

I Choose that Others Might Live

by K.P. Yohannan

K.P. Yohannan emphasizes the necessity of daily dying to oneself to produce spiritual life in others, following the example of Jesus and Paul.

Scripture: John 12:23

Topics: "Fruitfulness in Christ", "Self-Sacrifice"

Description

K.P. Yohannan emphasizes the profound truth that true life and fruitfulness in the Kingdom of God come through dying to oneself, as illustrated by Jesus' teaching on the grain of wheat. He explains that just as a seed must fall to the ground and die to produce a harvest, believers must daily choose to surrender their rights and desires for the sake of others. Yohannan challenges the notion of self-preservation, urging Christians to embrace the cross and serve selflessly, as exemplified by the Apostle Paul. He reminds us that the measure of our willingness to die to ourselves directly correlates to the life we can bring to others. Ultimately, the sermon calls for a radical choice: to lay down our lives so that others might live.

Transcript

When Jesus came to live on this earth, He entered a world in which everyone continually fought to preserve his or her own rights, reputation and life. How foreign it must have sounded to them when Jesus, in reference to the cross, replied to those who wanted to see Him: "The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life" (John 12:23-25).

In this Scripture, Jesus talked about the prospect of a single seed producing many more of its kind. But the most important requirement for that single seed to multiply is this: It must fall into the ground and die. In Mark 4, Jesus told the parable of the sower who went out to sow seed. Some of his seed fell on the wayside, some on the rocky ground, others among thorns and the rest on the good ground. Now just suppose the seeds that fell on the good ground didn't actually die.

How much harvest would they have produced? None! In fact, there would have been no difference, in terms of the end result, between these seeds and the ones that fell on bad soil. Think about it. You can take the best seed and put it in the best soil, but if it will not crack open and die, what good is it? With a grain of wheat, Jesus illustrated how very serious a matter it is that He and we, His followers, die in order to produce life. Even if we had every doctrine right, lived our lives beyond reproach and could move

mountains by our faith, it would be insufficient to produce life in others.

Without death there is no harvest. Jesus, being 100 percent God, could have decided to lay down all His glory, become a man and later on go back to heaven . . . alone. But He saw that through death, He would bring many sons to glory. Out of His free choice, He willingly embraced the cross (see John 10:18; Hebrews 2:9-10, 12:2). So it is with us. Paul wrote, "I die daily" (1 Corinthians 15:31) and "I am crucified with Christ" (Galatians 2:20, kjv). The death he talks about is a continuous present tense.

It's a choice I must make every day of my life to die to my own desires, rights, wishes and decisions for the sake of bringing fruit for the kingdom of God. There is no shortcut and no other way. In the measure in which you and I are willing to die daily through the grace of God and the cross, in that same measure will life be produced in others. Paul put it this way: "So then death is working in us, but life in you" (2 Corinthians 4:12). I am sure when Paul finished his race, he looked back on the death that worked in him--the bloody trail of suffering, hardship, loneliness, shipwreck, prison and rejection-- and had no regrets.

I am sure there was only praise to God who called him (see 2 Corinthians 4:17). He brought many with him to heaven, and even today, after 2,000 years, his choice to die continues to bring fruit through the words he left behind. What about those of us who believe we must be so private and so protective of our time, energy, resources and reputation in order to further our own spiritual pursuits? You will find that in spite of all the knowledge and blessings accumulated, those lives would remain fruitless.

Essentially, all that is happening is self-preservation. A man who is willing to go the extra mile, carrying the burden for someone else, is at that moment dying to his desire for rest and more peace for himself. He sees the extra mile as a means to help that person see God's love. Someone who truly understands that death to himself will produce life in others will not watch the clock in his service to the Lord. When there is need, he will work alongside Jesus as long as it takes.

He will pray for the lost world while others are sleeping. As he dies to his rights to stop working at 5:00 or to sleep an extra hour, he opens the way for thousands around the world--on the mission field and elsewhere--to find life. Such a follower of Jesus will not hesitate to humble himself before others when he has failed. He will trust God that through his honesty and willingness to receive correction, life will be produced. It is true if we superficially look at others who live for themselves, we can become jealous of the so-called "easy" life they live.

We can begin to tell ourselves, "I have rights too." The pressure grows especially when our friends, families, the media and churches counsel us contrary to Christ's call to lay down our lives. Paul said that he had the right to be married, just like Peter and the rest of the apostles. It wasn't wrong; but he chose not to so that he could serve the Lord with undivided attention (see 1 Corinthians 7:7-8). So the choice we make in dying daily is not between right or wrong. The choice is between my rights and a new way--Christ's way.

In other words, when we say no to many things and accept the cross, regardless of how much it hurts, that one seed can give life to hundreds more. Death to your own wishes will mean life for multiplied others--what will you choose?

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/kp-yohannan/i-choosethat-others-might-live/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net