

# You Must Die

by Robert Ketcham

---

*The sermon emphasizes the necessity of dying to self and living as the embodiment of Christ's message in the world.*

**Duration:** 41:17

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Romans 6:11-13, Romans 6:16, Colossians 3:2-3

**Topics:** "Dying"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of allowing the Holy Spirit to work through us rather than relying on our own efforts. He refers to Romans 8:13, which encourages believers to mortify the desires of the flesh through the Spirit. The speaker also highlights the significance of our bodies, which were bought by Jesus, and how we are called to glorify God in them. He explains that living for God is a continuous process, moment by moment, and refers to Romans 6-11 to emphasize the need to be alive to God through Jesus Christ. The sermon addresses the struggle of wanting to do what is right but often falling into sin, and encourages believers to rely on the power of the Holy Spirit for victory over sinful behaviors.

---

## Transcript

The high cost of writing paper, 2 Corinthians 3.3. We are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, the letter of Christ. Epistles are letters. The purpose of letters is to convey a message from someone here to someone over here, who is absent from him, who has a message that he wants to get to him.

Jesus Christ has a message that he wants to get to the lost of earth. So he writes them a letter, and you're it. Keep in mind what I said yesterday, you are not simply a letter bearer.

You are not simply, you do have a verbal message, that's true, to deliver. But this passage goes beyond that, and gets right down to your conduct, and your manner of life, your reactions to situations that arise, some of them slowly, and you have a chance to get yourself ready for them, others that arise instantaneously. How do you react? Do you fly off the handle? Do you get cranky and irritable? And all this kind of business.

All of these things distort the letter. You are the letter, not simply the letter carrier. You are declared to be the epistle, not simply the one who carries it.

You do have a message to carry. But you have a body, and that body was brought by the Lord Jesus, according to 1 Corinthians 6, and therefore we are to glorify God in our bodies. And it was that that I was talking about yesterday.

The high cost of writing paper is first of all a very costly proposition to the man who buys the standing timber which he intends to make into writing paper. And so the Lord Jesus bought the standing forest of multiplied millions upon millions of standing timber, you, you, you, you, you, you, and me, out of which he hopes someday to make writing paper. And you're it.

I suggested yesterday that the only Christ that an unsaved world will ever see is the Christ they see in you and me. There is no other place on the face of this earth where unsaved people can see Christ except in you and me. Now, they may hear a lot about him from you and me.

That's not what I'm talking about now. Do they see him in you and me? That's the issue. And just what kind of a Christ does your circle in which you move see? Do they see you using the same language, following the same customs, associations, and pleasures, and amusements, and habits that they do? If so, they see nothing different in you than from themselves, and they're not attracted to Christ, and we jump all over them because they don't hear our message.

Don't you jump on these unsaved people about not hearing the message and coming to Jesus Christ. Look at yourself and see whether or not the Christ you have lived in their presence is attractive. That is where the rub comes on this one.

You are declared to be the letters of Christ, and I closed yesterday morning with this suggestion, that all we are in heaven before the face of a holy God is in Christ Jesus. The other side of that is just as true. All Jesus Christ is before the face of a godless world is in us.

Jesus Christ is our advocate, our representative, talking to God the Father about us and witnessing about us, confessing us before his Father. And I close with this question. If Jesus Christ hasn't done a better job representing me before the Father and representing you before the Father, than you and I have done the last 30 days representing Christ before the world, how secure would you be? These are things I said to you yesterday.

But we have come to an hour in the Christian era when we can no longer play at being a Christian, when we can no longer just think it's a sort of an afternoon picnic and a little canoe ride up a shaded stream. Maybe there was a day when that's what it was, but that's long since passed, fellows and girls. We're out in the front line trenches, and there never was a time when we needed to be more serious about being Christians than right now.

Now, this business of being a Christian is the most serious business in all the world. Now, Jesus Christ bought our bodies for an express purpose, that he might move us out of them, keeping us constantly in the place of death to self, and that these bodies which he bought now are his sole property, and he has a right to move them and do anything he wants to do with them, and we have no right to them anymore. Who you marry, what you wear, where you live and what you do, that's none of your business anymore.

