

General Topics :: Finding it so hard to die to myself and carry my cross...

Finding it so hard to die to myself and carry my cross... - posted by Richard365, on: 2010/2/11 8:15

I know I'm not alone when I say that I'm having such difficulty in what Jesus says in Luke 14:26-27 that we should do in order to be a disciple.

I understand how the Lord wants our love for Him to outshine the love we have for our parents, our children our friends that it seems we hate them in comparison. But I haven't gotten there yet and don't understand exactly why. I understand how we should hate our own life, our self life...the life we inherited from Adam, but again...I'm not there yet and don't know why. I see the goal and the freedom it will bring...but everyday I do something so stupid and selfish and I wonder if I really understand the big picture.

To carry my cross each day...to die to my self...to put the axe to my self will, desires, pleasures and seek only God; why am I making it so hard?

The requirements to be a disciple are very clear, but yet my actions aren't matching my intentions. I see the man of God He wants me to be...but it seems so far off. I want to be a whole hearted disciple.

I know it's possible through dependence upon God. These issues I'm facing make my addiction to Pornography seem like something easy to quite. Up until two years ago, I was totally defeated by porn. I could never beat it on my own and almost lost my marriage because of it. Then the Lord found it in His will to take it from me and since then I've been porn free. Thank you Lord.

Anyways...just wanted to vent a bit and possibly get some encouragement from fellow believers. Thank you in advance and God Bless.

Richard

Re: Finding it so hard to die to myself and carry my cross... - posted by Goldminer (), on: 2010/2/11 8:40

Richard I thought at first not to comment on this because I am a woman, but after prayer I do feel to share one thing with you that has really helped me over the 33 years that I have been saved. And here it is.

Light dispels darkness. When you go into a dark room and flip on the light the darkness remains, it is just overwhelmed by the surpassing greatness of the light. This is the answer to our problems on every side. Saturate yourself in God, in His word, in prayer, in worship and you will find the things you spoke of falling off. In fact you will find they are transformed into light, because we are children of light. You are the light of the world. The light is not our own but He manifests His light as we abide in Him. Stop trying to make yourself good, you never can. But you can fill your eye gate, ear gate and entire life with Him and you will find the answer to what you are seeking. It will happen almost without you knowing it. But folks around you will see a real difference.

Re: Finding it so hard to die to myself and carry my cross... - posted by Areadymind (), on: 2010/2/11 8:47

"Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee."

It is the word bro. The word is cutting and slashing at who you are. It is bringing to the surface the divisions within you. I can only relate. To be a whole-hearted disciple is certainly a work in process. I think a good long cry through John 21 might help a bit. To recognize that Peter was not even able to say that he had Agape for his Lord, and finally Jesus descended to his deep deep need and asked Peter if at least he had Phileo for him.

He knows our weak pathetic frames. Sometimes we just need to be honest about who we are to Him. If we are not honest with him we aren't honest with anyone. Not that I am saying you aren't. I am just relating my own struggles in this area.

Only God by his grace, through faith, by the power of the Spirit can give us the capacity to live with a whole heart. Galatians says that the just shall LIVE by faith.

I find Psalm 123 has been helping me with this issue as well. As the eyes of faith look to the master, and not too much down on themselves. I am struggling with some of the exact same issues of heart brother. I will try to remember to pray for you throughout the day.

In Christ.

Re: , on: 2010/2/11 9:14

James 1

1James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,

To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations:

Greetings.

Trials and Temptations

2Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. 4Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. 5If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.

Please understand that you are not alone in your struggles. I have gone through similar trials brother and continue to battle 'self' and consistently putting God first. I remember reading a testimony by the great China missionary, Hudson Taylor, concerning the struggle of overcoming that internal battle that seeks to condemn us. I wish I could find that but I've looked and can't at the moment. I hope someone else can provide it for us. He found that when he consulted others whom he respected about his struggles, that they had not overcome many of them either, but he assumed they had. The enemy wants us to see ourselves as the only one with these types of struggles. As for Hudson, when the truth started coming forth with this common struggle of mankind, God revealed the 'rest of Jesus' to him. His testimony hence changed from striving to resting in faith. His honesty was a great blessing to me. The battles coming forth, internal and otherwise, will help us see our weakness and lean on Christ who is 'the author and the perfecter of our faith'. I pray that you will come into a place of rest in faith. But that doesn't mean that the battle is over for good.... God didn't forsake Hudson for seeking Him out in this and He will not forsake you either.

