

BRYAN STATION BAPTIST CHURCH
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LIFE THROUGH DEATH

By: Al Gormley

John 12:23-33, *"And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour. Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him. Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes. Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die."*

In our text, it was six days before the passover. It was just a few days before Jesus Christ would be crucified that He made these statements. In John 12:24 He makes a simple statement, *"Verily, verily,"* or amen, amen, or so be it, so be it: *"I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."*

Jesus is comparing his death here with the sowing of seed. I wonder sometimes if we really understand the natural things of this life. How they picture the things of the Lord. Here is a seed, a grain of wheat. The Bible says it must be put into the ground, it must die before it brings forth any fruit. In other words, unless that seed is put into the ground and dies, it will never bring forth any fruit.

When you plant a seed in the ground, it is a picture of a death and a resurrection. I would like to say this, that there is no resurrection without a death. These are simple things, but they are profound. Jesus Christ would not have been raised were it not for his death. There is no resurrection as far as salvation is concerned, unless there is a death. The Apostle Paul said after he was saved, Galatians 2:20, *"I am crucified with Christ nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me..."*

Every seed we put in the ground that comes up, pictures the resurrection. There is life that comes through death. That seed had to die, but in its dying came forth something new—a new life, a resurrection life. In that resurrection life, it would produce fruit.

When you were baptized, as a child of God, you said that you died in Christ. Isn't that what baptism pictures, that you have died in Christ? Without a death in Christ there is no resurrection. Unless Jesus Christ died and was buried, there would be no resurrection. Unless Jesus Christ died in His body on the tree, there would be no one saved. So life comes through death.

The little seed, if it is kept in a jar, won't amount to anything. If Christ Jesus had not died and been put into the grave, none of us would be saved; no fruit. As we look at even nature itself, it teaches us that in order for fruit to be brought forth, there has to be a death. Those of us that are saved by the grace of God had to come to the place in our life, where we repented of our sins and died in Christ Jesus. If you did not die in Christ Jesus, then you will die eternally, suffering for your own sins.

We believe by faith that when Jesus Christ died, he died for as our substitute, as our sin-bearer. Instead of us dying and suffering for our own sins, we believe and trust in Him, that He died in our place and by faith we trusted in Him that He died for us. So we

die in Him. That is what Paul meant, *"I am crucified with Christ..."*

In our baptism we are declaring that we have died to this world, we have died to sin, and we are alive in Christ. Romans 6:4, *"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."* Isn't that what we picture in baptism, that we have died to this world and we are raised to walk in newness of life? Isn't that what repentance declares, that we have turned away from our sins? Christ died for our sins; and now there is a resurrected life? Galatians 2:20, *"...The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."* As a child of God there should be a resurrected life. We have been raised from the dead, spiritually. We have passed from death unto life. *"The life which I now live...I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and died for me."*

Jesus Christ saved us because He was willing to die, and through His death comes life. If we say we are saved today, we have to die in Christ. You not only have to die in Christ Jesus, but in repentance we die to the old life. We die to the old life, we don't want to live any longer in it. We picture that we are raised to walk in newness of life. That which we put in the grave, that doesn't bring life. We have died in Christ; that brings us life. We are raised now to walk in newness of life.

I am afraid that we have little by little gotten away from the Lord so much that we think our salvation is just to come before the church, profess Him as our Saviour and that's all it amounts to. That is not what it is friend; that is not what it is. Many say, "I know I am saved." There is no way you can know you are saved unless you die in Christ

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Jesus. Just "...as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life," Romans 6:4.

John 12:25 Jesus is still on that subject. "He that loveth his life shall lose it..." When we repent of our sins, we quit loving our old life. It was sinful, it was destroying us, it was sending us to hell. We hate those things that we did; we turn to God, and put our faith in Jesus Christ. We hate that old life; and, the new life that we live is by the faith of the Son of God who loved me, and died for me. That is the kind of life I love, I love the new life. It is something that came out of the old life, but it is altogether new. II Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

I not only look at other people, I have to look at myself. I Peter 2:19, "For this is thankworthy, [grace] if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully." You do what the Lord tells you to do and you will suffer for it because in this world you will have tribulation. You will suffer wrongfully, but God will take care of it. God says this is grace.