It's your job to find out what he wants to do with your body and go on and get it done. Maybe he does want you to be a housewife or a godly husband. Maybe he does want you to be a preacher or a doctor or a lawyer or an accountant.

Maybe he does want you to be a missionary, but whatever he wants, that's his business, not yours. You are not your own, you are bought with a price. So we'll just have to face up to it, folks, and quit prancing around and diddling around and giddy-giddy, kind of a hurdy-gurdy, hop, skip and jump through Christian life.

We've got to settle down the business and get serious about our Christian life. I don't mean by that that you're going to have to go around with a face on you for long enough to eat oatmeal out of a gas pipe. I don't mean that.

Grin and giggle if you want to. But when it comes to this business of being the representation of Jesus Christ, that's serious business. I said you could do nothing if you didn't have a body.

Neither can Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ would be just as helpless in this dispensation if he didn't have a body in which he could live as you would be if you didn't have a body. You couldn't let anybody know you're around, you couldn't do anything, neither can Christ.

That's why he bought your body. That's why he bought that old carcass of yours. He wants to put it to death hour by hour, moment by moment, and he wants to live his life out through your hands, your feet.

He has no other hands, he has no other feet, he has no other vocal organs, he has no other nothing by which he can make himself known to a godless world. You are it. Now let's settle down and face it.

And the price he paid for the standing pulpwood tree in the forest of humanity was a terrible price. It was a costly job to him, let me tell you it was. Now this morning, I want to move into the realm of costliness to the tree itself, to you and to me.

There are four processes which a pulpwood tree has to undergo before you can write a letter on it. When Joe wants to write to his sweetie pie, he doesn't go up here and cut down a sapling yea big and saw off an eight foot length of it and take the bark all off of it and write all over it and take it down to the post office and mail it to his sweetie pie. And yet, essentially, that's exactly what he does.

Essentially. But before he can do it, something has to happen to that log. And before Jesus Christ can write on you and make you the letter, there are four things that are going to have to happen to you.

So far you are just a tree standing here, so far as our exposition is concerned now. We've reached this point where you are an individual pulpwood tree standing in the purchased forest of the master papermaker of the universe. And he bought you and paid for you that he might transform you into his writing paper.

Now, the first thing that has to happen to a pulpwood tree before it can become writing paper, it is it has to die. It has to be cut down into the place of death. It must feel the sharp ax and the ripping saw and fall with a crash and lie prone and prostrate and bend in the forest around it.

And that's the first thing that's going to have to happen to you. You're going to have to die to self. Die to sin.

Die out to everything about you that is of self and the old man. Die! Die! Die! And you don't do that once and forever by chewing the varnish off the oil and gibbering around in tongues. Paul said, I die, how often, class? Daily! This business is not a once and forever experience in your acts of working out of it.

It is moment by moment. Now, Romans 6.11 has something to say about this. Speaking about the law, well, suppose you turn to it and read it in unison so that we get it really before us.

Romans 6.11. Ready, read. Wait a minute now. Hold it.

Read up at least above your shoelaces there. Read up to everybody. Where are you? Ready, read.

Why do you reckon ye also yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord? Now, here's a pivotal verse. Reckon ye also yourselves to be what? To what? And alive to what? Alive to what? God through Christ. Right? Read it again, please.

Ready, read. Why do I reckon ye also yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord? Now, alive unto God through Jesus Christ. Now, and then it goes on to say that you, no you're not, that you are the servants to whomsoever you yield your members to obey his servants you are.

There are two words here. Reckon and yield. Reckon and yield.

Reckon and yield. Reckon yourselves to be dead to that sin and yield yourselves unto God and obey him. You say, well now, Preacher, bring that down out of the cloud of theological formula and exegesis and let's get it down in language that we can understand.

I'll do just that if I can. Reckon yourselves to be dead, indeed, unto sin. Let's take that one first.

