

The Kingdom of Power: How To Demonstrate It Here And Now

Guillermo Maldonado
(Whitaker)

Do What Jesus Did

Robby Dawkins
(Chosen)

To Know Him: How Intimacy With God Changes Everything

Billy Humphrey
(Passio)

The Prophetic Generation: Fearless and Uncompromised

Tim Bagwell

(Destiny Image)

We Won't Be Shaken

Building 429

(Essential Records)

How to Lose Yourself in God

Jesus had a way with words. He was as gentle as a lamb. He welcomed outcasts as friends, touched lepers to heal them and held children in His arms. But He also demanded utter loyalty and complete obedience—nothing else and nothing less. If we exclusively focus on His kindness and compassion, we understand only part of His character, His purpose and His heart.

Today, many Christians are convinced that Jesus Christ came to Earth to make them happy and successful. In the church world we seem to gravitate to books and messages that focus on success, fulfillment and pleasure. When they experience any kind of disappointment, they believe God has let them down. Pain isn't part of the plan! They then assume God is mean because He let them be hurt.

But Jesus didn't come to make us feel better about our selfishness and sins. He came to forgive our sins, transform us and change our hearts so we find sin detestable instead of desirable. To make that happen, something deep inside us has

to die.

Here's the truth: Jesus didn't come to hurt you. He came to kill you.

Not long before He was arrested, Jesus told Philip and Andrew: "I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat is planted in the soil and dies, it remains alone. But its death will produce many new kernels—a plentiful harvest of new lives. Those who love their life in this world will lose it. Those who care nothing for their life in this world will keep it for eternity" (John 12:24–25, NLT).

Jesus didn't come to make our normal, selfish, sinful lives a little better. He came to radically transform life as we know it. He came to kill our sinful lives so we could experience true life. A kernel of wheat doesn't flourish until it "dies" by being planted.

Jesus was referring to His own death, burial and resurrection only a few days away, but He applied this principle to us too. If we love our sinful lives—valuing success, pleasure and approval above all else—our spiritual vitality will wither away and die. But if our love for those counterfeits dies—if we "care nothing" for them—we'll experience the real adventure of knowing, loving and following Christ. We'll really live! It's our choice.

People who aren't familiar with the biblical concept of "life through death" may assume, "Yeah, but that's just one passage. Surely that's not central to the teaching of the Bible." Actually, the principle is found throughout the Scriptures. For instance, Paul's letter to the Romans contains many references to it (see Rom. 6:2-4).

So what does it mean to follow Jesus? It means to be "joined with" Him in death and resurrection. Jesus loved the Father with all His heart; we'll love the Father with all our hearts. Jesus obeyed the Father, even when it cost Him His life; we'll

obey God even when it's inconvenient and painful.

We choose righteous living and obedience—not only when we're in church on Sunday morning, but all day, every day. We live for God, not for ourselves. We study God's Word, we pray, we give, we serve and we act like disciples of Christ—not to earn points with God and twist His arm so He'll bless us, but because we've already been blessed beyond anything we can imagine!

When we trust in Jesus, we join Him in death, and He raises us from the dead to new life. The Christian life, then, isn't just a different set of moral laws, rigid rules or habits to follow. It's dying to ourselves and being raised back to life in Him! Now everything is different. Nothing is the same. Things that used to be so important begin to lose their grip on our hearts. We want to know, love, serve and honor God out of a full heart of thankfulness.

Our purpose has changed, our hearts are transformed and our loyalties are forever altered. