

Death and Life in the Writings of Paul
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1 Death and Life in the Writings of Paul

Development of SDA Lifestyle

Lecture 6

2 Let's summarize what have we learned

1. Crucifixion of self is a union with Christ in His death. Rom 6:3-4
2. It involves a conscious choice to surrender the old life of sin and to develop, acquire a new life of continual surrender to Jesus. Rom 6:11
3. It needs to happen daily. Luke 9:23
4. Without it we cannot be Christ's disciples. Luke 14:27, 28, 33

3

Jesus tried to explain this to the disciples before His death, but until they saw the cross, and received the Holy Spirit, they couldn't comprehend it. But when they saw Jesus go through crucifixion to resurrection, they saw life with new eyes.

By seeing their Lord embrace the Cross, they learned that they could too.

4 The portrayal of the Cross became the core of their evangelistic method

- Peter (1 Peter 2:24; 3:18; 4:1-2, 12-13)
- John (1 John 3:16-21; 4:17; 5:11-13)
- Matthew
- Mark
- Luke, all explained it,
- But the one who gave it the greatest clarity was Paul.

5 Paul's portrayal of the Cross

- Galatians 3:1
- "O foolish Galatians! Who has *bewitched you* that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified?
- The Cross was Paul's ultimate weapon. If they went astray even after seeing the Cross, how else could he reach them?

6 Paul's experience: Galatians 2:20

"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." Gal 2:20.

Being crucified with Christ means my own life career has ceased. I am

deceased. Only His plans still exist in my life.
That is scary—at least it is for me—until He reminds me again how glorious are His plans, and what awful messes I have made by following my own plans.

7 Paul's Explanation: Romans 6:3-4

³ Do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

⁴ Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

8 Romans 6:5-7

⁵ “For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death [baptism], certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection [new life in the Spirit],

⁶ knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.

⁷ For he who has died has been freed from sin.”

9 Romans 6:11-13

¹¹ Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

¹² Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.

¹³ And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

10 Let's summarize what have we learned

1. Crucifixion of self is a union with Christ in His death. Rom 6:3-4

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11 How do we experience it?

- Being crucified with Christ means being united with Him in His death so that in that moment we *actually become* dead to the old life.

- However, this is not something that happens once for all, as we know all too well.

- Rom 6:11-12 call us to *make that death actual* with reference to sin.

12 How do we experience it?

- Christ becomes our Savior when we take His death in substitution for ours, and He remains our Savior as long as we don't go back on that

decision. John 10:27-28; 6:37; 1 John 2:1-2.

- But *making His death our death*, and *making that death actual with reference to sin* demands a continuing life of faith.

13 Romans 12:1, 2

v. 1 “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. [The challenge of being a living sacrifice is the ongoing temptation to get off the altar.]

v. 2 “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. [This is obviously talking about changing our sinful ways.]

14

- That’s why the NT writers over and over urge us in various ways, to “Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things,” and “Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly [sinful] nature.”

Col 3:1, 5

15 Romans 12:1-2

v. 1 “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.” [The challenge of being a *living* sacrifice is the ongoing temptation to get off the altar.]

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16 Colossians 3 and Lifestyle

3:1-2 Set your mind on things above, not on earth

3:3 for you died

3:4 you will be resurrected or even translated

3:5 “Put to death, therefore, . . . sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires, and greed, which is idolatry.”

17 Colossians 3 and Lifestyle

3:6 “Because of these, the wrath of God is coming.”

3:7 “You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived.”

3:8 “But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to one another, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in the image of its Creator.”

18 Colossians 3 and Lifestyle

- Notice the list that Paul gives (in vv. 5, 8, and 9) of things that Christians are supposed to not *cultivate*, but *crucify*: “sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires, . . . greed, . . . anger, rage, malice, slander, . . . filthy language,” and “lying.”
- Wouldn’t you say that list summarizes the main content of the worldly culture that we are surrounded with? Sexual immorality, violence, greed, and deception of all kinds—aren’t those the staple ingredients of popular movies, television, books, and magazines?

19

- And when we choose such topics for our entertainment, we are not crucifying those things, but cultivating them. And if we are not crucifying sin, we are choosing to crucify Jesus.

20 Colossians 3 and Lifestyle

- 3:6: “Because of these, the wrath of God is coming.” Then how will we escape it, if this is what we love also?
- We are talking about principles. Not every kind of entertainment has these characteristics, but many do. I’m not telling you what to do. I’m reading Scripture to you, inviting you to accept these principles and let the Holy Spirit guide you in applying them.

21 Colossians 3 and Lifestyle

- 3:7: These things are part of the “normal worldly life” that we put away when we accepted Christ.
- 3:8-11: But now we must put off not only “sexual impurity, evil desires of all kinds, greed, anger, rage, malice, slander, filthy language,” and “lying,” but also prejudice, “class” consciousness, pride of nationality, pride of ethnicity, pride of race, pride of status—whether social, economic or educational. Are those kinds of pride valued and promoted in worldly culture? Obviously.