Re: - posted by Giggles (), on: 2010/2/11 9:58

I like to maintain the "lay down your life...that you may gain it" tug-of-war by emphasizing both. Die---yes, deny myself---yes, pick up my cross---yes, BUT only for the purpose of living and finding true life and receiving all He has and being renewed in the newness of His life. We only ever say 'no' as Christians that we may say 'yes' to a higher pleasure. See happiness and holiness as synonyms not antonyms. John Piper's dad put it this way, "Don't be a don'ter, be a doer." So only deny yourself that you may choose a higher pursuit of joy, peace, relationship, and revelation of God, not just say 'no' because it's the 'holy' thing to do.

Good post ccider. That's a foundational truth to build on right there.

Re: Finding it so hard to die to myself and carry my cross... - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2010/2/11 13:41

Richard,

It may be helpful to remember that salvation and sanctification are received on the same basis, by faith. Watchman Nee puts it this way...

Our crucifixion can never be made effective by will or by effort, but only by accepting what the Lord Jesus did on the Cross. Our eyes must be opened to see the finished work of Calvary. Some of you, prior to your salvation, may have tried to save yourselves. You read the Bible, prayed, went to Church, gave alms. Then one day your eyes were opened and you saw that a full salvation had already been provided for you on the Cross. You just accepted that and thanked God, and peace and joy flowed into your heart. Now salvation and sanctification are on exactly the same basis. You receive deliverance from sin in the same way as you receive forgiveness of sins.

For God's way of deliverance is altogether different from man's way. Man's way is to try to suppress sin by seeking to overcome it; God's way is to remove the sinner. Many Christians mourn over their weakness, thinking that if only they were stronger all would be well. The idea that, because failure to lead a holy life is due to our impotence, something more is therefore demanded of us, leads naturally to this false conception of the way of deliverance. If we are

preoccupied with the power of sin and with our inability to meet it, then we naturally conclude that to gain the victory over sin we must have more power. 'If only I were stronger', we say, 'I could overcome my violent outbursts of temper', and so we plead with the Lord to strengthen us that we may exercise more self-control.

But this is altogether wrong; this is not Christianity. God's means of delivering us from sin is not by making us stronger and stronger, but by making us weaker and weaker. That is surely rather a peculiar way of victory, you say; but it is the Divine way. God sets us free from the dominion of sin, not by strengthening our old man but by crucifying him; not by helping him to do anything but by removing him from the scene of action.

For years, maybe, you have tried fruitlessly to exercise control over yourself, and perhaps this is still your experience; but when once you see the truth you will recognize that you are indeed powerless to do anything, but that in setting you aside altogether God has done it all. Such a revelation brings human self-effort to an end.

-excerpted from *The Normal Christian Life* by Watchman Nee

Re: - posted by Areadymind (), on: 2010/2/11 14:07

Thank you for sharing that InTheLight

Truly a great word of wisdom, and power which is not in us but in him. Watchman's thoughts here are a succinct summary of the book of Galatians for sure.

Re: Finding it so hard to die to myself and carry my cross... - posted by murrcolr (), on: 2010/2/11 17:56

Quote:
-----To carry my cross each day...to die to my self...to put the axe to my self will, desires, pleasures and seek only God; why am I making it so hard?

Mt. 11:28-30 "Come unto Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and My burden is light."

Most interpret these verses to refer to the good way of salvation and the rest in Him that is found from acts of sin and the ensuing guilt. Actually, as well as this it refers to a little-known better way to walk with God.

