

# The Crucified Life

by Zac Poonen

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*This sermon emphasizes the importance of dying to self and allowing Christ to live within, comparing the significance of spiritual health (freedom from sin) to physical health (freedom from sickness). It challenges believers to prioritize cleansing their spirits from sin as diligently as they care for their bodies, highlighting the need to crucify the flesh daily and seek a life where Christ dwells within, leading to true happiness and a transformed Christian walk.*

**Duration:** 54:06

**Scripture:** Galatians 5:24, Galatians 2:20, Luke 9:23, 2 Corinthians 3:6, Romans 7:18, Genesis 2:17, Genesis 3:24, Matthew 7:14, Colossians 3:3

**Topics:** "Dying to Self", "Spiritual Health vs. Physical Health"

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## Description

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## Transcript

Isn't it a wonderful thing if we can have a body that is completely free from disease and sickness? Sickness is such a terrible thing that we don't want even a small sickness in our body. Even if it's a small thing like a child coughing, coughing, coughing, you want to take him to a doctor. Or he's got a little fever that's not going away.

It's not a very serious thing but you don't want it. The Bible says we all love our body. And we are so careful to keep our body completely free from sickness.

How much money we spend in order to get treatment for our sickness. We will not spend money for something which is useless. There are people who go to a hospital and spend one lakh just for a surgery in their body to be healed.

Now if I were to ask you, which is more important, your body or your spirit? Your body, no matter how much you take care of it, one day it will become dust. All Christians will say, my spirit is more important than my body. But what sickness is to the body, sin is to the spirit.

So if you are so careful to take care of your body to have zero sickness, and you also believe that your spirit is more important than your body, then you should be more careful to see that there is not even the smallest sin in your spirit. But why is it Christians are not so careful? Let me take a simple example. When a husband and wife have a little disagreement or a fight, I don't mean a physical fight with words.

And some distance has come between them. That happens in all marriages. But the wise husband and wife immediately close the gap.

Because it is a sickness. That sin has come between them. And it has cut off their fellowship with God also.

And wherever there is a gap like that, the devil will come inside. You know, if there is a gap between you and your wife, that is what the devil is waiting for. It is like an open door.

The devil says, now I can come in. And he can attack your home, your children. Sin is more serious than sickness.

I will tell you how you can find out whether you are a spiritual Christian or a worldly carnal Christian. I will tell you how you can find out whether you are a spiritual Christian or a worldly carnal Christian. Do you consider sin more serious than sickness? If you consider it more serious, then you are a spiritual Christian.

Supposing you got cancer. And you got anger. And you say, cancer, that is not serious.

I want to get rid of my anger. Then you are a spiritual Christian. But if you say the other way round, Anger will always be there, but I must get rid of my cancer.

I am willing to spend one lakh to get healed from my cancer. Anger, all people have it. It is okay.

Lusting after women, all men do it. You can sit in CFC or any church in the world, you are thoroughly worldly. You may call yourself an elder brother, but you are a worldly elder brother.

And your wrong attitude to sin, you will bring into the body of Christ. What does it mean to have no part dark, like we were thinking? That means no known sin. Unknown sins there may be, what can I do? If you know sin, there should be none.

That is the test of a spiritual Christian. That is why Jesus said, the way to life is so narrow, very few people find it. In our CFC Sunday service, sometimes people ask me, how many people come to CFC Bangalore? How many disciples? I don't know.

I know that we have about 400 chairs and all the people are sitting there on Sunday morning. So to count the people is very easy. It doesn't take long.

But how many disciples? Supposing one of the angels asks Jesus, Lord, CFC Bangalore, how many disciples? Lord says, 20. That is the strength of the church in Bangalore. 20.

20. I will be very happy if there are 20. 20 people? Who hate sin more than they hate sickness? 20 people who love Jesus more than themselves and more than the world and more than anything else? We can turn Bangalore upside down with 20 people like that.

Dear brothers and sisters, we have to be honest. Even in our CFC churches, there are very very few people who hate sin more than they hate sickness. They will spend so much money to be healed from sickness, but they won't make so much effort to be free from sin.

They are not spiritual. They haven't found the way to life. They want to go to heaven.