22 Colossians 3 and Lifestyle

- In contrast to these, Paul gives in vv. 12-17 a description of Christian lifestyle, the lifestyle Christ calls us to model, both individually and as a church family. These are the goals, characteristics, and consuming passions of *real disciples*.

23

- We dare not be otherwise in this uncertain world than *real disciples*. If *real discipleship* is our consuming passion, these are the characteristics that will be increasingly seen in our lives. Whatever hinders me from developing those characteristics has to be given to Jesus. This is the essence of Adventist lifestyle.

24

- For some this may sound really scary. But the **point to focus on is not the moment of dying (the crisis of surrender)**, but the **immediate joyful resurrection (new life in the Spirit)** that will continue throughout eternity.

25

- This truth is real. When God helped me grasp this concept, the writings of Paul opened up to me like never before. Please notice that ministry in the power of the Spirit is only possible through sharing Christ's death.

26

Christ's resurrection power is continually available to us right now, in this life, if we accept the condition of dying with Him. The two cannot be separated. **If you take up your cross and die with Him, you will also share right now in His resurrection power.**

27

2 Corinthians 4:7 "But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us."

28 2 Corinthians 4:8-12

"We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; ⁹ persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. ¹⁰ **We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.** ¹¹ For we who are **alive** are **always being given over to death** for Jesus' sake, so that his life may be revealed in our mortal body. ¹² So then, **death** is at work in us, but **life** is at work in you."

29 2 Corinthians 5:14,15,17

¹⁴ For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died.

¹⁵ And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. . . .

¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

30 2 Corinthians 4:14

"Because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you in his presence."

31 Galatians 2:20

- ²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

32 Philippians 3:3-6

- For it is we who are the circumcision, we who worship by the Spirit of

God, who glory in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh-- ⁴ though I myself have reasons for such confidence. If anyone else thinks he has reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: ⁵ circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for legalistic righteousness, faultless.

33 Philippians 3:7-10

• But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸ What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ

34 Philippians 3:7-10

• ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ-- the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. ¹⁰ I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death

35

• Right now – we experience in the present mortal body, fellowship with Christ in His sufferings, which we can bear because with suffering comes resurrection power.

36

• Who gets resurrection power?
• Only the dead.
• Philippians 3:11, “and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.”

37

• Who gets filled?
• Only the empty.
• Luke 1:53 “He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty.”

38 Bargaining

• Isn't there some easier way?
• Why does self have to die?
• If self is obedient, is that not enough?
• Why does self have to die?

39 Romans 8:5-8

Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.

⁶ The mind set on the flesh [self] is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace;

⁷ the mind set on the flesh is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.

⁸ Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.

40

The sinful self **cannot** be made obedient

41

Old Self	New Self
• Old Self = humanity in the image of Satan	• New self = humanity in the image of Christ
• Human nature as degraded by Satan's deceptive tyranny	• Human nature as God originally created it, perfect and innocent
• Satan's plan for us	• Glorious beyond our present abilities to imagine

42 The heart of the “self”

• The “old self” that must die is actually the root of the plant we call “selfishness.” Selfishness is the common motive for all sin. The root of selfishness, the very essence of evil, is the sinful self, influenced in the image of Satan. It is the self-will, that tragically chooses to doubt the Life-Giver and believe Satan.

43

• The result of the resurrection/new birth, is the gift “self,” the “new creation” in the image of Christ.

• Every good thing in human nature was originally created when God made us in His own image. Every good thing in human nature is restored in the “new creation” that we are in Christ.

44

• Every evil in human nature owes its origin to Satan and sin, through which Satan used to degrade us into his evil image.

• So when we renounce self, we are only renouncing that evil element which was never part of human nature in the beginning.

• We're *not* losing anything good or desirable.

45

• So, why can't we just surrender our sins? Why do we need to surrender our very self, our very will to God?

• Because, by sin, the will itself became corrupted. The will, which before sin had been other-focused in outgoing love, like God Himself, after sin became inward focused on serving self, placing the perceived “needs” of myself above all other priorities. This is the essence of evil.

46

- When Satan first realized he was lost, and in blind rage determined to take others with him, he was not yet hardened from centuries and millenniums of evil.

47

- When Satan first planned the seduction of Adam and Eve, “he shuddered at the thought of plunging the holy, happy pair into the misery and remorse he was himself enduring. He seemed in a state of indecision; at one time firm and determined, then hesitating and wavering.” 1 SP 32

48

- Then he “he cast off his feelings of despair and weakness,” and “fortified himself to brave out the matter,” that is, to go ahead regardless of consequences. 1 SP 32

49

- The willingness to destroy others for even the chance of gaining some personal advantage, is the essence of evil.

