

# (Sermon Clip) Actually Dying to Self Not Pretending

by Zac Poonen

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*This sermon emphasizes the importance of truly dying to self and taking up the cross to follow Jesus, not just pretending or acting. It delves into the challenges of facing persecution, abuse, and maintaining a heart of love and forgiveness even in the face of mistreatment. The speaker shares personal experiences of striving to walk the way of the cross, acknowledging failures, repentance, and the continual need to seek God's Spirit for empowerment and renewal.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 16:24, Job 3:11, Luke 9:23, Galatians 2:20, Romans 6:8, Philippians 3:10, Acts 2:38, Luke 9:62

**Topics:** "Dying to Self", "Embracing the Cross"

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## Description

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## Transcript

Now we've spoken about this so many times, but we really have to die. There's a dear brother, Aryan, here, a friend of mine. He told me a lovely story yesterday.

I'll tell you for the benefit of all of you. There was some place where they were acting a drama of the crucifixion, and they had one fellow standing like this, and people had to pretend to spit on him and all that. And while he was hanging there, this one chap standing there actually spat on him.

And he said, you wait till I come down from the ground. I'll teach you a lesson. That's what happens with a lot of people who say, I want to die with Jesus and all that type of stuff, till somebody actually irritates you.

And all that acting disappears. Dear brothers and sisters, we have to die. Not pretend to die, not act as if we are dying.

It's not a drama. It's a real thing. If you want to follow me, you're going to take up the cross and die.

And God will raise you up. Let people spit on you, let them abuse you, let them kill you. The Lord said to me, if you choose the way of the cross, you'll have my power rest upon you.

But the day you decide, no, I've had enough of that, my power will depart from you. And that is so imprinted in my mind. You know, the Lord said that to me 1963, 53 years ago.

Yeah, more than that. 1963 and I've never forgotten it. There are many times I wept in my bed and said, Lord, I never want to go any other way.

I'll go the way of the cross and no matter what happens, whatever people do to me, I will not retaliate. I will not fight back. Whatever they do, they can take me to court, they can kill me and do whatever you like.

I will not fight back. If you hate them, that is a way of fighting back. I will not hate.

If you wish evil for them, even if you don't say it, like this fellow who was acting, you just wish. For a while, I'll teach him a lesson. You just wish that.

You haven't died. There's a verse which blessed me when I used to meditate on this matter of dying from the Old Testament, which it says, you know, in the book of Job, Job says, you know, I wish I had died when I was at birth, Job in chapter 3 and verse 11. He describes there what death would have been.

If I was like a miscarriage, he says in Job 3 16, that means I died as a baby. And then he describes what death is like that. And I said, Lord, if I really die with Christ, it will be something like this.

Verse 17, the wicked will cease from raging and the weary are at rest. This wicked man, Zakponin, will stop getting angry. And I will be at rest, and I'm a prisoner, and I'm at ease, and I don't hear the voice of the devil anymore, the taskmaster.

And the slave, verse 19, is free from his master. Great. I said, I want to die.

I want to die with Jesus. And I can't say that I followed that faithfully all these 53 years, but I understood the principle of it. Sometimes I would slip up and fall, get up and repent.

And it took me time to learn how to really die. And things would come, and I would get discouraged. And then after a while, as I developed a ministry, unfortunately, I got taken up with my ministry.

And I did not, I sort of ignored my life. You know, when your ministry becomes very important, it's a great danger. It happened to me.

I began to be accepted and traveled here and there, and I began to slacken off in my inner life. And that's when I began to seek God again. I said, Lord, I'm a hypocrite.

I want you to meet with me. Fill me with the Spirit again. And that's how we met with me a second time.

What I want to say is, there's a very close connection, like there was in Jesus' baptism, between his choosing the way of death and the Holy Spirit coming. And many of you are seeking for the fullness of the Holy Spirit, I believe. I was.

I want you to see there's a very close connection. Between the way of the cross and the fullness of the Holy Spirit, and I believe that is what our dear Pentecostal charismatic friends have missed. They've understood the importance of the fullness of the Spirit, but they haven't seen that the death of the cross is

very closely connected.

The Spirit drove Jesus to the cross. It says he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem. It says in Matthew 26, after the Last Supper, they sang a hymn and went to the cross.

He went to the cross. You know, that's one of the things he did before, after the Last Supper, they sang a hymn. Imagine singing a hymn before going to the cross.

He was so excited. And I say, Lord, that's where I want to go. But over the period of years, as I've struggled and failed, and I've gradually come to understand that the way of death is the way of life.

If we die with him, we will live with him.

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