If I see sin coming down that aisle at me and I know it is sin, now watch carefully what I say. Every word. If I see sin coming at me and I know it is sin, one split second before I do it, I don't have to do it.

I reckon myself to be dead to it. You see, if I know a thing is sin, and I'm talking about known sin. Don't go out of here this morning and say that Dr. Ketchum taught sinless sanctification and perfection or I teach nothing of the kind for the simple reason Bible doesn't.

But I'm telling you this, that there is a place that can be attained of victory over known sin. And if that's not true, if there isn't power enough in Jesus Christ, when I know a thing is sin before I do it, if there isn't power enough in Jesus Christ to do something for me instantly which will give me the victory over that thing and give me the power not to do it, then Jesus Christ isn't all this Bible cracks him up to be. Put on the whole armor of God that ye may be able to stand and having done all stand, put on the shield that ye may quench all sixty-five percent of the dark to the evil one.

Boy, that's good. That's good for nothing. What ye need is to quench how many? What? How many? Oh, you're afraid of it, aren't you? You're afraid of it.

You're taking the Fifth Amendment on it. I want to hear from the lips of every born-again person in this audience this morning, how many? And I didn't get it yet. What are you afraid of? That's what it says.

And if you ever get to the place where you've got that, you'll find yourself to be so lousy with sin that you'll have to go to the confessional fountain a hundred times a day or none some. The reason you don't know it now is because you're not dealing with the sins that you do know. There's so many sins right up here in front of your face that you know are in your life and you're doing nothing about it.

You're just playing along with it, doing nothing about it. When you come to the place where you get rid of those things through the power that we're going to talk about this morning, you're going to find that the old

nature will be secreting new sins, new temptations that you never dreamed were there. And the reason you don't know they're there is because you haven't gotten down to them yet.

You get some of the crust off the top and they'll come up. Deal with them all in sin. If I know it is sin before I do it, I don't have to do it.

And how do we implement that? Reckon yourself to be dead to it. Well, now you say that's still sort of theological formula. I know it's biblical quotation.

But, Doc, can you get it down into something simple? Yes, sir. Because that's where I have to get it for myself. Maybe I can simplify what it means to be dead to sin.

Reckon yourself to be dead to sin by this illustration. Two young ladies were saved. And about a week or two after they were saved, they got an invitation to a dance.

They had had no opportunity for teaching about wilderness. But when they got this invitation, the Spirit of God gave them a mention, threw up an inner warning of some kind, and one said to the other, now wait a minute, is this out of bounds now, we're Christians? And the other one said, well, I don't know. And so they discussed it a while, and the final one said, well, you remember, the preacher said that when we were in doubt, and we needed guidance, we could go to the book and God would give us some verses, guidance from his book.

Yes, that's what he said. Well, all right, let's do that. And they knelt down and one of them prayed and said, dear Lord, we're just a couple of babes in Christ.

We want to please you. We want to obey you. We want to do the right thing, but we don't know just what it is right here.

And would you be pleased to give us something out of your word that will give us guidance on this matter? And as they leafed through the book, God so graciously allowed them to come up with a verse. Now hold it. Don't you folks who have been Christians for ten years sit down on that cushion.

You're supposed to know where the verses are. But babes in Christ, that's a different proposition. And they leaped through and came up with Colossians 3.3. And there they read.

Suppose you read it, Colossians 3.3. Just get it open on your laptop and let's look at it. If he then be what? Risen with whom? Christ. Seek those things which are where? Above.

Set your affections on what? Things above and not on what? Things of the world. Away you are hopped. Dead and your life is hid with Christ in God.

That's what they read. And startled, they looked into each other's face and said, Well, there it is. Right there.

That's it. And they took the invitation and wrote across the bottom of it. Sorry we cannot come to the dance.

We are dead. There you have it. You can go to Victoria's Life conferences from now until two weeks after the Millennium opens.

And you will never hear a more clear, succinct, complete and total proposition and statement of what people call the Victoria's Life, I prefer to call the normal life, than what those girls wrote on the bottom of that invitation. We cannot come. We are dead.

