

Stop Trying • Galatians 2:20

INTRO

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.

1. There's no short-cut to spiritual maturity.
2. No conference, article, or podcast episode is going to produce Christ-likeness in you.
3. The life of the maturing believer is slow, steady progress as we walk in the Spirit.
4. But, there *are* moments when we leap forward.
 - a. I've discovered the Christian life is less like a ramp as a set of stairs.
 - b. The Spirit teaches us something & we take a step up to a new level of Christ-likeness.
 - c. That's followed by a level-season of that truth being integrated into our lives.
 - d. After a while we seem to plateau.
 - e. What's *really* happening is God is *preparing us* for the next step up; He's taking us *to* it.
 - f. When it arrives, it often comes as a challenge, a trial.
 - g. Seeking God for help with it, another Truth arrives that lifts us to the next step.
5. Gal 2:20 is one of the most important truths the Spirit uses to step up & into Christ-likeness.

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.

“I have been crucified with Christ”

1. Faith in Jesus *identifies* us with Him, so that when He died, we died *with* Him.
2. What died was our sin-dominated, self-centered, old-nature >> What we inherited from Adam.
3. This is the picture *baptism* captures. It's marks our *identification with* Christ in His death & burial.
4. It's put like this in [Rom 6:3](#) -

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

5. When we baptize, people walk into the water one at a time.
 - a. We talk briefly with them, asking if they believe Jesus died & rose for them.
 - b. Upon their confession of faith, we lower them backwards till they're immersed.
 - c. It's a way to *identify* with Christ; *His* death *becomes* theirs.
 - d. *WHAT dies* is the sin-dominated, self-centered, old-nature.
6. In vs [6&7](#) of Rom 6, Paul explains ...

⁶ 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.

7. So Gal 2:20 says - **“I have been crucified with Christ.”** = [Repeat]
 - a. The verb tense means a *past* action with *present* results.
 - b. Literally, “When Jesus was crucified, I was too, & what died then, remains dead.” // So →

“It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.”

1. For Paul to write, “I have been crucified with Christ,” *something* must live since the dead don't write.
2. What now lives in him is Christ.
3. We don't just *die* with Christ. That's only *half* of it. The other half is believing He *rose* for us.
4. When we baptize, we don't lower people into the water and leave them there.
5. We lift them out & up, *identifying* with Christ's resurrection & the new life we receive from Him.

6. So, Rom 6 says -

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. ⁵ For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be *in the likeness of His resurrection*, [then, v8] 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.

1. THAT is the *application* of Gal 2:20.
 - a. In Gal 2:20, Paul states *a fact* → He WAS crucified with Christ.
 - 1) So, the life he had wasn't what he had before coming to faith in Christ.
 - 2) It was Christ living in Him.
 - b. In Rom 6:11 Paul tells us how he'd appropriated that fact.
 - c. He **RECKONED** it so = logidzomai.
 - 1) It means to *take an inventory; a precise count of what's really there.*
 - 2) There's no *supposing* or *guessing* involved. No *estimating*.
 - 3) It's what the careful scientist does when measuring.
 - 4) I **reckon** there are ____ people in this front row → Because *there are*.
 - 5) I can't "reckon" there's a vague -
"some people, a few, around ____" because such hazy words don't go w/logidzomai-reckon.
2. Let me be clear ...
 - a. Believing in Jesus means owning the fact that when Jesus died, so did our old sinful nature -
 - b. And living inside us now is the resurrected Christ.
3. The night before Jesus' crucifixion, His disciples were bummed at the news He was leaving.
 - a. He comforted them with the promise, "I will not leave you orphans. **I will come to you.**"
 - b. He told them after His resurrection & *because* of it, the Holy Spirit would live *in* them.
 - c. Where the Spirit is, Jesus is.
 - d. It all happened just as Jesus promised. He rose and they were filled with the Spirit.
 - 1) They ended up looking & sounding so much like Christ, it wasn't long before they became known as "Christians."
 - 2) When Peter & John were hauled before the Jewish authorities for preaching the Gospel, With a striking bold-humility just like Jesus, Peter preached *to them*.
 - 3) The authorities were stunned and said, "These men have been with Jesus."
 - 4) True. But it would have been *more true* to say, "Jesus **IS** with them."

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.

Implications

1. Consider the *implications* of that →
2. The selfish piece of work I was before coming to faith in Jesus, is dead.
3. Last I checked, insult a corpse, you get no clever retort.
 - a. Offend a cadaver, you'll get no angry rebuttal.
 - b. Dead men >> Tell-no-true, aren't selfish, envious,
4. This doesn't mean we're to be *dis*-passionate. We're not *zombies*, for goodness sake.
5. Because dead is only *half* of what we're to reckon. The other half is alive in Christ.

