

## **DYING TO SELF (II Corinthians 4:6-12)**

**John 15:5, 8** Every true believer has at some point a desire to be used by God in some way in order to show appreciation for what Christ has done for us. The essence of God's plan for us is to bear fruit.

**Ephesians 2:10** We cannot get away from the fact that God has saved us in order to have people serve Him and have good, spiritual works (fruit) from our lives.

**Romans 12:1-2** Paul explains to the Romans how we can be successful in serving God. He says we must die to ourselves (become a sacrifice) and do not take upon ourselves the philosophy of the world but we must be changed (transformed) by renewing our minds. God's philosophy is opposite the world.

**Galatians 2:20** Paul explains that the only way to live spiritually is to die to self and live by Christ.

### **WHAT IT MEANS**

**Matthew 16:24-25** In rebuking Peter for the verses previous to these, Jesus tries to get His disciples to understand that being His disciple requires their own beliefs and setting aside personal feelings and giving themselves 100% over to the will, desires and needs of God and others before self. There are two things that separate us from fellowship with God more than anything else: 1. Pride (self exultation) and 2. Idolatry (things or people that we desire more than God). Dying to self means removing those things that keep us from fellowship with God and serving God unconditionally with all our heart.

**John 12:24-26** Jesus gives us a great truth here that we should not miss. How much spiritual fruit has God the Father gathered from the obedience of Christ while on earth? Remember when Jesus said to His Father “not what I will, but what thou wilt.” Jesus died to Himself to the will of the Father.”

**I Corinthians 15:31** Paul admonishes the church at Corinth for their lack of spiritual understanding by telling them of his continual self sacrifice for the gospel. How did Paul become so spiritual?

**A. Humility: II Corinthians 12:7-9, 21** Paul was kept humble by the Lord he was serving.

**B. Self-sacrificing: Philippians 4:11-13** Paul was content in whatever state the Lord put him in

**C. Faith: II Corinthians 1:8-10** When there was no indication of God's presence Paul still had faith.

### **HOW IT IS DONE**

**Galatians 5:16-17** Because dying to self is totally contrary to our human nature this process will involve a real, spiritual fight when trying to surrender our natural will to the will of God.

**I Corinthians 10:13; I Timothy 1:18** For those that enter into the battle God gives His promises.

**Matthew 6:19-24** Herein lies the monster that wrestles the spiritual life from most believers. Jesus puts “the cookies right where we can get them.” It is a CHOICE that every believer will make. Whether we want to make the choice or not we either decide to serve ourselves or we decide to serve the Lord.

**Romans 7:15-25** We must remember that we cannot rid ourselves of the flesh (old man), it is still with us. As believers we no longer must serve the flesh but have a choice. Do we really hate the flesh? Are we really ready to turn away from serving ourselves, having our own way, doing what we want?

**Matthew 4:1-11** The greatest example to all believers is of course Jesus Himself. The way He defeated the devil and stayed fast to serving God the Father was by fasting, prayer and scripture.

**Hebrews 4:15-16; Ephesians 6:10-18** Our Lord has given us the same tools that He had for fighting a spiritual battle with the devil or with our “old man.”

**Romans 6:3-4, 11-13, 19-22** Our life has actually gone through the process of death and resurrection.

Paul tells us that we do not have to serve self and wind up with dead fruit. end up with eternal spiritual fruit.