There it is. We try to make such a hard job out of the Christian life. We try to make things so difficult.

There is nothing difficult about it. When you see something coming at you that you know is out of bounds for the Christian, you reckon yourself to be dead and say, I can't do it, I'm dead. And dead folks don't do anything.

It's just as simple as that. Then don't forget to send your pastor a note saying, Dear Pastor, I'll be in prayer meeting with you tonight. Don't forget, don't just take it all out and be in bed to sin, you know.

You've got another job to do, alive to God. But it's this dying that I want to talk to you about. You've got to go down into the place of death if you're ever going to be Popewood.

I mean, writing paper. Now, another little side note on that. I was giving this message, or something equivalent to it, several years ago in Lockheed, Pennsylvania, my wife's home church.

And after church, we all loaded in our cars to go up here into the Smart Residence. When we all got in, there was one too many. So my wife's brother Joe said, Well, go ahead, I'll walk up.

I'll walk up with Brother Cook, who lives up in that section. So later when Joe came in, he was laughing, he said, Bob, I wish you could have heard what Brother Cook said about your message this morning. I said, Well, what'd he say? Well, as soon as we were coming up the hill, he said, Joe, that, that what your brother-in-law said this morning, that was good.

That was good. Now, Joe, he shoots like what he said. He shoots like that.

Joe, every day, the old devil, he come and he hop up on my shoulder and he says, Old man Cookie, you do this. Old man Cookie, you do that. And you know what I say to him, Joey? I say, Old man Cookie's dead.

Now I ask you, Joey, what can the devil do with a dead man? Well, I ask you, what can the devil do with a dead man? Nothing. Listen. Listen yourself to be dead to the thing that you know to be out of the will of God.

Whether it's a dance or jealousy or envy or covetousness or gossip or a loose tongue and exaggeration and getting enthusiastic with the truth and sniping at other folks. I don't care what it is. It's sin.

And you don't have to do it if you don't want to. That's your trouble. You want to.

And if you don't want to, you don't have to. Now, you say, well, Dr. Ketchum, that all sounds so nice on paper and as you give it to us orally, but it isn't so easily done. Well, you say, I tried it, and it didn't work.

Well, I'll read you that this is what happened. When you tried to implement Romans 6.11, the way you did it, you saw sin coming at you, and you knew it was sin, and you knew you weren't going to do it, you didn't want to do it, so you rolled up your sleeves and you started, no, sir, no, sir, no, sir, no, sir, I'm going to fight you. And about the second go, you're clear, not only down, you're clear out under the ropes in the audience somewhere, not completely out.

Why? Because you tried it yourself. You see, here's the blessed business about all this. You have a mighty helper who lives within that body of yours to implement this business.

And all you have to do is to keep out of the way and let him do it. Look at Romans 8, oh, I think it's about 19, I think it's about 8, verse 19, I think, no, 13, let's try 13. Where do you read? Now, hold it.

If you through the Spirit do something, not through yourself, but through the Spirit, and what is it that you do? You what? Mortify what? Oh. So the body wanted to go to the dance, but you reckon it to be dead, and you mortify the thing so it can't go. Does that word mortify ring a bell? Huh? Mortify.

Does that ring a bell on another word that's quite familiar to you? Huh? Mortician! We used to call them undertakers. Comes from the same root. Same idea.

Now, let me tell you, my friend, when the mortician down the street gets through with you, you don't go to the dance. You're done. There isn't another wiggle in you.

You've got the same principle right here. This soul nature of yours that wants to keep bobbing up all the time, reckon him to be dead, and how do you implement it? By turning the job over to the heavenly undertaker, the heavenly mortician, and he will mortify the deeds of the flesh. And brother, when he gets through with you, the old man on that particular issue is dead.

It's something you, all you have to do is be willing to permit it, that's all. And trust him to do it. Now, in just a closing suggestion here, let's look at this truth I'm trying to get to you this morning, the implementation, the simplicity, the downright easiness of living in the normal Christian life.