I told the Lord once, I said, Lord, I am not interested in meeting people who want to go to heaven. Everybody in India wants to go to heaven. I want to meet people who want to follow Jesus every day on this earth.

Who want to obey God's commandments and please the Lord and will do anything to please the Lord. Who have no interest in position in the church or honor or anything. Who are only interested in pleasing the Lord.

The Bible says in Romans 7 and verse 18, Romans 7 verse 18, Paul says about himself, I know something. Do you know this? Paul says, I know. This is something very important for us to know.

I know that there is nothing good dwelling in me, in my flesh. Absolutely nothing. My flesh is full of evil.

Do you believe that? You know there are some, we all know some very evil criminals and thieves and goondas there are in our country in different places. Gangsters who will murder and kill. Like some of these terrorists who blow up planes and all that.

Is our flesh better than their flesh? No, I don't think so. My flesh is as bad as the flesh of the worst murderer and criminal in the world. There is nothing good in his flesh, there is nothing good in Paul's flesh, there is nothing good in my flesh.

That is a great revelation when you understand that. Anything that comes out from me is evil. Even in the good that I do, there will be some evil.

It's like a man who's got some serious sickness in his hand. Very infectious disease. And he picks up a beautiful apple.

And he gives it to you. Will you eat it? Apple is good. But the hand that is giving it is full of infection.

If you eat it, you will get the disease. When we give our songs and praise to God, it is like giving a good apple. Praise and the song is very good.

Like we sing, what beautiful music it is. It's like a beautiful apple. But what about the hand that is giving it? What type of hand is giving this beautiful song to God? Does God accept it? Will you accept that apple that comes from a dirty hand? If you don't accept it, how will God accept a worship that comes from a dirty heart? So what is the solution? Now, our past sins that we can ask Jesus to cleanse us in his blood, that we understand.

Lord, I did this. And then I did that. I did the other thing.

I said this thing. I cheated here. I did all that.

I confess it. I forsake it. Please forgive me.

Cleanse me in your blood. All blotted out. My record is clean.

But when my record is clean, I still have within me a flesh in which there is nothing good. Even though all my sins are forgiven, how can I come to God with this flesh? God sees not only what is your attitude to all the sins you committed in the past. He says, what is your attitude to the flesh which you have all the time with you? We all have two problems.

One is all the millions of sins we committed in the past. For that there is only one solution. Repentance.

Confession. Cleansing in the blood of Jesus Christ. Number one problem is solved.

If you don't repent, don't confess your sin, you don't ask Jesus to cleanse you, if you don't ask him to cleanse you in his blood, then that problem remains. But if you have done that, that problem is solved. Then we have another problem which is our flesh which is still there, which is so corrupt there is nothing good in it.

What is the solution to this? You cannot cleanse the flesh in the blood of Jesus Christ. Nowhere in the Bible does it say your flesh can be cleansed in the blood of Jesus Christ. Only your past sin.

What shall we do with the flesh? There is another solution for the flesh. Galatians 5 and verse 24 See what it says here. If you belong to Jesus Christ, this is what you do.

Those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with all its affections and desires. That is not cleansing in the blood of Christ. Crucifixion.

Putting it to death. Putting it on the cross. Every day.

Who has to do it? Is the Holy Spirit going to do it? Is Jesus going to do it? Read this verse and tell me who has to do it. Who has to crucify the flesh? Does it say Lord Jesus please crucify my flesh? No. It says here, we who belong to Christ, we have to crucify the flesh.

My past sin I cannot cleanse. That Jesus has to do. Lord Jesus please cleanse my past sin.

But my flesh, I have to crucify it. Every day. And if you don't do it, it will remain there.

And it is not something you can just do it once and finish. That's why Jesus said you must take up the cross every day if you want to follow me. That's why Jesus said you must take up the cross every day if you want to follow me.

That is the reason why some people's life is not equal to their knowledge. I told you the first day that knowledge and life are like two legs. What we know in the Bible, if we obey it and live according to it, then our life and knowledge are equal.

But if we know so much and we don't live according to it, then knowledge is so big, life is so little. You can know everything about what is right and what is wrong. You can get 100% in a test on what is good and what is evil.

And you can be dead. That's what God told Adam. You eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil and you know everything about good and evil and you will die.

