in him.

The Christian life is all about this simple question: is the love and joy of Jesus increasing its power and transformation in my inner being OR is my sinful nature raising its ugly head from its spiritual casket seeking to ruin my life? Sadly, too many people profess to follow Jesus but then only feed the old nature with habits and worldly pleasure.

If you want the life of Jesus to live in you, then the old nature must die over and over. Jesus said to pick up the cross "daily." This means learning to be selfless, generous, gentle, loving, kind, patient etc. (Galatians 5:22—the fruit of the Spirit). If you are not these things with increasing measure, then your old nature is gaining influence and like an old horror movie—that nature keeps coming back to life to wreak destruction.

There is a spiritual freedom of life that is only found in the death of our depraved nature. Become a dead man walking in the power of Christ who rose from the dead. His Spirit in you can accomplish great and miraculous works.

*Prayer: Father, I die to my old nature right now and ask that the power of the life found only in the resurrected Christ would reign supreme in my soul. Help me to hate sin and to love pure right living.*

Your Partner in the Gospel – *Ken Nabi*