

Book: Live Dead Journal by Dick Brogden (available on Kindle for \$2.99 or in paperback)

Scriptures:

John 12:24-26 – unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains by itself. But if it dies, it produces much fruit. The one who loves his life will lose it, and the one who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves me, he must follow me. Where I am, there my servant also will be. If anyone serves me, the father will honor him.

Mark 8:34-35, 38 --“If anyone wants to follow after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.” For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life because of me and the gospel will save it. For whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

Mark 29-31 – “Truly I tell you,” Jesus said, “there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for my sake and for the sake of the gospel, who will not receive a hundred times more, now at this time – houses, brothers and sisters, mothers and children, and fields, with persecutions – and eternal life in the age to come. But many who are first will be last, and the last first.”

Luke 9:23-26 Then he said to them all, “if anyone wants to follow after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life because of me will save it. For what does it benefit someone if he gains the whole world, and yet loses or forfeits himself? For whoever is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and that of the Father and the holy angels.”

John 13:14-17 – so if I, your teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done for you. Truly I tell you, a servant is not greater than his master, and a messenger is not greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.

John 15:4-5, 7-8 – Remain in me, and I in you. Just as a branch is unable to produce fruit by itself unless it remains on the vine, neither can you unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him produces much fruit, because can do nothing without me. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you want and it will be done for you. My father is glorified by this: that you produce much fruit and prove to be my disciples.

Romans 6:2-5, 8, 11 --How can we who died to sin still live in it? Or are you unaware that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we were buried with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too may walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in the likeness of his death, we will certainly also be in the likeness of his resurrection. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. So, you too consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Romans 6:13b – But as those who are alive from the dead, offer yourselves to God, and all the parts of yourselves to God as weapons for righteousness.

Romans 6:19b – so now offer them as slaves to righteousness, which results in sanctification.

Week 2 Challenges:

Day 8: We all have some life-draining people or activities in our lives. Some cannot be avoided, but others can. Take a few moments asking God to show you areas that unnecessarily drain life from you. Now, muster the courage to cut out one life-draining issue in your life this week. To live dead does not mean to live in misery. Even in the midst of great challenges, we can live with passion—not in a phony, superficial way, but with a quiet and profound trust in the Life Giver. NOW, list three life-giving activities, things that truly refresh you, regardless of how mundane each may be. Then write out an action plan to incorporate at least one of the activities into your weekly schedule for the next month. Resist the temptation to feel guilty doing “nonspiritual” activities. Rather, get out of bed each morning and live each day to the fullest, the way Jesus intended.

Day 10: Spend some time reflecting on your own physical death. Are you ready? Do you see it as an end...or a beginning? Is Jesus worth dying for? Are you willing to die for Jesus? If Jesus called you to work among a dangerous people group like the Somalis, or the Taliban, or Hezbollah, or Hamas, would you do it? Would you take your family there? Okay, a little closer to home – if Jesus asked you to be a foster parent or work with at risk teens or move into a low-income neighborhood to be an uncover missionary, would you do it? Are you listening to hear that call? If you knew you would die this evening, how would you live today? Go out and live today in that spirit.

Day 12: Today’s Challenge is a two-for:

1. Transparency and openness go completely against so much that is naturally fallen within us. Our carnal selves want to be guarded and hide our faults and feign that all is well. Here’s the challenge: Pray and ask God to show you *anything* in your life that needs to be confessed. Determine who you will confess it to and when. Put the plan in writing in your calendar or in your journal. When you do confess, be sure to take time to pray together, and *be healed* (James 5:16).
2. Now for the second challenge. Are you living “in community”? Are you sharing your life and possessions with others? Can people borrow your car? Or your computer? As I like to ask my 5-year-old son when he comes home from kindergarten, “Do you share your snack?” Think of something in your life that you hold too tightly and tear down the wall.

Day 14: Leonard Ravenhill says, “This generation needs to learn to eat less, sleep less, and pray more.” Being more for Christ, learning-for-life, is an attitude. But it’s an attitude that demands we actually do something in order to achieve it. I keep a running record of my New Year’s resolutions. I’ve had one on there for a long time. “Expand your prayer time.” Every year I looked at that unchecked box and whispered to myself: “This is it. This is the year I expand my prayer time.” Every year I wrote it again. It’s not that I wasn’t praying. I was. I am. But the call demands more. About a month ago I came to the conclusion, *If you’re going to do this, you need to wake up earlier*. Check! Wow, that was a no-brainer. Discipline requires action. How has Christ framed the command for you to “do your best to present yourself to God as one approved”? What do you need to do to be more?