That's what happened. When Adam ate of that tree, means he knew now what is good and what is evil. See Genesis 3. When Adam ate from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, God said in verse 22,

Genesis 3.22 See this.

The Lord said, Behold man has become like one of us. Why? He now knows good and evil. He did not know good and evil before that.

Now he knows good and evil. He has got the knowledge and he is dead. In the day that you eat it, you will die.

That's what the Lord told him. In Genesis 2. Genesis 2.17 In the day that you eat from it, you will surely die. Do you know that knowing good and evil will make you die? You can keep on studying the Bible.

This is good, this is evil. You can preach, this is good, this is evil and you will die. Knowledge of good and evil brings death.

Knowledge of good and evil brings death. Religious knowledge brings death. All the Pharisees had so much religious knowledge they were dead.

There are lot of Pharisees today who know the Bible but they are dead. I think there are lots of them who know so much of the Bible they can explain it to others. You know, from CFC we have an internet from which we send so many emails every week and that goes to thousands of people around the world and some of them write back and I see so many of their replies they are arguments about this or that in some verse.

They are absolutely dead. They think it is by analyzing some verse that you get life. They say they are born again but they are dead.

They are not interested in life. They are interested in knowing good and evil. What is good? What is evil? Should a woman cover her head or not cover her head? Should she wear jewellery or not wear jewellery? Can we attend the wedding of an unbeliever or relative or not? But all the things we spend our time discussing and supposing you have the right answer to all these things and you look down on those other brothers and sisters who don't have the right answer they are dead and you are more dead.

You know that knowledge of good and evil about the bible can bring death. I get letters like this all the time and I can see from it this man is dead and he doesn't know it. And when I try to correct them to save their life they will argue then I stop.

I say I am not interested in argument. Only the holy spirit can show you that you are dead. But there was another tree that I call the tree of life.

Now I want you to see something here. When Adam went into the garden of Eden he could have gone straight to the tree of life. The tree of life is a picture of the life of Jesus.

See there are two ways to know what is good and what is evil. One is by studying the bible the other is by the life of Jesus. Supposing you are watching one television program or some cinema this particular cinema this Tamil cinema is it good or evil? So I study the bible find out this Tamil cinema is not mentioned anywhere here.

How do I know whether it is good or evil? The word cinema is not even mentioned in the bible. What to do? Smoking cigarettes is that good or evil? I look from read the whole bible and cigarette is not even mentioned once. Like that there are so many things.

Television TV no mention in the bible. There are hundreds of things like this. You cannot find out.

But if you have the life of Jesus in you because you are filled with the holy spirit as soon as you see something this life will say no. That's not good. Or something else the life will say that's ok.

That is called the tree of life. So people who are always trying to find out where does the bible say it is wrong to go to cinema? Where does the bible say you can't have television? Where does the bible say you can't smoke cigarettes? These are the scribes and Pharisees today who have made this book a tree of knowledge of good and evil and they eat of that and they die. Can you read the bible and die? Yes.

I'll show you. 2nd Corinthians chapter 3 See what it says. 2nd Corinthians 3 Here you find the two trees again.

You want to see the tree of knowledge and the tree of life in 2nd Corinthians 3? Here it is. 2nd Corinthians 3 verse 6 God has made us servants of the new covenant. Not of the letter that is the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

But of the spirit that is the tree of life. So here you have the two trees in this verse. The tree of knowledge of good and evil and the tree of life.

And what will the tree of knowledge of good and evil do to you? It will kill you. It says here for the letter kills. Which letter? Not Quran or Gita or something.

Bible The letter of the Bible will kill you. It killed the Pharisees. Do you think the Pharisees were reading some Buddhist book or Gita or something like that? They were reading the Bible.

They had a Bible Genesis to Malachi. They read it, studied it, and it killed them. Can the Bible kill people? Pharisees spiritually dead.

Here it says even in the New Testament you can study it, study it, it will kill you. Holy Spirit gives life. The life of Jesus is what we need.

Not just knowledge of the Bible. So think of these two trees. When Adam went into the Garden of Eden the way was open.

Tree of knowledge of Eden, tree of life. Do you want to live by the letter or do you want to live by the spirit? And Adam said I'll go for knowledge. Just like most Christians today.