This way is better because it has been made free from all the just mentioned "carnal labor and heavy worldly weight". You do not find this better way by getting something more than the New Man, but by getting rid of something that is old:

Even though you are saved and all your previous acts of sin are forgiven, the foundational defiling sinfulness of the fallen heart remains covertly intact. All your acts of sin, both past and future have their root in a basic corruption that is still quietly hidden within your heart of hearts. Any new acts of sin are manifestations of what was already hidden in seed-form within the heart. All acts of sin are conceived and empowered by dark seed-forces.

Pardon is the remedy for new acts of sin, but there can be no covering or excuse for the heart that is just continuing to be its own perverse natural-born self. It is not an act of sin for your heart to be the way it was born to be, so the only remedy for it is to willingly crucify it on the cross with Christ. Such an unworthy heart is both unavoidable and unlawful since by nature it is not enabled to obey the ten commandments (with will-power you manfully resist, but the unlawful urge remains), and therefore the only cure is to be cleansed from it.

Now once that unworthy hidden world of sinfulness is gone, what is left? You are. The Holy Spirit is. But your heart is now unhindered from the fall and set free to be as Godly as you wish it to be. No pollution means no distance from Him. In my own case, the changes were subtle at first but opened out over time to become totally revolutionary as I gradually earned what I could do with this gloriously completed spiritual freedom.

The Link to web site will help you on the way.....

(<http://www.enterhisrest.org/>) Enter His Rest

Re: Finding it so hard to die to myself and carry my cross... - posted by twayneb (), on: 2010/2/11 20:20

Richard: The quote that Inthelight put up is great advice. I think it would be hard to find a man, or woman for that matter, that does not know exactly how you feel. I have learned a couple of things that might be useful.

Jas 4:7

(7) Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

We are long on the resit part, but often short on the submit part. God taught me something about this verse that goes well with the quote by Watchman Nee. To submit to God means to realize that I am totally incapable of resisting temptation on my own. It is simply not within me, and my own power is totally insufficient. I say, "God, I cannot fight this thing on my own with willpower, and furthermore, I realize that to try is to take myself out of submission to You. I won't even try to resist outside of the power of Your Holy Spirit. I give myself to You. You do this thing through me by Your power." It is only then that I am able to rise up in the strength and power of God and actively fight against that enemy (that is what resist means). I use the Word of God as a sword and do battle with it. I resist in the name of Jesus (understanding that I have been given the authority to do so and am backed by His word and His name. It is totally His authority, but I must wield it.) I do so vocally and as long as it takes for the temptation to be defeated.

The second thing that I have learned is that the more I fall in love with Jesus, the less power temptation has over me. One of the keys, I have found, is to spend less time fixated on the temptation I am fighting and more time fixated on the object of my love and adoration, Jesus Christ.

Hope that helps

Travis

Re: Finding it so hard to die to myself and carry my cross... - posted by Richard365, on: 2010/2/12 14:52

Thank you all for the words of encouragement.

To Goldminer: I see exactly where you are coming from. I also think that walking in the light is being totally honest and transparent with God. If we don't do that we only fool ourselves.

To Alreadymind: I read John 21 and I'm not clear on where Agape or Phileo love is in there. I understand how Jesus is asking Peter if he loves him more than success. In those times, if a fisherman could catch 153 fish on a regular basis, he'd be rich. I know that God tests us with things to see if we love Him more than that new job or the new car or even our family. I'm just beginning to understand Grace through faith and I'm seeking the power of the Holy Spirit.

To CCrider: I so agree with that for us to be an effective witness, we need to share our struggles with each other. In churches we only see people and how great they are doing or say they are doing. And we look at them wondering how we aren't like them. If people were just honest with each other...

To Giggles: Thank you for those words...

To In the Light: Good stuff. I too have read some of Watchman Nee's stuff and see the great importance of brokenness before we can become true men of God.

To Murrcoir: It's funny how we can go for a time and think everything is good. Then something shakes us and all this bitter water floats to the top of our so-called pure cup. It's awesome how God shows us our true self.

