

# The Gates of Death

by Paul West

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*The sermon teaches that following the Holy Spirit into a place of testing and temptation leads to spiritual growth and abundant life.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 16:24, John 12:24, Romans 6:11, Romans 8:13, 2 Corinthians 4:10, Galatians 2:20, Galatians 5:24, Philippians 3:10, Colossians 3:5, 1 Peter 4:1

**Topics:** "Mortification Of Self", "Spiritual Renewal"

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## Description

Paul West preaches about the necessity for Christians to daily enter the gates of death in order to find true life in Christ. He emphasizes that following Jesus often leads believers down a narrow, challenging path that requires mortification of the flesh and a willingness to face trials and temptations. By choosing the path of death to self and sin, Christians can experience a new spiritual vibrancy and protection from the snares of the enemy, ultimately receiving abundant life and grace from God.

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## Transcript

Dear Christian, do you each day enter the gates of death that you might find life? If you profess to follow Christ Jesus, this is where the Spirit will always lead you. Many imagine God's Spirit to lead the believer down a flowery, sunlit path of effortless living, of soul-happiness and physical content, without a graveyard in sight. But it's the broad and heavily-trodden paths in life that lead to an easing of the flesh. Narrow roads lead to cemeteries.

When you pray for God's will to be done in your life, expect to be tested. Expect for something unpleasant to happen, expect someone to verbally abuse you, to belittle you, expect someone to question your integrity, count on being tempted by the opposite sex, to be at a personal disadvantage, to be inconvenienced, misunderstood, vexed, misconstrued, lured by the prospect of making dishonest gain, etc. These are divine appointments to provoke the flesh to get you to sin and lose your peace with God. Along these lines you can expect a dreadful manifestation, and you will have a grand opportunity to mortify. At that moment, you will find yourself at a fork in the road.

One part of the fork - the broad path - keeps going on in the direction you were heading, to the venting and appeasement of the flesh. The smaller road takes a sharp detour off the beaten path. If you were walking with the Lord up to this point, this is the path Jesus takes. Dear saint, follow Him; He is heading toward the gates.

As you follow the Lord to the gates, the temptation to look back to the main road is there, for it is never far from the graveyard entrance. It beckons you back to life, back to fun, to sensuality, to satisfaction. You can smell the death wafting over the cemetery walls; on the broad side, however, the sweet smell of vibrant life still mingles. You hear the laughter, the merrymaking of flesh and exaltation of self. The roar of Satan's fiery missiles suddenly bombard you mind: "Join them! Say something! Defend yourself! Take a second look! Grab the opportunity! Flirt!"

Dear Christian, the next time you are tested, remember the gates of death, for this is where the Holy Spirit leads you. Are you enticed to indulge in an impure thought? Enter the gates of death. Are you tempted to defile your conscience with a second look? Look instead unto the cemetery walls, for the Lord is near. Do you see an opportunity to make some money that compromises your godly integrity? Mortify your members and push the squeaky gate forward. Are you tempted to sin on the internet? The gates of death loom large before you. Enter through them with your High Priest.

As you enter through the gates of death, you lose your flesh life - but gain a new spiritual vibrancy a thousand times over! The gates of death suddenly become the gates of grace. True death, paradoxically, is outside the cemetery, back on the broad highway of unmortified flesh. Within the cemetery, however, there is abundant life, there is protection from the powers of hell, from the tormentors of the mind and soul, from the entrapments of harlots, charlatans and devils.

God surely rewards those who voluntarily lose their life by following His Son into the cemetery. Enter therefore into the systematic, private death of mortification by the Holy Spirit, and God will openly reward you before all those outside the cemetery walls. From the place of death you will manifest life. The odor of death for you will become a fragrance of life for others.

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