

## MORE: Dying

Sermon Series : MORE  
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### Dying: The Christ-Centered Life

Jesus declares that dying to self, dying to our agendas, dying to our preferences and ideals, and making Him the center of our lives actually leads to a full, abundant, and meaningful life.

*“When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die.”  
(Dietrich Bonhoeffer)*

#### 1. “When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die.”

Luke 9:20-25 (see 23-25 in MSG); John 12:24-26

We want the gain without the pain

#### 2. Beware of the “But firsts...”

Luke 9:57-62

#### 3. How do you die to self?

- Fix your eyes on Jesus** (Heb 12:2; 1 Cor 2:2)
- Find Your worth in Jesus** (Phil 3:8-12)
- Be filled with the Spirit** (Gal 5:16-26)

#### 4. Death is not the end in itself; it’s the pathway to life.

##### Prayer:

*Father, Son and Spirit, I need your help.  
I want more of Jesus, but my old self keeps getting in the way.  
Fix my eyes upon Him, the crucified King.  
Reveal the ways I cling to life apart from you,  
then help me to put them to death  
so that I can experience the fullness of life You promise.  
I choose to die to myself and live in the Spirit.  
I choose to pray with Jesus:  
“Not my will, but yours be done.”  
Amen*

## QUESTIONS

1. Jesus promises that when we die to self we experience abundant life in him. Why, then, is dying to self so hard?
2. What does it look like to seek the gain without the pain? Can you think of examples from your own life (including your spirituality) where you’ve been guilty of this?
3. What have been the most consistent “but firsts” that have kept you from following Jesus fully? What would it look like to die to those things??

*Take time to pray for each other. Pray that God would help you put to death the things that get in the way in order to experience life in abundance*

See also this week’s Application Questions  
in the *MORE Scripture Guide* e-book @  
<http://www.gracechapelonline.org/morepdf>

Excerpt from *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* by C.S. Lewis

Well, anyway, I looked up and saw the very last thing I expected: a huge lion coming slowly towards me. And one queer thing was that there was no moon last night, but there was moonlight where the lion was. So it came nearer and nearer. I was terribly afraid of it. You may think that, being a dragon, I could have knocked any lion out easily enough. But it wasn't that kind of fear. I wasn't afraid of it eating me, I was just afraid of it — if you can understand. Well, it came close up to me and looked straight into my eyes. And I shut my eyes tight. But that wasn't any good because it told me to follow it."

"You mean it spoke?"

"I don't know. Now that you mention it, I don't think it did. But it told me all the same. And I knew I'd have to do what it told me, so I got up and followed it. And it led me a long way into the mountains. And there was always this moonlight over and round the lion wherever we went. So at last we came to the top of a mountain I'd never seen before and on the top of this mountain there was a garden — trees and fruit and everything. In the middle of it there was a well.

"I knew it was a well because you could see the water bubbling up from the bottom of it: but it was a lot bigger than most wells — like a very big, round bath with marble steps going down into it. The water was as clear as anything and I thought if I could get in there and bathe it would ease the pain in my leg. But the lion told me I must undress first. Mind you, I don't know if he said any words out loud or not.

"I was just going to say that I couldn't undress because I hadn't any clothes on when I suddenly thought that dragons are snaky sort of things and snakes can cast their skins. Oh, of course, thought I, that's what the lion means. So I started scratching myself and my scales began coming off all over the place. And then I scratched a little deeper and, instead of just scales coming off here and there, my

whole skin started peeling off beautifully, like it does after an illness, or as if I was a banana. In a minute or two I just stepped out of it. I could see it lying there beside me, looking rather nasty. It was a most lovely feeling. So I started to go down into the well for my bathe.

"But just as I was going to put my feet into the water I looked down and saw that they were all hard and rough and wrinkled and scaly just as they had been before. Oh, that's all right, said I, it only means I had another smaller suit on underneath the first one, and I'll have to get out of it too. So I scratched and tore again and this under skin peeled off beautifully and out I stepped and left it lying beside the other one and went down to the well for my bathe.

"Well, exactly the same thing happened again. And I thought to myself, oh dear, how ever many skins have I got to take off? For I was longing to bathe my leg. So I scratched away for the third time and got off a third skin, just like the two others, and stepped out of it. But as soon as I looked at myself in the water I knew it had been no good.

"Then the lion said — but I don't know if it spoke — You will have to let me undress you. I was afraid of his claws, I can tell you, but I was pretty nearly desperate now. So I just lay flat down on my back to let him do it.

"The very first tear he made was so deep that I thought it had gone right into my heart. And when he began pulling the skin off, it hurt worse than anything I've ever felt. The only thing that made me able to bear it was just the pleasure of feeling the stuff peel off. You know — if you've ever picked the scab of a sore place. It hurts like billy-oh but it is such fun to see it coming away."

"I know exactly what you mean," said Edmund.

"Well, he peeled the beastly stuff right off — just as I thought I'd done it myself the other three times, only they hadn't hurt — and there it was lying on the grass: only ever so much thicker, and darker, and more knobbly looking than the others had been. And there was I as smooth and soft as a peeled switch and smaller than I had been. Then he caught hold of me — I didn't like

that much for I was very tender underneath now that I'd no skin on — and threw me into the water. It smarted like anything but only for a moment. After that it became perfectly delicious and as soon as I started swimming and splashing I found that all the pain had gone from my arm. And then I saw why. I'd turned into a boy again.