

DYING WITH THE LORD**Watchman Nee:**

Let us now explain the matter of fact, faith, and experience in relation to our dying with the Lord. It is just as important for believers to know the matter of dying with the Lord as it is for sinners to know the matter of redemption.

Fact: When Christ died on the cross, not only did He die for the sinners, but the sinners died in Him as well. He not only died for sins, but He brought death to the sinners as well. It is a fact in God that the sinners have died with Jesus on the cross. The following Scriptures prove this:

One died for all, therefore all died (2 Cor. 5:14).

Knowing this, that our old man has been crucified with Him (Rom. 6:6).

We who have died to sin (Rom. 6:2).

After seeing these few verses, we can realize that in God's view the believers have been crucified with Christ on the cross already. When a believer is not aware of this fact, he will try to crucify himself day after day and will find that no matter how much he tries, he does not die. Little does he realize that we are dead in Christ already. We should not try to crucify ourselves; rather, we should apply His death by faith and reckon His death as our death. Baptism is the demonstration and acknowledgement of faith. It both demonstrates and acknowledges the fact. Romans 6:3 says, "Baptized into His death." "Baptism into His death" (v. 4) is the demonstration and acknowledgement of our application through faith of this death.

We are dead, we have been crucified with Him, and our death and our crucifixion with Him are facts, yet the Word of God goes on to charge us to "reckon [ourselves] to be dead to sin" (Rom. 6:11). Reckoning is an act of faith. We do not consider ourselves dead, because we cannot consider ourselves dead. We may try to consider ourselves dead day and night, but how can one actually consider himself dead? The more we consider in this way, the more we will realize that we are alive and that we are capable of and even prone to sinning. The only way is for us to "reckon" ourselves dead in Christ. Christ's death is our death. If we have this faith, we will have the experience of dying with the Lord. In the Bible, Paul is a good pattern of a person who had the experience of dying with the Lord. He said, "The cross...through whom the world has been crucified to me and I to the world" (Gal. 6:14). He also said, "To know...the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death" (Phil. 3:10). Again he said, "I am crucified with Christ" (Gal. 2:20). If a believer is to have the experience—the life experience—of dying with the Lord, he cannot do so by his own methods. He must take God's way, the way of fact, faith, and experience.

It is a fact that the believers have been crucified with Christ on the cross. Do you believe this fact? Are you willing to accept this fact and to reckon yourselves dead? If you believe, you will have the same experience of dying with the Lord that Paul had.

All of the teachings in the Bible concerning God's way of dealing with man follow the order of three things: fact, faith, and experience. All that God has done is perfect. The way He deals with the world is to accomplish all the works on behalf of the world, so that they will not need to use any human ways, but rather, receive and claim by faith alone. Since God deals with man in grace at present, He does not need any work from man (Rom. 4:4). The same principle applies to crucial doctrines such as "sanctification" and "victory."