To Twayneb: Great word. I do need to develop a deeper love for my Heavenly Father.

Thanks to you all...God Bless

Re: - posted by jenny12345, on: 2011/9/16 22:29

My story for the conversion of sinners and unbelievers.

A personal testimony glorifying Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior

This mercy is the greatest threat to Satan, because he loses many, many souls because of this Mercy offered by God for sinners

I am spreading the Devotion of Divine Mercy which teaches that any sinner can be saved if they would only turn from their sin and accept God's Mercy as bought for them by the death of Our Lord Jesus Christ on cross for sinners.

IN THE DEVINE MERCY DEVOTION, GODS LOVE IS UNLIMITED AND AVAILABLE TO EVERYONE! ESPECIALLY THE GRESTEST SINNERS!

Background of the Divine Mercy Devotion

http://www.faustina.ch/index_en.htm

I am a new creature

My specific encounters with God, my sense of His "presence

KJV 2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things become new.

The Holy Spirit was convicting me of my sins, as I was praying I wept with grief. Every time I sinned I offended God. I was so ashamed of myself for what I had done, and for the way I had treated other people in the past. I wept so much I was exhausted.

God changed my heart.

Now I am no longer selfish,

I am no longer a lover of money.

I am no longer a liar.

I am no longer a con man and I am no longer a thief.

I have stopped using people to my advantage.

I am no longer spiteful towards others people.

I am no sarcastic towards others.

I am no longer rude towards others.

I no longer do my will, I only do Gods will; what he has commanded me to do for him, I have died to myself.

I was praying, on my hands and knees, for people around me, imagine the power of a volcano erupting. That's what it felt like when the Holy Spirit penetrated my heart. For He wants me to love others, to love every person as much as I love my own family. This is the will of God. He commands me to be like this.

I am changing my life and putting right with God. There are things I need to change in my life and I am working on them every day.

I want to change; it is not me who can control this change in myself. Only God can do websites that

One time a person asked me: "I want to be an angel, how do I become one?" I answered: "Angels have one rule. In all your words, actions, behaviours towards others show love, we are angels, but we are lost, trying to get back home to heaven.

.God showed me, I would be going to hell.

One night as I laid in bed, eyes closed, just about to fall asleep, I was suddenly, literally, frozen in fear. I tried to move my body but I could not move anything. I then tried to move one of my fingers but I could not move that either. I was paralyzed with fear. I continued trying to move but it was futile. My body wouldn't respond to any commands my brain gave. I

could hear a whirlwind. It was a terrifying sound, in the darkness. God's wrath was on me. Next thing I knew I was no longer in bed. I was cast out of my body into outer darkness, a black darkness. I knew I was there for a reason, I was going to hell, and I was on my own. I knew there was something on its way to me, as it got closer to me, I became more terrified. As it came really close I knew who it was, it was the devil. Horror overwhelmed me. Terror took a hold of me, I was shaking and trembling in fear, it was so intense that I fainted.

KJV Psalm 58:9 before your pots can feel the thorns, he shall take them away as with a whirlwind, both living, and in his wrath.

KJV Matthew 25:30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

I have a thirst for Jesus and still do when I go into a church. I felt at home, I belonged there. I started reading the holy bible for the first time in my life, first the gospels of Jesus-Christ. Sometimes Jesus spoke in parables. I was reading a parable and I was trying to digest it, I realised that I understood the parable and my heart jumped for joy. I thought to myself: "It's never done that before." Reading further I become scared and suddenly understood what the evil one is up to with me. He wants me to sin and rebel against God, he is out to corrupt me through sin, and he's doing it to destroy me, to take me from God.

These are just a few examples of the seeds the evil one sowed into my heart, to corrupt me, of this world.

The way I used to be towards other people and how I treated them was rude, selfish, arrogant, spiteful, malicious, I used profanity, got into punch-ups, bullying, was sarcastic and threatening.

