

Dying Before Living

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INTRO.

A sobering reality of life is this – when stress and pressure arise – they have a way of stirring up what’s buried deep inside us ... In Christian circles, we often talk about “dying to self,” – but the truth is – many haven’t actually died ... They’ve just learned to stuff down the old self.

Somehow, suppression has been mistaken for crucifixion – and it's become an accepted norm ... But why is this such an important distinction? ... Because you cannot become a Kainos being – a new creation – without truly crucifying the self.

Every new beginning demands the end of what came before ... Yet we often try to step into the new – while still clinging to fragments of the old ... But real transformation isn’t about behavior modification – it’s about death and resurrection ... Old patterns have a way of sneaking back in when they haven’t been dealt with at the root.

If we truly desire to walk in the new life Christ requires – let me interject this here

Revelational Nugget

We treat our spiritual walk as optional ... But the reality is – we do not have a choice ... This is a critical mindset shift we must all make ... You have been chosen – you have been tasked with a mission ... That mission is to be conformed into the very image of Christ – and live and function as He did.

Matthew 7:21-23 New Living Translation

“Not everyone who calls out to me, ‘Lord! Lord!’ will enter the Kingdom of Heaven ... Only those who actually do the will of my Father in heaven will enter. ... 22 On judgment day many will say to me, ‘Lord! Lord! ... We prophesied in your name and cast out demons in your name and performed many miracles in your name.’ ... 23 But I will reply, ‘I never knew you. ... Get away from me, you who break God’s laws.’

When Jesus said: “I never knew you” – He was speaking from a place of intimacy ... In order to develop intimacy with Him – we must destroy everything else in our life that we have become intimate with – as our God is a Jealous God.

The old must be completely destroyed before we can live the new ... We must be willing to completely eradicate the patterns, identities, and comforts that belong to the old life ... Only then can we fully embrace – through spiritual expansion – what it means to be a new creation in Christ.

Before we step into the fullness of who we are in Christ – we must confront what still binds us to who we were ... We must look deeply into the mirror of our soul and confront our carnality – the programmed version of ourselves that this world has shaped.

Transformation doesn't begin with addition – it begins with subtraction ... Not with layering truth over dysfunction – but with tearing down everything that no longer belongs ... Only when the old self is completely destroyed – can a clean foundation be laid for the new you to emerge.

TRANS.

So, this morning I want to give you a few practical principles that you can use to destroy the old you – so that a new you may emerge.

The Process of Destroying the Old Self

Overarching Principle - - Imagery

Romans 6:11 (The Voice) says:

So here is how to picture yourself now ... that you have been initiated into Jesus the

Anointed: ... **you are dead** ... to sin's power and influence, - but you are alive to God's rule.

This is the starting point – see yourself differently. ... You are no longer under the influence of sin. ... The old self is not improved or modified - - it's dead.

Galatians 2:20 (NCV) echoes this truth:

I was put to death on the cross with Christ, ... and I do not live anymore ... it is Christ who lives in me.

You must create an image of death – of the old man ... Picture yourself dead in Christ ... See Christ on the Cross and imagine yourself in Him ... Superimpose yourself over Christ on the Cross ... This may seem gruesome – but you must get your mind around – that you died with Christ on the cross ... The old you literally died on the Cross with Christ ... “I was put to death on the Cross with Christ” ... Believe it ... Create a mental image of this truth in your mind.

Two Reprogramming Principles

Transformation begins with Self-Identification / Awareness

Colossians 2:8-9 The Message

Watch out for people who try to dazzle you with big words and intellectual double-talk. ... They want to drag you off into endless arguments that never amount to anything. ... They spread their ideas through the empty traditions of human beings and the empty superstitions of spirit beings.

Before you can build a new life in Christ – you must identify – and tear down what doesn't belong ... You must wipe the hard drive of your carnal life – so that it may be reprogram – by the Holy Spirit – with your new creation life ... This begins by allowing the Holy Spirit to reveal to you – the worldly desires and patterns that have shaped you. ... This includes your habits – your beliefs – and the self-imposed limitations you've accepted as truth. ... You have to declare war on the parts of you that resist growth: your bad habits ... The things that cause you to waste time like social media ... Those things that easily distract you and draw your attention ... Your self-imposed laziness and procrastination ... All of these must be exposed – brought into the light – and confronted in a dramatic way.

You must also confront your internal barriers ... Those limiting beliefs – that fear driven self-doubt ... Those external voices that have your ear – that reinforces a life of mediocrity ... You especially need to confront and eliminate those things that make you feel safe – those comfort zones – emotional crutches – and temporary escapes like social media – junk food – or toxic relationships ... This is your turning point ... You must stop tolerating mediocrity in your spiritual life. ... Now catch this – the discomfort of this reprogramming is only temporary – but your bondage to the old – will have eternal consequences ... Remember – your old self was merely the version of you – that carried you this far in life. ... But now, God is calling you into something greater. ... Holding onto the old self only makes it harder to step into the new. ... Isaiah 43:18-19 reminds us to - - "Forget the former things; - do not dwell on the past. ... See, I am doing a new thing!"

