

The Death that Kills All Dying

We also believe that we have all died to the old life we used to live. (2 Corinthians 5:14 NLT)

Life in addiction kills us. Many of us die from AIDS, various liver diseases, infections, pneumonia, or injuries. All of us experience the death of relationships with family, loved ones, God, and even ourselves. Hopes and dreams die. Opportunities are killed. We feel dead. We look dead. We are dead. The Bible describes it this way:

Once you were dead, doomed forever because of your many sins. You used to live just like the rest of the world, full of sin, obeying Satan, the mighty prince of the power of the air. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God. All of us used to live that way, following the passions and desires of our evil nature. (Ephesians 2:1-3a)

For some of us that death came through the use of drugs and alcohol. Others of us gambled away our families' love and trust. Sometimes violence and rage killed what mattered most to us. Pornography and sexual sin stole away the very satisfaction and joy it promised. Overeating choked life from others of us. What we didn't manage to think up on our own the devil was sure to suggest to us. We chose from a variety of options that chased life away. We followed the passions and desires of our evil nature. We refused to obey God. We chose death.

In an amazing twist, God chose death in order to give us life. **[Christ] died for everyone so that those who receive his new life will no longer live to please themselves. Instead, they will live to please Christ, who died and was raised for them** (2 Corinthians 5:15 NLT)

Jesus died to give us the opportunity to find life. When Jesus died on the cross, he took every sinful habit and obsession and killed it. He rose from the dead to offer something far superior in their place. When we invite Jesus to come into our lives and take over control of us, we bury the old dead life and take on a brand new one. **For you died when Christ died, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God.** (Colossians 3:3 NLT)

Those who become Christians become new persons. They are not the same anymore, for the old life is gone. A new life has begun! All this newness of life is from God, who

brought us back to himself through what Christ did. (2 Corinthians 5:17-18a NLT)

We finally get to experience life when we die. How odd? We have to die in order to live? Exactly. To live at all, we have to accept Christ's death on our behalf. To live fully, we have to die to our old life. It takes a lot of death to give us fullness of life.

Since God chose you to be the holy people whom he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. You must make allowance for each other's faults and forgive the person who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. And the most important piece of clothing you must wear is love. Love is what binds us all together in perfect harmony. And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are all called to live in peace. And always be thankful. Let the words of Christ, in all their richness, live in your hearts and make you wise. Use his words to teach and counsel each other. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts. And whatever you do or say, let it be as a representative of the Lord Jesus, all the while giving thanks through him to God the Father. (Colossians 3:12-17)

So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. Have nothing to do with sexual sin, impurity, lust, and shameful desires. Don't be greedy for the good things of this life, for that is idolatry. God's terrible anger will come upon those who do such things. You used to do them when your life was still part of this world. But now is the time to get rid of anger, rage, malicious behavior, slander, and dirty language. Don't lie to each other, for you have stripped off your old evil nature and all its wicked deeds. (Colossians 3:5-9 NLT)

In place of all that death, God offers us new life. It's vibrant and fresh. It's a new and exciting adventure every day. We learn new things. We discover new and wonderful aspects of our own person every day we live with Jesus and let Him live in us. **You have clothed yourselves with a brand-new nature that is continually being renewed as you learn more and more about Christ, who created this new nature within you.** (Colossians 3:10 NLT)

Jesus actions consistently demonstrated life. He chose kindness, truth, humility, encouragement, forgiveness and patience every single day of His life. Jesus lived love without exception. Jesus is life.

Jesus said, **"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.** (John 14:6 NLT) Am I still

lusting after the dead ways of the world or am I living fully Christ's life of love?

Whatever we do, it is because Christ's love controls us. Since we believe that Christ died for everyone, we also believe that we have all died to the old life we used to live. (2 Corinthians 5:14-15 NLT)

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. Have I died?
2. What aspects of the new life do I need to put on today?