I never cared about people, only ever caring about my own needs, my greed and my wants.

My biggest weakness, was watching pornography on the internet, my heart was so perverse I felt dirty; so dirty. I felt as if I had demons wrapped around my body, and I felt that way day and night for twenty three years. Satan's demons attacked me through my weaknesses, through sin.

After I realized what the evil one was up to, I closed every door in my life to do with sin. I changed the choices I made and for the first time in a long time I feel happy. I drew closer to God and he drew closer to me. When I pray, if I ask anything according to his will, he hears me. I struggle daily so when I am tempted I pray and within seconds God takes away the temptation.

1. All these changes, in my life, happened after I started reading the holy bible. I was gently awakened, spiritually. My eyes and ears were started to open, just a fraction.

My walk with our Lord is a daily cleansing process. The words of God cleanse me and changed the way I live.

My encounter with God.

When I realized what Satan's demons were doing to me, in anguish, I started to pray, closed my eyes and cried out to Jesus, saying the Lord's Prayer. I said to Him: "I am chained to Satan and his ways because of my sins." I prayed to the Lord and asked: "Break the chain Lord and free me of all his ways." Then something extraordinary happened. As I had my eyes closed I saw a sun. A grey mist was obscuring it. As I stared at it, I felt glorious joy and happiness. There with God and I did not need anything to eat or drink. The only thing that mattered was the relationship I had with him, nothing else. God told me this world and everything it has to offer is absolutely nothing compared to what he has in store for us, and as I am still staring at this sun I realized how much I loved Jesus. I love Him more than anybody on this earth. God showed me a reflection in the mirror as he truly beholds me. I saw myself and what was wrapped around my body was my perverse heart I was filthy, dirty. It grieved me to see the person I had become through sin. I cried to God because of it. He was showing me that to change.

I have changed so much in such a short time that now I run from sin. I hated the person I had become. I wanted to change so much, but I couldn't stop sinning on my own I needed help and now I have the Holy Spirit dwelling within me that's how I am able.

God was saying to me, he gave me the idea to sell the house. He said: "You don't need it. I didn't know what he meant by that. There were two doors, I could go through either. Keeping the house was about seeking money and wealth, the other was about giving up worldly possessions. So I sold the house and the money went to those who needed it. Everything I ever wanted for myself I gave it all up to follow Jesus.

The vision only lasted a few seconds, but it had a profound effect on me. The devil caused me to desire wealth, so to distance myself from him, rejecting him; I had to give up materialistic ways.

KJV Ephesians 3:16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man.

I cannot blame anyone for my sins only myself.
After that encounter, I became hyper sensitive to evil.
I could recognise sin whereas before I was blind to it.

While I observed other people's behaviour,
I saw a person being cruel towards another,
I saw another person being violent towards another,
I saw another person being spiteful towards another.
And I saw another person being hateful towards another.

In the Holy Scriptures, when I read those two verses it reflected me.

KJV Jeremiah 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

KJV Isaiah 64:6 But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

God hates sin, he wanted me to hate my sin, and he wanted me to ask him, so I would have the ability to hate sin.

God has given me free will; I have chosen to love him

Ezekiel 18:31: Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

I'm a child of God and he loves me, I died to myself.

My only goal in life is to accomplish what God has called me to do for him, I want to do more, and then go back home to him.

This is an extract from

<http://worldviewchurch.org/insight/70-a-mirror-with-two-images>

A Mirror with Two Images.holy bible

By T. M. Moore|Published Date: May 05, 2010

Reflecting on the Word of God

For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. James 1:23, 24

"Wherefore let us know nothing more profitable for ourselves than to examine ourselves daily..." Columbanus
Souls-in-progress

The Bible presents itself to us as a mirror with two images.

The first image is that indicated by the Apostle James: the Bible shows us ourselves. It reveals what's in our hearts. It illuminates the dark recesses of our minds. It leads us to evaluate the priorities and values of our consciences.

