

QTC532. Learning the New Death. 15 August 2024

Quiet Time Coaching Episode 532 | Learning the Death of Jesus | A New Creation Part 23
| Malcolm Cox

Introduction

A new creation! I'm Malcolm Cox. Welcome to this series on 'A new creation'.

The premise of this series is that God is loving us into spiritual character growth. Jesus is the inspiration for that spiritual character. We are being transformed into his likeness.

2 Corinthians 3.18

“And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit.”

How does this happen? A key aspect is following Jesus and living as a disciple. Following Jesus changes us, and those changes help us follow him. Today, some thoughts on learning to embrace the 'death' of Jesus. We are talking about laying down our life for Jesus. What does this mean?

What kind of life are we giving up?

Are we called to martyrdom? When Jesus talked about his departure it seems that was what Peter understood his fate to be.

- John 13.36-37
“Simon Peter asked him, “Lord, where are you going?” Jesus replied, “Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later.” Peter asked, “Lord, why can't I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.””

From what we know of church history, Peter did, in fact, lay down his physical life for Jesus. However, the life of self-death we live as disciples is not bios, but psyche. In other words, it is not our physical life but our inner orientations and agendas. We are not called to an obliteration of self but a recalibration and a reorientation. Because we follow Jesus, we have a new centre.

Oswald Chambers wrote:

"It is much easier to die than to lay down your life day in and day out with the sense of the high calling of God."

What happens when we live this death?

When we follow like this, we develop what someone called 'the radiance of Christ'. When we live *for* Christ, people see more of him in us.

Dr Paul Brand wrote:

"...denying ourselves leads to a more abundant life."

Why is this the case? Because Jesus only has our best interests at heart, and he knows that a life lived like his is life in all its fullness ([John 10.10](#)).

When we trust Jesus to the extent of living *for* him, we discover that joy comes from sacrifice. Philip Yancey put it this way:

"In the exchange, the advantage clearly rests on our side: crusty selfishness peels away to reveal the love of God expressed through our own hands, which in turn reshapes us into God's own image."

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

How do you view what Timothy Keller termed "self-forgetfulness"? Is it attractive, repulsive, scary, or inspiring? What would help you to embrace dying to self?

Conclusion

God is on our side. He wants nothing more than for us to enjoy life in its fullness every day. For that to happen, a daily death is necessary. Jesus shows us how to go this way.

Next time, we will wrap up the series by reflecting on how we practice the presence of Jesus.

Your brother, Malcolm

Please add your comments on this week's topic. We learn best when we learn in community.

Do you have a question about teaching the Bible? Is it theological, technical, or practical? Could you send me your questions or suggestions? Here's the email: malcolm@malcolmcox.org.

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