

daily *trying* or daily *dying*

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After being saved, most Christians are vibrant with zeal. They know the joy of salvation and are readily available to witness to this fact. Everything they can do for the Lord is a thrill.

As time goes on, the zeal they once had is suddenly not quite as thrilling as it was at the beginning. The prayers that used to be so spontaneous have almost become a chore. The sensitivity of sins committed does not seem to be as strong; doesn't seem to drive them to their knees as it once did. All of a sudden, they realize they have gone all day without even thinking of Jesus. Where are the songs they use to sing all day long?

The Christian begins to realize something is happening. In an attempt to make some changes, this person begins to schedule things that use to be an automatic. "I will read my Bible 15 minutes everyday. As soon as I get up in the morning I will pray for half an hour." Instead of his mind spontaneously meditating on the scriptures, he has to put up "reminder signs" at home and work. These signs quote scriptures or are thought provoking statements. We begin to reduce the automatics of Life down to "reminder signs" and "schedules."

The motivation behind doing this is usually noble. A genuine desire to follow the Lord is still present. This desire usually fluctuates with circumstances. At a time of crisis, this desire comes to the forefront. Before, zeal was the motivation. Now, crisis is the motivation. Neither one can continue to motivate consistently. In order to try to fulfill this desire, he has to try very hard each day. At times it is a real battle. He is heavy laden with little rest. It's as if he has to make his Christianity work. Haven't most of us experienced this? It seems we are always trying daily to do things in order to be something. A Christian should act like a Christian because he is one. His Life should automatically produce the right behavior.

But Jesus' Life comes out of death. 1 Corinthians 15:36 says "Life comes out of death." In verse 31, Paul states that he lives by this principle daily. He describes this death more clearly in Galatians 2:20. "I am crucified with Christ." Paul declares that by virtue of the death that Jesus died, he also was included. He reckoned on the Cross daily. The result of this death which he died "In Christ", was "not I, but Christ liveth in me." That is a motivation that could last through eternity!

As long as I try daily, I will fail. As long as I die daily, Christ will be glorified. John the Baptist knew this principle. He said " He must increase and I must decrease." The Cross becomes a principle in the life of the believer. New birth is not the improving of the old nature but the putting off of the old man and the putting on of the Lord Jesus Christ. We are not to give our life

to God, we are to lose our life; for in so doing, we will gain life -- HIS LIFE. It's no wonder the Christian life was so hard to live. No matter how hard we try, we still can't live it. Only He can live it through us. His Life is the Life of the Christian.

Stop and think! Is trying to be a Christian becoming a burden? Are the things that should be automatic forced? Do we find ourselves scheduling a time to pray and read the Bible, only to find we can't even submit to the schedules we have set up much less the demands of the Lord? Let us face facts! We have not yet been to the Cross. I am still trying, instead of knowing His death with me included and dying daily as a result. Trying to die daily is not the answer. Only if the seed is dead will it then bring forth Life (John 12:24).

If you don't understand, then get in the scriptures and stay until Christ is revealed. Then get to an environment conducive to living His Life and there learn Christ. ***