And if you go to the paper for writing, you're going to have to die to self. Now, how do you do it? By turning self constantly over to the heavenly undertaker, and let him take care of the old man, the old flesh, so that he is reduced to a state of absolute helplessness on whatever issue it is that's confronting him. Now let me show you how it works.

A lot of folks have had trouble with chapter 7 of Romans 6. And a lot of good folks have had trouble with it. Some of my best friends seem to have trouble with it. Some of my best friends say that Romans 7 is the picture of an unsaved man wrestling with the old man, the old nature.

Well, I don't quite understand how this can be a picture of an unsaved man when he says, in my inward parts I delight in thy law. I never met an old man Adam yet that delighted in the law of the Lord. But here he is, he says, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

What I want to do, I don't do. What I don't want to do, I do do. What I ought to do, I don't do.

What I ought not to do, I do do. And I, oh, wretched man that I am, pull it out of me from the body of this death. You know what the trouble with man in chapter 7 of Romans is? He has learned the blessed doctrine of Romans 6. He read in Romans 6 that we are dead with Christ, we are buried with Christ, we are risen with Christ, therefore we are to walk in newness of life in Christ.

He read all that in Romans 6. And he is delighted with it, and he accepts it. His identification with the Savior in his death, very resurrection, and newness of life. He delights in it and he loves it.

Then he starts out to implement it, and that's the story of the fellow in chapter 7. He's doing it all himself. There is one single reference to the Holy Spirit in chapter 7. When he cries out, who will deliver me from

the body of this death? And we jump over into Romans 8. I think it's some 20 times in that chapter that the Holy Spirit is brought into the picture. And chief among the things that are said about him is this.

He will do the mortifying. Mr. Man in chapter 7, saved, yes, gloriously saved. Identified with Christ, a born again Christian, yes, all of that.

And really wanting to make it real and implement it in your life. And you roll up your sleeves and you want to do the thing, and the first thing you know you're doing, you're doing the thing you didn't want to do. You find a law reigning in your body, and all the rest of it, and you're all mixed up and muddled up and messed up.

And in despair every night you cry, oh God, I don't want it this way. I thought today was going to be better, and it's the same old life of defeat. I didn't get my victory over my jealousy.

I didn't get my victory over my gossipy tongue. I didn't get my victory over my dislike and my hatred for somebody. I didn't get it, Lord.

Who's going to deliver me? Oh, that's the experience of countless millions of born again Christians, trying to implement and live the blessed life that they entered into in Romans 6, all by themselves. Trying to reckon themselves to be dead, and the old guy won't lie down and die. You just shove him down a big bob like a rubber ball, staring you in the face again, and laughing at you and saying, you thought you had me out, huh? Oh, Christian this morning, young man, young woman, learn to live in Romans 8. If you want to implement the blessed truth of your union with Christ in his death, birth, and resurrection, and your union with Christ in his new life that he wants to live out through your body, his life, his life, his life, not yours, his, if you really want that, you've got a mighty helper who lives inside to put the old man to death, and quicken the new man into victorious action.

And this is the way it's going to have to be if you want to be a writing paper. You can still muddle around and muddle around and muddle and muddle and muddle until the rapture in Romans 7, and you will never be a scrap of paper upon which Jesus Christ can write his message to somebody they don't want you got. They don't want that life of misery that they see in you, testifying to one thing and living another.

They're not interested in that, and they never will be until you learn what it is to reckon yourself to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ, he and the Holy Spirit living in this body of yours. And the Holy Spirit, the heavenly undertaker, the minute the old man starts to rise up out of his coffin, while you've shoved him, he gives him the injection of heavenly formaldehyde, and he's done on that issue. God our Father this morning, solemnize our hearts as young Christians and older Christians, and help us to know that we have a job to do.

It's a serious business, that the only Christ the world will ever see is the one they see in us. And oh, what an image they get of him, so distorted, so blurred, so untrue. Oh God, this morning you do something in our hearts that'll make us good writing paper, for Jesus' sake, amen.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/27/SID27981.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/robert-ketcham/you-must-die/>

# *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](http://www.sermonindex.net)**