

apr 3

the crucified life

"if anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." matt 16:24

what does it mean to live a crucified life? it certainly doesn't sound very pleasant upon mention. after all, it involves all those nails driven into one's flesh. then there's all that agony and pain that must be endured before death comes. but that's just what Jesus bids us do. come and die. that's what He did and just look at the reward He reaped.

what does it even mean to live a crucified life? well, "those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires." gal 5:24 just as God, under the law, commanded all His chosen ones to be circumcised in the flesh, He now commands us to be circumcised in our heart, and that can hurt just as bad. "a good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things." matt 12:35 so there will be a cutting away of all our fleshly desires if we too are to be called His chosen ones.

years ago i read a little pamphlet. i can't even remember where i got it now. it was simply titled, "others may, you can not." just because someone boasts of their fortune or fame doesn't mean we should. "for we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. but they, measuring

themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise." 2 cor 10:12 it doesn't mean none of us will attain fortune or fame; just that we shouldn't seek it, and certainly that we should not try to keep up with the joneses.

it may mean He will let other good people do things that He will not let you do. here i want to be sure and explain that God will let you do anything you want. He has given us free will. it is the love of God that constrains us. though my heart breaks, i have seen some who has followed God all their life suddenly decide to walk way. no, i don't believe in a once saved, always saved, but i know He is able to keep those who keep to Him. "of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace." heb 10:29

i got a little side-tracked with free will. (maybe we all do.) anyway, you may see others pushing themselves, pulling wires and working schemes to carry out their plans while He tells you to seek Him and His righteousness. others may boast of themselves, of their work, of their success, of their writings. not so for you. you must give all the glory for all things to God. others may have praises heaped on them for all they have done for the kingdom of God. not so for you. instead you feel the stinging voice that says, "you could have done more."

a little sidetrack again. i watched a movie awhile back; can't remember it's name or anything, just the

plot. however, a true story, i believe. it seems there was a christian man adamant he could not kill and wouldn't carry a weapon. he was assigned to be a corpsman in service of our country, one who tends the wounded. i may be mistaken but i believe others carried weapons, but he did not. he suffered much ridicule but when the battle began and there were wounded needing help, he shined. long after the "fighters" had retreated back, wounded lay in mass all over. He kept moving them one by one to safety, in his heart praying, "Lord, just let me get one more." the number he saved that day astonished everyone and, of course, he won medals and praise. God may grant it, but you must not seek it. while others may be boasting in their accomplishments, the humble will be saying, "Lord, just let me reach one more."

"for whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives."heb 12:6 He wants to produce some choice, fragrant fruit for His coming glory which can only be produced in the light of God's glory. He may allow others to be great and credited while you toil on without knowing how much or even if you are accomplishing anything.

our God is a jealous God and the Holy Spirit may rebuke you for little words or feelings, or for wasting your time which other christians never seemed distressed over. He may not explain a thousand things to you but if you absolutely sell yourself to be His love slave, He will wrap you up in that jealous love of His and bestow on you the hidden things that only the "inner circle" experience. i am reminded of a stanza from a poem i love:

the perfect way is hard to flesh
it is not hard to love
if thou wert sick for want of God
how swiftly would thou move

how much of God do you want? the call goes out to
whosoever will and i will to get as much as i can. if
you will and if you work at it, He will work through
you. i used to have a pastor and i still remember him
saying: if you're working for the crucified life, you
can drive all the nails in but one; the last one.

even if you manage to get all the nails in, someone
else will still have to drive that last one in for you.
some unexpected hurt or loss may drive that nail, and
honestly, i don't know which will hurt worse; the first
one or the last. i'll tell you when i get there.

then you can say, "i have been crucified with Christ;
it is no longer i who live, but Christ lives in me; and
the life which i now live in the flesh i live by faith
in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for
me." gal 2:20