In On It To Death, Part One

"If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me."

TO BEGIN:

- To be a church that loves God's project, we need to be (mostly) people that do.
- If 100 of us did, that would be great!!!

What Wesley said...

"Give me one hundred preachers who fear nothing but sin, and desire nothing but God, and I care not a straw whether they be clergymen or laymen; such alone will shake the gates of hell and set up the kingdom of heaven on earth."

So dozens and dozens of us here should be saying in our hearts,

"Yes!!! I do. I love God so much --- with so much of my heart --- that I love what He is doing in the world with all my heart!!!"

- A. And some of us have been like that for years. (So we should look after it!)
- B. And some of us are just becoming like that. (So we should develop it!)
- C. And some of us need to change pretty significantly (And we should go for it!).
- And then we will be a church worth being... fruitful! (Ephesians 3:20,21!!!)
- And then dozens and dozens of us will be in on the abundant life that we are called to live... that Christ died to make happen.

TODAY:

Speaking of death, we ALL need to know that this abundant life has a death clause attached to it.

[Luke 9:23: An agreement to die...]

I. Becoming a Christian, that is, *regeneration*, is a sort of *death*

- As depicted in baptism (Wednesday, November 2 is the next Baptism Bible Study)
- N.B. The whole thing ends in death as well. Glorification as death. But for that matter, **everything** ends in death!

Luke 9:18-24

And it happened that while He was praying alone, the disciples were with Him, and He questioned them, saying, "Who do the people say that I am?"

They answered and said, "John the Baptist, and others say Elijah; but others, that one of the prophets of old has risen again."

And He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" And Peter answered and said, "The Christ of God."

But He warned them and instructed them not to tell this to anyone,

saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed and be raised up on the third day."

And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it."

Dietrech Bonhoeffer, The Cost of Discipleship: "When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die"

Jim Elliott, "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose."

a) Notice the appropriateness of it.

- He both suffered AND died
 Vs. 22 → "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed and be raised up on the third day
- So why shouldn't we?
- But didn't He die specifically so that we wouldn't need to?

1 Peter 2:24

and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.

1 Peter 2:21-23

For you have been called for this purpose, since **Chris**t also **suffered for you**, **leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps**, WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH; and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but **kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously**...

b) Notice the <u>necessity</u> of it

You either lose your life or you save it: "life" isn't exactly like anything else
 Verse 24 → "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it."

Galatians 2:20

"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me

Galatians 5:24

Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have **crucified the flesh** with its passions and desires.

Galatians 6:14

But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

- c) Notice how <u>normal</u> and notice how <u>continual</u> it is
 - vs. 23 → "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. ">>>> "daily"

1 Corinthians 15:31

I affirm, brethren, by the boasting in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.

2 Corinthians 4:7-11

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; *always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus*, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are *constantly being delivered over to death* for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. **So death works in us...**

Next time.... October 30th
II. Becoming a mature Christian, that is <u>sanctification</u>, is a sort of <u>death</u>