

The Substitution of the Christ-Life for the Self-Life.

by F.B. Meyer

The sermon emphasizes the need to overcome self-centeredness by choosing the cross and living in the Spirit, which involves the crucifixion of self and the mortification of the flesh.

Scripture: Romans 6:6, Galatians 1:4, Galatians 2:20, Galatians 3:3, Galatians 5:16-25, Galatians 6:14

Topics: "Self vs. Christ", "Sanctification through the Spirit"

Description

F.B. Meyer emphasizes the necessity of substituting the Christ-life for the self-life, arguing that self is the main impediment to spiritual growth. He uses the Epistle of Galatians to illustrate how the works of the flesh manifest in various forms of selfishness and how true sanctification comes through the cross of Christ. Meyer stresses that believers must crucify their self-life and allow the Holy Spirit to lead them into a life centered on Christ. He highlights that the struggle between the flesh and the Spirit is ongoing, and true victory comes from living in the Spirit. Ultimately, the sermon calls for a radical transformation where Christ becomes the center of our lives instead of self.

Transcript

In my second address we saw that the will is our main and chief impediment. We are not what we or think, or wish but what we will In the preceding address we saw that our curse lies in making self the pilot of our life, and that the one aim of Christianity is to put Christ where man puts self. I want now to show shortly, concisely, with the power of God's Spirit who cooperates, how this may be done, and I am going to use the Epistle of Galatians. In Gal_5:19, we have the works of self: "Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness' idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, 'wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like."

Wherever man's nature works itself out, the lust of the flesh shows itself in every casino, saloon and house of ill-fame. Turn to Gal_3:3 : "Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" Will you be made perfect in the flesh? In the regenerate man, the church-member, there is the same principle of self-life; and though you do not find him in a den of drink or lust or infamy, the same principle which is working unrestrained and unbridled there is working in his heart also.

He gives to the collection, to the subscription list, that men may see how much he gives. He seeks to please God by prayer, by the communion, by ritualistic observances. He will even try to be perfect. There

is many a man who goes to Keswick and to Northfield, trying to pile up his religious life in the energy of his religious-looking self. But I repeat it: the curse of the Christian and of the world is that self is our pivot; it is because Satan made self his pivot that he became a devil.

Take heaven from its center in God, and try to center it in self, and you transform . heaven into hell. I know little or nothing about the fire, or the darkness, or the worm of hell. Hell is selfishness, and selfishness is hell. And is to do away with self, and to make Christ all in all. When I am dealing with a drunkard I am inclined to say to him: "Be a man." What a fool I am! I am trying to cast out the evil of drink by the evil of self-esteem. If I want to save a man, I must cast out the spirit of self, and substitute the Lord Jesus Christ.

Alpha, Omega, all in all. But how? How? This epistle to the Galatians is my battle-'axe. Luther used it for justification, but I think it is for sanctification. How? By the cross, and by the cross as presented in the epistle to the Galatians. The Apostle tells us in Gal_1:4 : "Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father." He considers the cross in its aspect toward sanctification.

He says: "He delivered us from this present evil world." In Romans we have the cross for justification, the putting away of sin; in Galatians for sanctification, the cross standing between me and my past, between me and the world, between me and myself: the cross, and I count from that cross. That is the ground taken in Galatians. Take Gal_2:20 : "I have been crucified with Christ." God demands that every man and woman should unite with the cross, and (so to speak) kill the self, life, the egotism, the personal element which has been so strong in each one.

Not your individuality, however. Isaiah will still be Isaiah, and Malachi, Malachi; but the proud, fussy self, esteem, yourself, ego, the flesh, must be crucified. Christ denied His divine self, and you and I must deny our fallen self. Christ's temptation was to use His divine attribute; your temptation is that you should use your human attribute. You must put it to the cross, and believe that from this moment it shall be crucified to you and you to it. Barabbas to the cross, to the cross!

Christ, come down from the cross and live in here! Gal_5:24 : The aorist: "They that are Christ's crucified the flesh." Gal_6:14 : " God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." The world looks at me as a felon, but I have my revenge. That by which I am crucified to the world, by that the world is crucified to me. It may say what it likes about me. I retaliate: "Take it back; it is all true of thyself."

This wonderful epistle speaks of the cross as between me and Egypt, between me and the wilderness, between me and my past, my wanderings; and now the cross is my Jordan by which I pass through death into the land where Joshua leads, the land that flows with milk and honey. This epistle also treats of the Holy Ghost, be. cause as I have said before, it is only the Holy Spirit that can make your reckoning true. You choose the cross, but the Holy Spirit as it were mortifies, makes dead, makes real.

You reckon, He makes real your reckoning. And hence Gal_5:17 : " The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Gal_5:16 : " Walk in the Spirit"; Gal_5:18 : "Be led of the Spirit"; Gal.. Gal_5:25 : "Live in the Spirit." And whilst you walk in the Spirit, are led of the Spirit, and live in the Spirit, the Holy Spirit will go on lusting and agonizing and making real to you your reckoning of death.

You have not therefore got to worry about the death side; think about the life side. Do not live looking at the corpse, but live looking to the Holy Ghost; and as you trust Him for every movement, as you breathe in the Holy Ghost moment by moment as you breathe in air, in the depth of your heart He will draw you away from the flesh, the self, the world, the devil; and insensibly, unconsciously, exquisitely, He will bring you into life. And the more you live on the life side, the more, without knowing much of it, you will live on the death side; for whilst you are engrossed with the Holy Ghost, the Holy Ghost in the depth of your being is carrying the sentence of death deeper, deeper, deeper down, and things are being mortified of which you once had no conception.

Now listen: If you choose the cross, if you live in the Spirit, the Spirit lusts, (always the present tense), lusteth against the flesh. I do not know how your Bible reads, but some Bibles are printed wrong. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh," and " Spirit" is spelt with a small s. Take some ink and alter that. It is not "spirit" with a small s; it is " Spirit" with a capital S, the Holy Spirit. "The flesh, the self, lusts against the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit lusts against the flesh." Now, let us look at five texts in Galatians on the inner life, the indwelling of Christ.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/fb-meyer/the-substitution-of-the-christ-life-for-the-self-life/>

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