Verse 20, "For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently?..." If you have done something, and you are guilty of it, and someone criticizes you, you deserve what you get. If you are wrong, you deserve to be criticized: "...but if, when ye do well,..."

When you do what God told you to do, and suffer for Christ sake, the Bible says: "...When you do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God." The word acceptable here is grace, *charis*. Just do what is right, whatever people say doesn't make any difference. Just suffer for it, if you are right with God, He says this is acceptable with God.

Verse 21: "For even hereunto were ye called..." This is what God called you to do. "...because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." Christ is our example, not only in Christian living but He is our example in suffering. What did Christ do for us if He didn't die for us that we might live. "Who did no sin,..." Christ did not sin: "neither was guile found in his mouth." There was no reason for Him to be criticized or despised of men. There was no reason for Him to be crucified, but He was and left us an example. "Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again;..." When people said all manner of things about Him, He reviled not again. He just shut His mouth and let them do it, be-

cause he was right with God and he was not going to worry about it. "...When he suffered, he threatened not;..." When He suffered, He did not say, "well you did this to me, I'm going to do this to you." No, "...he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." Paul says in I Corinthians 4:3-4, "But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment:...but he that judgeth me is the Lord."

In John 12:25, He is still talking about a death. "He that loveth his life shall lose it;..." Let me ask you something, did Jesus Christ love His life on this earth? No, He didn't. In fact, He came and sacrificed His whole life. He was despised of men. He lost His life so that we might have ours. Hebrews 4:15: He "...was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." He was a man, He was in the flesh, He was tempted as a man to do the things that we do, and yet there was no sin. "He that loveth his life shall lose it..." If you love your life on this earth, and you love to live like the world is living; you are just like the world, and you are loving your life and you are going to lose it. "And he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." The Bible tells us that we hate the kind of life we once lived. We don't want to live that kind of life anymore, because God hates that kind of life. "...He that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal."

I want to do a lot of things. This old flesh wants to do what everybody else wants to do. But I am finding out more and more, as the Lord says, "I come to do thy will oh God." In order to please my heavenly father, I have to put those things out of my life so that I can please him for Jesus' sake.

Romans 7:15, the Apostle Paul said, "For that which I do I allow not:..." I do some things that I don't like. "...for what I would, that do I not;..." Things that I know I ought to do, I fail to do them. "...but what I hate, that do I." I didn't say that when you die to this world that you would not sin. But when you die to this world, you will hate what when you sin.

Verse 22: "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man." That's how to have joy, that's how to have peace—to do from the heart those things that are pleasing to the father. "Peace I give, not as the world giveth, I give you a different kind of peace." Verse 24: Here's what the Apostle Paul thought of himself: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" John 12:26: "If any man serve me, let him follow me;..." The word serve

means to minister unto. "When you feed one of my little ones, you have done it unto me." We minister unto the Lord; we are his servants. Isn't that what a servant does to his master, ministers unto him? Isn't that our life? We are to minister unto the Lord. "If any man serve me, let him follow me;..."

This world is departing from God. I never saw such a mess in all my life and the Lord told us this was coming. "If any man serve me, let him follow me;..." Romans 6:16, "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey;" What does this verse say? "If any man serve me, let him follow me;" You can't follow the Lord unless you obey Him.

John 10:27-28: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life;..." You are either obeying the Lord of heaven or you are obeying the prince and power of the air. You are following one of two persons: the Lord or the devil. John 8:44: "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do..."

Romans 6:16: "...Whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" You see, sin is disobedient. When you are obedient unto God, you are following the Lord. "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin,..." That's what we were before we were saved. "...but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." Verse 20: "For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness." As long as you are serving sin, you are still in your sins. "What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death." If you want to serve the devil, "the end of those things is death." That's where he is leading you. If you want to serve the Lord, "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." That's something to look forward to!

"If any man serve me, let him follow me..." Jesus Christ's life was a life of obedience. It was a life of doing the will of God. Doing those things that pleased His heavenly father, He said, "I come to do thy will, oh God." Matthew 3:17: "And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Philippians 2:9-11, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every

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knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Matthew 7:14 *"...Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."* You know when you go through that gate, you have to die to this world. Restricted, strait is the gate. When you go through the gate, the door is Jesus Christ, you have to trust him that he died for you and you have to die unto him. *"...Narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."* It is the way of holiness. Hebrews 12:14 tells us that without holiness *"no man shall see the Lord."*

It's going to be a terrible thing, when you close your eyes in death and go out into eternity and find out that you just believed on something in your head and never had it in your heart.