50

- Thus Ellen White says that the self we must crucify is the “image of Satan” in humanity. We cannot at the same time choose to imitate the character of Satan and the character of Christ.

51

- Every moral decision points one way or the other. Every moral decision makes us more like the image of Christ or more like the image of Satan. Therefore, every time I awaken from sleep, I have a choice – to trust my self, my previously made plans, and my ability to carry them out, or to distrust self, surrender my self to God to be carried out or given up as His Providence shall indicate, and plead with the Holy Spirit to come dwell in me, giving me the moral power I do not have in myself, to do what He calls me to do, today.

52

- Thus Christ’s crucifixion is the pattern for the believer’s crucifixion. Some major insights into how we are to experience crucifixion of self in daily life are found in studying how Jesus surrendered Himself to crucifixion.

53 Luke 9:23

- What many are searching for, is a clear understanding of how this works in practice. A major clue is found in Luke 9:23. Notice that the call to take up the cross is given in the context of *following the example of Jesus*. “He said to all, ‘If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.’”

54

- First of all, did Jesus try in any way to orchestrate His crucifixion? He sent two disciples to prepare the upper room for the Last Supper, but there's no record of Him sending messengers to Caiaphas, Pilate, or Herod, to schedule His trials and execution.

55

- *Desire of Ages* says that "So utterly was Christ emptied of self that He made no plans for Himself. He accepted God's plans for Him, and day by day the Father unfolded His plans." Then follows, "So should we depend upon God, that our lives may be the simple outworking of His will. DA 208

56

- Notice that "being emptied of self" is a parallel expression to "dying to self" or "crucifying self." There are two parts to the process of union with Christ. Being emptied of self precedes being filled with the Holy Spirit, as crucifixion of self precedes resurrection to new life. *Desire of Ages*, 208

57

- Evidently Christ made no plans for His crucifixion; He "accepted God's plans." Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost clearly identified who orchestrated the crucifixion: it was "by the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God" that Christ was "delivered" to "lawless hands" to be "crucified" (Acts 2:23).

58

- If God arranged it, what was Jesus' part? "Father, if it is Your will, remove this cup from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done" (Luke 22:42 NKJV).
- Christ's part was to surrender. So it is with us. It is not our responsibility to devise ways of bringing ourselves to crucifixion. We have only to surrender—and keep surrendered—to the Father's love and will.

59

- Why was Jesus able to keep calm and not explode with rage when He was brutally abused by Pilate and the Roman soldiers?
- Because He rested in the conviction that everything that happened to Him was part of the Father's will.

60

- Pilate himself was amazed at Jesus' composure, and demanded, "You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?"

61

- Notice that Pilate's amazement was based on Pilate's assumption that he

was the one in control of Jesus' fate.

62

- But Jesus disagreed, plainly declaring that Pilate was not the one in control of the situation:

"You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above" (John 19:10-11).

- This was the secret of Jesus composure under brutal abuse: He knew that the One in control was His Father.

63

- In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus had stated the radical principle He lived by: "I say to you, Do not resist one who is evil. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also" (Matt 5:39).

- Before Pilate, He practiced what He had preached. Commenting on this passage, Ellen White expounds the secret of Jesus patience.

64 Mount of Blessing, 71

- "The Father's presence encircled Christ, and nothing befell Him but that which infinite love permitted for the blessing of the world. Here was His source of comfort, and it is for us. He who is imbued with the Spirit of Christ abides in Christ. The blow that is aimed at him falls upon the Saviour, who surrounds him with His presence. . . .

65 Mount of Blessing, 71

"Whatever comes to him comes from Christ. He has no need to resist evil, for Christ is his defense. Nothing can touch him except by our Lord's permission, and "all things" that are permitted "work together for good to them that love God." Romans 8:28.

Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, 71.

66

- *So the Orchestrator of the crucifixion was God the Father.* The devil and his agents could do nothing to Christ without the Father's permission.

- Whatever God permitted, Jesus accepted as proceeding from the Father's love, and in that acceptance Jesus had perfect peace.

- We can have the same peace if we will keep surrendered to God and dependant on God as He was.

See *Desire of Ages*, 208

67

- In God's will there is no thorn without a rose.

68 Romans 6:8-11

⁸ Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,

⁹ knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more.

Death no longer has dominion over Him.

¹⁰ For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.

¹¹ Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

69 We read in the previous lecture the words of Jesus that dying to self is a daily necessity

Jesus said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.

"For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it." Luke 9:23-24

70 Jesus did not leave real *disciples* any other option

Luke 14:26-27, 33

²⁶ "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his . . . own life also, he cannot be My disciple.

²⁷ "And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. . . .

³³ "So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple."