

Christ - Submitted to the Father (Self-Control)

Thursday, March 5, 2026

My name is Gladys DeBruyne. I am a member of the River Church along with my husband who is the pastor of visitation. I am a retired educator, having worked over 25 years, primarily in kindergarten and first grade. We are natives of West Michigan living there for 35 years before we moved to California in 1991. We have two grown children, 5 grandchildren, and 2 great grandchildren.

Scripture: II Timothy 2:11 *If we died with Him, we will also live with Him.*

Submission means giving up, in essence it means dying to a part of us. By submitting to Jesus, we are giving up or dying to our old sinful nature, our wants, our desires. This is a daily process. Once we have given ourselves to Christ, He lives in us, but we still have that old, sinful nature whispering to us, begging us, taunting us to come back to our old ways.

If we look at physical death, it is permanent. All of us have lost a dear person in our lives. We no longer see them, can no longer communicate with them. Our lives are permanently altered because of their absence. Now, let's turn that to ourselves. Paul writes to Timothy using this illustration of physical death, which we are all familiar with. In giving ourselves to Christ, we are dying to ourselves. In physical death, the death is permanent. Our spiritual death during our journey on this earth is to our sinful, old self. It is a process; it is a daily act of laying ourselves at the feet of Jesus. Total death to our sinful self does not come until our actual physical death. But daily, we are asked to die to ourselves, that means putting those old practices that God has convicted us of to be against His will, putting them away, saying no to that part of ourselves, and burying it in our minds. Does it always work? No, sometimes, we dig it up again, pick it up and revert to our old ways. But then, we confess to God, and resubmit ourselves, die to that self and allow God to live within us. It is called sanctification, becoming more like Jesus. It is becoming holy. The process is not easy and sometimes can be very painful, but it is our life's goal - to grow in our relationship to Him.

Do you feel yourself growing closer to Him? It is hard giving up, letting go. But the more we do it and discover that God fills those empty spaces with His Spirit, it becomes more comfortable to give up that need to be in control, to give up you - to die to yourself. It is almost a cleansing process, a washing away the old and putting on the new. As we die to ourselves, we realize God does not leave us with a void, but there is an indwelling of His Spirit and that awareness of His Spirit within is refreshing, it is uplifting. So, in death, we have life.

Today, think of areas where you would like Jesus to enter and take control. Let Him fill your being with His spirit. He is there for you, He wants you to live with Him in this life and in the next. He wants you to know Him and be in relationship with Him. Allow yourself to be caught up in His presence. Allow Him space to work within your soul today. Praise God that He loves us where we are, but He loves us enough not to leave us there. He wants more for us. He knows what He created you to be and He wants you to live in that perfection He sees in you. Pray that God will fill you today, that you will sense His presence and His life in you.