Notice the encouragement He gives in John 12, He is warning us in verse 25: *"He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal."* Verse 26 is a word of encouragement. *"If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be:..."* Isn't that encouraging us to follow the Lord. Isn't that encouraging us to be obedient unto the Lord? Doesn't that encourage us to do the will of the father? Matthew 28:20: *"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you..."* Are we, am I, following the Lord? Who am I following? It also says, *"if any man serve me, him will my Father honour."*

Isaiah 35:8 is talking about Jesus Christ. *"And an highway shall be there, and a way,..."* What did Jesus say in John 14:6: *"...I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."* *"An highway shall be there..."* Isn't that what John the Baptist preached in Luke 3:4? *"...The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."* *"...and it shall be called The way of holiness..."* People who do not want to go the way of holiness will not reach heaven. Without holiness no man shall see the Lord. *"...the unclean shall not pass over it;..."* You know what happens when you go through the door (strait is the gate)? You are cleansed through faith in Jesus Christ who died for you. *"...the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein."* If you get on a road with no exits, there is no

way off, a fool would get on that road. The Bible teaches us, we need to follow Jesus Christ. That is the strait gate, that is the narrow way. *"No lion shall be there..."* Do you know what that is teaching us? A lion is a killer, he will destroy you? But there won't be anything there to kill you. That means that when you are saved, you are saved eternally. *"Nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon,..."* When you get on the way of holiness, there is nothing going to destroy you. There won't be any lion, no ravenous beast, nothing there to take your life. You are going to live on as you walk and follow Him. *"...it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there."* Those who have been redeemed by the blood of the lamb, the Holy Spirit comes within, causes us to have a change of mind and heart. We want to live our lives for Jesus Christ.

Isaiah 35:10: *"And the ransomed of the Lord shall return..."* I'm not only going to go to be with the Lord, but I am going to return and I'm coming back again. And we will *"...come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads..."* What kind of joy? everlasting joy. Isn't it worth it to lose your life in this world now, the few years that you have to live, so that you can have everlasting joy that God has promised us. *"...they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."*

The Lord only lived 33½ years, but look at Him now. What kind of glory is He enjoying now. We have the same privilege of living a few years upon this earth and doing what the Lord did. Following the Lord as His servant and dying to this world. As the Apostle Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ." Mortify the deeds of this body that Christ can live in and through you; and through that death, you are going to live.

II Timothy 2:10: *"Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him."* If you have died in Christ by faith, you come to the place where you realize that you are lost and headed for hell. You see that Jesus Christ died for you; and, by faith, you died in Him and you are going to live with Him. If Christ died for your sins, there is no way that you are not going to live with Him. You are going to have life through death. Christ had to die. You have to die in Him and you will live with Him.

Verse 12: *"If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us."* Would to God that we would really take these things seriously. Denomi-

national churches are fussing over whether women are to speak in the church. I Corinthians 14:34: *"Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak..."* We need to stay with the Lord.

John 12:27: *"Now is my soul troubled:..."* This was right close to the time when Jesus Christ was going to die. Already He is beginning to have grief, "my soul is troubled." He knew exactly what He was going to face when He went to the cross of Calvary. *"And what shall I say?"* "I know that I am going to have to take the sins of all of my people, and I am going to have to bear them in my own body on the tree. I am going to have to suffer to satisfy the justice of God. My Father will forsake me and turn His back upon me and everything will be dark. I am going to have to do it all alone." *"...What shall I say? Father, save me from this hour..."* In the gospel of John, He said over and over, "my hour is not yet come." Verse 23: *"The hour is come..."* Save me from this hour, *"...but for this cause came I unto this hour."*

Jesus Christ was a lamb slain before the foundation of the world. Jesus Christ had that hour upon His mind before the world was ever made. Galatians 4:4: *"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law."* He knew full well what He had to do—what he had to do to keep the law, that he had to suffer for our sins, and that God would punish Him in our place. It pleased the Lord to bruise Him and He had to do all this to bring His people to Himself. He had to die, and through that death came life.