6. The point is, whenever an emotion rises ask—Why? What’s causing it? What’s it appealing to?
 7. Instead of our emotions *controlling* us, see them as an invitation to closer fellowship with God.
-
8. An example may help.
 - a. When I first realized the message of Gal 2:20, it took a couple days to process.
 - b. The reality of the difference it makes came home the afternoon of the second day.
 - c. Someone I knew well said something unkind. It was an insult that hurt.
 - d. My usual routine was to deflect by acting as though it *didn't* hurt while firing off a witty counter-insult.
 - e. This time instead, when I realized I was hurt, I took it as evidence my ego, something that was supposed to be dead, wasn't reckoned so → So, I did!
 - f. Instead of being upset at the offense, I found an interesting appreciation for HOW the insult revealed something that needed being exposed.
 - g. All this happened in the span of maybe 3 or 4 seconds.
 - h. The person who insulted me was looking at me, waiting for the inevitable witty retort.
 - i. I instead smiled and complimented them on something unrelated to the insult.
 - j. As I walked away from the exchange, I had the most amazing “atta’ boy” affirmation by the Spirit.
 9. Realizing the implications of Gal 2:20 has set me free from *bondage* to my emotions.
-

Bury It

1. What do you do with a corpse? You bury it. You don't park it on the couch and watch the Dodgers with the World Series with it. You bury it.
 - a. If you don't, it stinks up the place.
 - b. Maybe that's why things stink around the house, at work, in school, at church.
 - c. A bunch of dead people haven't *reckoned* themselves so and put away what ought to be.
2. I know the reaction some will have to this? >> They think it's *unfair*.
 - a. That if they were to live this out it would make them a *doormat*.
 - b. They ask, “What about *my rights*?” >> Well, what rights has a dead person?
 - c. Claim rights is evidence we're trying to revive what died with Christ.
3. We ought rather reckon it dead >> **So we can have** something so much better.

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, BUT → Christ lives in me.

Rom 6:11 • Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, BUT → alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

4. We get out of the way so Christ can enter.
 5. Jesus won't *cohabit* with us.
 - a. He's not interested being room-mates. There's no bunk-beds in this arrangement.
 - b. You're not a time-share where Jesus gets Sundays from 8 to Noon & a half-hour weekday mornings while during devotions, but the rest of the time it's all you.
 6. Contrary to the book titled, *Your Best Life Now*, it isn't **your** life at all // It's Jesus living **HIS** life in us.
 7. Question: Who's a better *short-stop*; you or Corey Seager?
 - a. Who's a better *driver*; you or Danica Patrick?
 - b. Who's better at *painting*; you or Raphael?
 - c. Who's better at *living*; you or Jesus?
 8. We have a choice: We can live our little self-centered lives, or get out of the way and let Jesus live His amazing, love-filled purposes in us.
 9. Seems a no-brainer.
-

Stop Trying

1. Let me put it this way: Stop *trying* to live the Christian life.

2. With all this talk about reckoning ourselves dead but alive in Christ,
 - a. & because zombies are popular of late, I thought about titling this –
 - b. *The Walking Dead.* *Night of the Living Dead.*
 - c. *That Zombie Life.* *Zombieland.* *My Life as a Zombie.*
3. I went instead with *Stop Trying* because that's the essence of Paul's point here.
 - a. Though we're focusing on just one verse this morning, remember where it is – in Galatians.
 - b. Where Paul *destroys legalism*; the idea that we gain favor with God by works.
4. Jesus *never* said, "Try your best. Work real hard. Give it your best shot."
 - a. But He DID say in [Luke 9:23](#) –

'If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.'

- b. It's the same thing Paul says in Gal 2:20.
4. The Christian life isn't *our best effort* at holiness. It's Christ Himself, living in & thru us.
 - a. Christian: Stop showing Jesus *how* to be a Christian.
 - b. Stop trying to *be* a Christian. Let Christ live HIS life in you.
5. That's what Paul says in the balance of Gal 2:20 →

"And the life which I now live in the flesh [this body] I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me"

1. Our daily life is a continual identification with Christ in which we die so Christ lives in and through us.
2. [Hands] These move at His direction // [Mouth] This speaks by His urging //
[Feet] Carry me where He bids.

CONCLUSION • How to Die

1. When I've shared this message before, people inevitably respond, "I understand what God's Word says, but HOW do I die? What does that mean? Can you tell me what to do?"
2. I wish I could give you a 5-point action plan to reckon yourself dead.
3. But I can't, because dying is, well, it's intensely personal, isn't it?
4. How I die is how I die. Yours will be yours.
5. It's *unique* to each because God's designed it that way // It's has to be worked out between you & He.
6. I know what reckoning myself dead means for me. I gave you an example earlier.
7. How it plays out for you, is for you alone.
8. AND, that's your assignment; to ask God how YOU reckon yourself crucified with Christ, so that He can live in you.