The Scriptures affirm the evidence of Christ at work in us; and the Spirit uses the words of Scripture to convict us of shortcomings yet to be remedied. Every day when we come before the Word of God we should be straining carefully to see what God is revealing there concerning our lives. If all we're looking for is doctrinal insight or sermon fodder, we're missing the point. The Word of God must first speak to us before we can speak the Word of God to His people.

Scripture reflects back to us an image of our souls-in-progress. What could be more profitable than this, to examine ourselves daily in the light of God's gracious and infallible Word?

God in His glory

The second image of Scripture as a mirror comes from the Apostle Paul. In 2 Corinthians 3.12-18 Paul tells us that the Scriptures (here, the Law of Moses) are like a mirror in which we see the glory of God reflected at us. The beauty and holiness of God, His splendor and majesty, power and love, mercy and faithfulness – all aspects of His glory – as well as His divine and eternal purposes, are clearly revealed to us in the Bible.

As we read and meditate on Scripture, therefore, we need to be thinking and listening and pondering what God is revealing to us of Himself. We should be expecting for God's very presence to emerge from the pages of His Word, weighing heavily upon us and impressing us of the truth we are reading about the God Who has saved us and Whom we serve.

Transforming images

The image of God and His glory, juxtaposed with the image of our soul-in-progress, can have transforming effects. Paul says that the Spirit uses this encounter with God's glory to work glory into us, transforming us increasingly into the image of Christ, so that the glory of Christ shows through us. From "glory to glory" – each meeting with God's glory to each internalizing and expressing of it – we are changed, a little at a time, but steadily, increasingly, through all our lives.

Our daily discipline of reading and meditating on Scripture could be greatly enhanced if we took this two-fold approach. You might try journaling on a passage, setting down thoughts and reflections under three headings: "My Reflection" (what I see here about myself, the world, or humankind in general); "The Reflection of God's Glory" (my specific encounter with God, my sense of His "presence" in this text); and "Glory to Glory" (how I should go forth from this reading to manifest the transforming power of God's Word and Spirit).

Under the first two, set down your thoughts as to what the Scriptures "mirror" back to you, of yourself, in the first place, then of God and His glory. Under the third section put down some thoughts concerning how you might expect to be transformed so that the image of yourself begins to come more into line with the image of God. What steps might you take this day to put off the old man and put on more of the new?

Just as we take time in the morning to inspect our appearance, we need to linger before the mirror of Scripture until it discloses its images – of ourselves and of God's glory – in transforming ways. This takes time, to be sure, but, as Columbanus suggests, "What could be more profitable?"

For more insight to this topic, get the book, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, by Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart, from our online store. Or read the article, "Getting the Most out of Scripture," by T. M. Moore.

Re: Finding it so hard to die to myself and carry my cross..., on: 2011/9/17 21:16

"To carry my cross each day...to die to my self...to put the axe to my self will, desires, pleasures and seek only God; why am I making it so hard?"

STOP!!

Dear heavens on earth, yes, WHY are you making it so hard?

Bask in His grace and mercy, and be thankful brother.

You've already died with Him, it's done.

Do you know what taking up the cross means?

It means that you stop pleasing yourself and you serve another Jesus Christ. You stop doing your own thing, and you walk toward the Light Christ Jesus the righteous.

We've put weights on people that they simple can't bear.

Now if you have a besetting sin I can understand your plight. But you'll never overcome that with trying to do it yourself. The only thing you can do is repent and cry out for mercy and continue walking toward God. If you fall again, ask Him to forgive you and pray for more grace. In time and overtime you'll grow in so much mercy and grace that this sin will fall away like dead skin.

Shake yourself and be free.

God Bless

Re: - posted by jimp, on: 2011/9/18 7:07

hi, approved hit the nail on the head. repent and be saved is all about presenting yourself as a living sacrifice (dead person) and trusting in Jesus for the rest. dead folks don't have to strive about anything. it is now Jesus that lives, and He said His yoke is EASY. He brings about any change in you as you wallow in His grace and mercy. jimp anything you do is religion 101.