Verse 28: *"Father, glorify thy name..."* He was an example that we should follow in His steps. He had to go to the cross, and knowing all the things that faced Him, He said, "Father I want your will to be done, glorify your name." I Corinthians 6:19-20, *"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."* The things that we do, shouldn't we have the same thoughts, *"Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."*

In His baptism, Jesus Christ was spoken to by the father, Matthew 3:17, *"And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."* At the mount of figuration the father spoke to him again, Mark 9:7, *"And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came*

out of the cloud, saying, *This is my beloved Son: hear him.*" And here we see it being done again, three times, *"I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."*

I want to show you what he meant in John chapter one when He said, "I will glorify it." Verse 14, *"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory..."* Do you see that? I have glorified it and will glorify it again. *"...the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.*

Jesus Christ, in His life, glorified His heavenly father in everything that He did. *"I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."* The Bible says He glorified it in the life that He lived, He glorified His heavenly father in the death that He died, and He glorified Him in His resurrection. Romans 6:4, *"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so..."* when we die in Christ Jesus, we are raised to walk in newness of life by the glory of the father. I Corinthians 6:20, *"For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."* Romans 12:1, *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."*

As your pastor, I could stand here and tell you everything is ok. I am not telling you everything is ok. It is not ok in my life and it's not in yours. I think each one of us ought to go to the scriptures and find out what God wants us to do and do it. We need to do it for Jesus' sake. When I stand before the Lord, I want to be accepted, and not be ashamed. I want to present this church in such a manner that you can stand before God and not be ashamed.

Isaiah 63:1, *"Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? [that's the Lord] this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel,"* [How come your clothes are red?] *"and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?"* When Jesus was on the cross he said, *"I have trodden the winepress alone."* That's the cross, and the winepress is symbolic of the wrath of God and God's judgment upon His own son; how the grapes were put in a winepress and men trampled them and the skins burst and the juice poured out. *"I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me:"* He was not only the sacrifice, but He was the one that endured the wrath of God. He did it all by Himself, His disciples all forsook Him and fled. He voluntarily went to the cross, without any help at all; and He died and suffered for my sins.

John 12:29, *"The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him."* Jesus knew exactly what was going on, but the people did not have an understanding. The peoples of this world can not understand the things of God. But the Lord understood, and God's people can understand if God has opened your ears to hear. *"Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes. Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die."* You know what He is saying there, He is going to have to be put on the cross of Calvary. He said if I be lifted up, I will draw all; that's Jew and Gentile; I will draw all of my people unto myself.

What draws God's people to Him? It's not the wrath of God, it's the goodness of God that leadeth them to repentance. I find myself lost, I find myself dying and going to hell; I see the wrath of God upon me. If I am condemned and I die in this condition, I will die and suffer eternally in the fires of hell. And I find out that God was good to me and He sent His Son into this world to die for sinners, and I am the one that He died for; and through His death I have life, and I died in Him by faith. Through my death to this world, I will have life eternal.

God does not save anybody that is not willing, by the grace of God through faith, to die in Christ Jesus. That's the only hope there is: to die in Christ Jesus. Romans 6:1-2, *"What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"* Many people will read this and go their way, lost.

You are responsible to repent, don't blame it on your old nature; blame yourself. *"You will not come to me that ye might have life."* You love your sins, you love what you are doing. You are afraid that it is going to upset your life. No, the Bible says if you lose your life, you will find it. You have to lose it, you have to turn away from it, you have to be crucified to the world, you have to put it to death in order that you might live through His death; and live for Him the way He lived. You say, I can't do that. But you can sure try to live for Him. Then one of these days you are going to have a new body, and you will live exactly like you want to. You are going to live for Him. And that life came through His death, and through our death, by trusting Him and living for Him.

This sermon (#2877) may be ordered on CD or DVD. See email and mailing address below.

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Sunday Morning Devotion—9:45 a.m.

Sunday School—10 a.m.

Sunday Morning Worship—11 a.m.

Sunday Evening Worship—6 p.m.

Wednesday Prayer Service—7 p.m.

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