So he sinned. And the moment he sinned God said now you cannot go to the tree of life. And it says in Genesis 3.24 He put a sword, a fiery sword to go round and round the tree of life.

Nobody can go near it. Not just a sword but a flaming sword. So what is the message in that Genesis 3.24? Now man has become a sinner.

In his flesh there is nothing good now. If he wants the tree of life now this sword must fall on his flesh and kill it completely. Then he can get the tree of life.

But before he sinned there was no sword there. He could have gone straight to the tree of life. That's very important to understand that.

That my flesh must be put to death if I want life. It is there right in Genesis 3. And that is what we read in Galatians 5.24 That we crucify the flesh with its affections and lust. And that is the reason why many Christians don't have life today.

They try to get life without the sword falling on them. They can't get it. They can't get it so they go for knowledge.

So every conference they accumulate and so the knowledge leg becomes so huge. Why is the life leg so small? Or it's not even there. Because they don't want to die.

From now on if you want to make that life leg long I'll tell you how to do it. Let that sword fall upon your self life everyday. You know your sense that I am such an important person.

Die. We are all idolaters as children of Adam. We don't worship idols of stone and gold.

We worship our self. Our self is the big idol we worship. Here is an example of that.

When somebody says something and you say I got offended by what he said. Why you got offended? Because you worship yourself. Definitely.

Or somebody did not smile at me. Or after the church meeting they did not shake my hand. That is the worship of your self.

You are offended because people did not bow down to you. Let me ask you a question. Supposing you are seriously sick in some hospital and nobody from the church came to see you.

One week. Nobody from the church came to see you. And after that one week you come to the church meeting and you meet all these people who never came to see you when you were sick.

How will you look at them? These fellows they say they love everybody. They did not come to see me when I was sick. There is no love in this church.

You know why people say that? Because they worship themselves. I worship myself. When I am lying in the hospital bed all the people must come and worship me.

Oh sister how are you? Here we brought some oranges for you. Then I am happy they worship me. All idol worshippers how can you have life? I can tell you before God if I am lying one year in the hospital and nobody comes to see me I will be a happy man.

I have to say praise the lord. I have got lot of time to read the bible and nobody is disturbing me. It's wonderful.

Oh maybe they are busy. They have got other things. Why should they trouble themselves to see me? I am alright.

The lord is taking care of me. Do you know there is so much of worship of self in so called believers? Or you have some other financial need. Why is it the brothers don't come and give me some money? We are all worshippers of ourselves.

We have so much expectation from others. People must do this for me. Do this for me.

And that's why you are so miserable and unhappy. Nobody can make me unhappy because I died to myself long ago. You go to the cemetery.

Try and make some of those dead people unhappy. You try. You can try as much in front of a grave.

You cannot make that fellow unhappy. He is dead. He is not affected by what you say or what you do.

It's a wonderful thing to die. That is the way to a glorious life. That is the way of the cross.

That is the meaning of that flaming sword in front of the tree of life. And I want to say very few people in Christianity have found this way. That is exactly what Jesus said.

There are few who find the way to life. This is the way that Jesus walked. Every day he died to himself.

How do we know that? Because Jesus said in Luke 9.23 If you want to follow me, every day you must die. What is the meaning of that? The meaning of that is I am dying to myself every day. And that is the meaning that if you want to follow me, you must also die every day.

Every day I get up in the morning, I say praise the Lord. One more day that I can die and be a happy person today. All those who crucify their flesh, all those who die to themselves will always be happy.

They will never have a complaint against anybody. You go to the cemetery, do you think any of those dead people have got a complaint against somebody? Oh, nobody came to visit my grave. Nobody came to put a flower on my grave.

They have no complaints. Only those who don't die have complaints. Do you have complaints against your husband or your wife? Sometimes old people say this.

Oh brother Zach, my children are all grown up and they all got married and they are not caring for me. What shall I do? I say die. Die.

So he thinks he has to physically die and go to the grave. No, no, no. While you are alive you die.

Then you will be a happy man. You will not complain that your children are not taking care of you. Brother, God will take care of you.

But all your complaints will be finished if you die to yourself. This is a wonderful way. But while I am alive, inwardly, Zach Poonen is dead.