Transformation is Activated through Action

Spiritual truth is received by faith – but it becomes transformative – when it's activated through your union with Christ – in your spirit man ... Transformation happens – when your belief aligns with the Holy Spirit – through a mindset shift in your soul – that produces corresponding action.

James 2:19–20 (NLV) says:

“You believe there is one God. ... That is good! ... But even the demons believe that - and they tremble.”

Did you catch that? ... Even demons believe - and their belief causes a physical response ... James continues: “You foolish man! ... Do I have to prove to you that faith without doing things is of no use?”

James 2:25–26 (NLT) gives us a powerful example:

“Rahab the prostitute was shown to be right with God by her actions when she hid the messengers and sent them safely away by a different road. ... Just as the body is dead without breath, so also faith is dead without good works.”

Belief without action is incomplete ... Faith is not proven by what you say - - it's proven by what you do ... This is the moment where your spiritual transformation becomes visible through intentional action.

Engage in a Symbolic Act of Separation

This is how you put your faith into action ... This is where you create a memorial moment – marking the death of the old you ... Remember your baptism in water? ... That's what water baptism symbolized: the burial of the old and the resurrection into new life ... This was a memorial moment identifying the death of the old in a general sense ... But now, we're getting more specific – because transformation is personal.

Here's how you can engage in a prophetic act - - declaring in both the natural and spiritual realms that the old you is dead and a new you is rising:

Write Down the Habits You Want Gone

On a piece of paper, list every habit, pattern, or behavior that keeps you from growing in Christ. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal habits so deeply ingrained that you've mistaken them for your identity.

Write Down Your Limiting Excuses

Take a second paper and write down every excuse you've used for why you can't change ... Include the ways you've blamed others or your circumstances for your stagnation ... Be honest ... If needed, ask a trusted friend to lovingly point out the excuses you might not see.

Write Down Your Limiting Beliefs and Fears

On a third sheet, write the lies you've believed about yourself - - things like "I'll never change," - "I'm not enough," - "I'll always struggle," or "This is just who I am." ... These are the inner strongholds holding you back from becoming who you were created to be.

Now, destroy them ... Tear them up ... Burn them ... Shred them ... Do it prayerfully - - deliberately - - as a declaration ... This is more than a symbolic act; - this is a spiritual shift ... You're declaring war on the old self, and declaring your freedom in Christ.

Mark this moment ... Imprint it on your memory ... Do it in a manner that makes this act memorable ... This is the death of the old you, - and the birth of the new.

And remember - this isn't a one-time event ... Transformation is a daily journey ... As you continue to walk with the Holy Spirit, - He will reveal more areas that need to be laid down ... When that happens, don't be discouraged - return to this process and keep crucifying the old ... Transformation is not about perfection ... It's about a daily reckoning - where the old man dies - and the new man comes alive in Christ.

Detox – Declutter – and Define Your New Life

Ephesians 4:22-24 The Voice

Then you know to take off your former way of life, - your crumpled old self - that dark blot of a soul - corrupted by deceitful desire and lust ... 23 to take a fresh breath and to let God renew your attitude and spirit. ... 24 Then you are ready to put on your new self, - modeled after the very likeness of God: truthful, righteous, and holy.

There's a divine process at work here - - a sacred exchange ... Take off the old ... Breathe deep ... Be renewed ... Put on the new ... But this isn't passive - it requires intention ... You have to detox your mind from toxic thought patterns that are misaligned with God's truth ... You have to declutter your life from the noise, distractions, and habits that keep you spiritually dull ... You have to define your boundaries - with people, - with time, - with energy - so that your space becomes fertile ground for transformation ... You must create an atmosphere that supports spiritual growth - not one that drains it ... And finally, you need to clearly define who you are becoming in Christ ... Write it ... Speak it ... Live it ... Step boldly into your identity as one made in the image of Christ - truthful, righteous, and holy ... You can't live a new life while

clinging to the old one ... Let it go ... Detox ... Declutter ... And step forward - - fully aligned with your divine destiny.

Conclusion: Step Into the New

We've talked today about the hard truth - - that every new beginning - demands the end of something old ... We've exposed the lie that stuffing down the old self is the same as crucifying it ... We've confronted the reality that transformation isn't just about belief - it's about action ... And we've walked through the prophetic process of detoxing, decluttering, and defining the new life God is calling you into.

But here's the final question:

Are you willing to do what it takes to become who God created you to be? ... You can't walk in resurrection power while keeping parts of your old self alive ... You can't carry the weight of past habits, - excuses, - and fears into your future and expect to live in freedom.

So today, I'm not just calling you to make a decision ... I'm calling you to make a declaration ... Declare that the old you has been crucified ... Declare that your identity is no longer tied to what you've done - or what's been done to you ... Declare that you are stepping fully into the Kainos life - - the new, divine nature of Christ within you ... This is your clean slate ... This is your holy reset ... Not because you tried harder - but because you died deeper - and allowed God to raise you into newness of life.

Now – it is up to you ... Will you take these principles and actually do them ... Will you visualize yourself in Christ – crucified upon the Cross – until that image is burned into your soul? ... Will you do the hard work of self-examination – guided by the Holy Spirit – in order to destroy the old, you that this realm programmed you to be? ... Will you persevere until the new creation Christ has created you to be – becomes fully manifested for all to see?