

Articles and Sermons :: Death to all ambition

**Death to all ambition, on: 2005/5/26 14:00**

The New Covenant provides that the Holy Spirit will supply all the resources we need to fully obey God. In forming the New Covenant, God obligated (or chained) Himself by an oath to supply all the enabling power and strength to fulfill every condition and demand of the covenant. So, when God says by oath, "I will do it," faith in us responds, "Let it be so."

God unites and binds and fashions us close to Himself, and Him to us, by this binding contract. The New Covenant is all about our Lord's commitment to keep his children from falling, and to console, comfort and assure us that the power and dominion of sin can and will be broken by the Holy Spirit who indwells us. This truth is the only hope for those who have lost heart in their struggle against a besetting sin. Only by having the New Covenant unveiled to us can we learn the secret to having total victory over sin.

For years, since the day God promised to open to me the truth of the covenant, I had been praying, "Lord, when will you open to me its meaning?" He answered, "You must experience the cross before you can understand it. The doctrine of the New Covenant and your understanding of it will come only after you go through the process of taking up your cross and dying to all that is of self."

I experienced the "going down into nothingness." Now, I am not interested in the dictionary's definition of nothingness. All I know is that I came to the end of myself—down, down, down into a place of total helplessness. I had struggled so hard and for so long to please the Lord, striving earnestly to live holy and to be pure. I had tried diligently to beat down every passion and lust in my body and mind. I had read so many books and listened to so many tapes, looking for keys, in sights, secrets to living the life of an overcomer. I wept until there were no more tears. I walked and prayed, I knelt and prayed, I lay on my face and prayed. I wanted to be a pleasure to my Lord so badly, I read my Bible until my eyes were weary. I begged the Holy Spirit to cut off my offending right arm, pluck out my offending right eye, do whatever He had to do to rid me of all besetting sins.

Then one day I could take it no more. On that day, I could not even pray. All I could do was lie on the floor, empty in spirit, with no tears left. Engulfed in a sense of total failure, I could only say, "Lord, I cannot go on like this anymore. I am worn out. I have tried and failed. After all my searching through books, all my study, all my efforts to be a conqueror, I still battle with the flesh. My temptations have not let up. I have tried to be a living sacrifice. I have struggled to live by faith. I have diligently tried to live and walk in the Spirit, to allow Him to lead me and empower me. But I still do not get it. I still do not understand why it is not getting through to me."

Down to nothingness I went, where the cry is, "Lord, I cannot struggle anymore. I have nothing in me to offer you, no merit, no plea. I have no more power, no more fight. I am weak, helpless. I am clueless as to what I need to do." Down to nothingness, where you know nobody on this earth can help you. No counselor, no loved one, no friend, no minister. It is a place where you know that unless the Lord comes to change you, to open your eyes and show you the way, it can not be done. It is a place where you know beyond any shadow of a doubt you can do nothing on your own. It is where you once and for all face the truth that all your struggling and striving in the flesh have gotten you nowhere, and now everything depends on Him. If there is going to be revelation, He has to give it. If there is going to be deliverance from besetting sins, the Holy Ghost has to do it. If things in my life need fixing, He has to fix them. If I am to be a blessing and joy to Him, He has to make it happen. If I am to walk in the Spirit, He has to show me how. If the Holy Spirit is to empower me to defeat lust or passion, it must happen by imputed faith alone. I am now out of the picture. Out of nothingness must come his supernatural strength. My promises are worthless because I can not keep any of them. My striving is in vain because I have nothing to work with.

Nothingness, a place where you feel abandoned. You love Him, you desire Him, you know that He is, but you feel that for some unknown reason He is silent. His revelation is not coming to you. He is not answering your heart's cry for a clearer vision of what you are going through. In such an hour, Jesus cried to the father, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mark 15:34). I made the same cry: "Father, all I want is to do your will and please you. Why must I bear this sense that I am on my own? Why do you not respond in my desperate time? Why is my soul so cast down with feelings of rejection and confusion?"

When Jesus said, "Take up your cross and follow me," He meant, "You will go down the same path to death." A cross ex

perience is when you think God has turned a deaf ear to your cry for righteousness and holiness. For a season your prayers go unanswered. And your heart rises up and begins to reason: "All I wanted was to be like Jesus, to walk in victory, to be a joy to Him, to enjoy sweet communion. But this? Why is there no clear way, no reassurance? Why is this darkness in my soul, this feeling of speaking into God's ear, yet He appears not to hear? Why does it have to be so complicated?"

It is at this point in his crucifixion that Jesus broke through the devil's cloud and cried aloud in faith. "When Jesus had cried with a loud voice, He said. Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit; and having said thus, He gave up the ghost" (Luke 23:46). Here is where the cross is most powerfully experienced. It happens when in my nothingness, I surrender my will, I quit struggling and striving. I now become wholly dependent on Him. The matter is now out of my hands completely; God has to take over. His spirit must take me into death and raise me up as a new man. I give up the ghost, the independent life of flesh.

Death to all ambition. Death to boasting and trying to impress others. Death to doing anything on my own. Death to my plans, desires, will. Death to all my striving to please Him. And, most of all, death to my past flesh-faith. How many times have I struggled to muster up faith and tried to pump it up with promises? I repeated over and over, "Lord, I believe, I do believe, I really believe. I really, truly, honestly believe." But it did not work. (You can always tell a request that's of the flesh, because it comes with a deadline. We give God what we consider a long enough time to act, but when He does not perform on schedule, our so-called faith turns into ugly unbelief.)

Death, it is the only way out of the Old Covenant and into the New. Flesh faith has to die. No more striving to believe. If I am to have faith, true faith, the faith of Christ, He has to give it to me. We have been given a measure of faith, yet if it is true that I can do nothing of myself, then this includes having His faith. That is why the scripture calls it "the faith of Christ".

Are you sin-sick? Are you truly yearning to live a holy life, free from the habituating lusts of the flesh? Then get ready to die. Get ready to embrace the cross. The Old Covenant will bring you to your wit's end, to nothingness. When you have given up all hope of overcoming sin by your own human power and will, then you are ready to enter the glorious realm of freedom through the New Covenant.

"For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful" (Romans 7:9-13).

#### **Re: Death to all ambition - posted by RobertW (), on: 2005/5/26 15:05**

Thanks freed,

What a powerful word. What a *timely* word. I have been walking this valley of death for over a year and a half- and the last 5 months have been like walking through a cave with no lights. Each step deliberately lifted and set down. Wondering over and over if God has in fact forsaken? I have seen it as a refining and sifting. Going to the very foundation of what I am as a person to realize afresh that I was such a sinner when God found me.

I can do nothing of myself. If God save me not I will split hell wide open. Besetting sins have been tossed aside. I could care less what people think anymore. I have been himmed in by the Law and know that the only thing separating me from hell is the blood. I am not saying I am backslidden. The odd thing is- that once I thought I got past what was real serious in my life- a whole new folder came open and God commenced to doing a surgery I did not see coming. I have had to go down into the river afresh and die all over again.

My enemies compass around me they sneer and jeer at my estate. They stalk me and mock me as if to say, "where is thy God"- He has forsaken you! Pride is dying the death. My hopes and dreams were twice dead and plucked up by the roots and now even those are being burned. Life has been a valley, but this valley is darker than them all.

God is preparing us for something my friends. He is getting us ready and in shape for the days that lie ahead of us.

God Bless,

-Robert