Christ is living. Christ can look through my eyes. Why do you have so much trouble with the lust of the eyes? Because you are the one looking through your eyes.

But if you die and Jesus begins to look through your eyes, he will never lust after women. The Apostle Paul said in Galatians 2, Galatians 2.20 I have been crucified with Christ. Galatians 2.20 Very important verse.

I have been crucified with Christ. The flaming sword has fallen upon me. It has killed me.

I no longer live. I am not living. If you are not living, then you cannot lust, you cannot get angry, you cannot do anything.

If you are not living, then you cannot lust, you cannot get angry, you cannot do anything. But I am not like a dead person. Christ is now living in me.

I have died but somebody else has come inside this body. Isn't that a wonderful life? Have you experienced this life? Supposing Jesus were to say to you, Sister, let me take your skin one day and let me live inside. And instead of you living in the house, I will live there in your skin.

Instead of you living in the house, I will live there Your husband still thinks it is you. Because you look the same. But I am now living inside.

What will your husband say that day? How my wife became so good today? She is speaking so nicely. She is so humble. Or the other way round.

If the Lord tells one of your brothers, Can you give me your skin today? Let me live inside. You will look the same. And your wife will look and say, Hey, my husband is different today.

That is the Christian life. It is no longer I. But Christ lives in me. It's the same skin.

Same eyes, ears, nose. But somebody else is living inside. What a wonderful life.

This is the way we are supposed to live. This is the way I want to live in my home. This is the way I want to live with my brothers and sisters.

And I stand up to preach. He said, Lord, I don't want to preach. I want to give you my skin.

You come inside and say whatever you want to say. You come inside and say whatever you want to say. What a wonderful thing it is.

I remember the olden days when I had to struggle to produce some message to preach to people. Because I had to preach. Now I am dead.

I said, Lord Jesus, you come inside and you use my brain and you use my tongue and you speak whatever you want to speak. There is no strain. Supposing your job, for example, your work is a very heavy type of work you have to do.

If somebody tells you, today you just lie down in your bed and relax. I will do your work for you. He does all the work.

What a wonderful thing it is. That's how Jesus wants to live in us. This is the most wonderful life that any human being can ever live.

Why don't we accept it? And there is only one thing the Lord asks us to do. You must die to yourself. To your dignity and your position and your respect.

Expecting people to do this and do that and do the other thing. I expect nothing from anybody. I have died.

I don't expect anyone to respect me. I cannot be offended because I don't expect anything from anyone. You know there are some pastors, if you don't call them pastor so and so, call them brother so and so, that's enough to offend them.

They will look at you in a funny way. But how was it with Jesus? They called him Beelzebub, prince of devils. He was not offended.

He said, it's alright, you are forgiven. Dear brothers and sisters, I want to tell you that many of us have not experienced this life. We have got such a lot of knowledge but we have not taken up the cross.

The main thing in the Christian life we have missed. I want you to understand it in this conference. Nothing good dwells in my flesh.

I am going to let the sword fall on it and kill it completely. I want Jesus to live in me. All the time, everyday, I tell you if you live like that, there will always be a song in your heart.

And there will be a twinkle in your eyes. And there will be a spring in your step when you are walking. You will be a happy person.

Because Jesus Christ was the happiest person that walked on this earth. This is the Christian life. It is no longer I. Christ lives in me.

But he won't force you. But if you choose this, I can tell you from the little experience I have, you will live the most happiest, the most wonderful life any human being can ever live. Your home will become like heaven.

You will be living in heaven while walking on this earth. Let's pray. While our heads are bowed in prayer, don't listen to all this as some fancy stories that won't work in daily life.

There are very few people living this life, but there are a few. You won't find many people. But Jesus said the way to life is narrow and few there be that find it.

Don't look at the standard of other CFC believers and say that is the standard. Even in CFC, there are very few who have found the way to life. But you can be one of them.

Lord, I don't want to live anymore. I want Christ to live in me everyday. I want the flaming sword to fall upon myself life.

I want Jesus to live in me. Heavenly Father, I believe there are some here who want this life. You are a rewarder of those who diligently seek you.

Make it real in them Lord. In Jesus name. Amen.

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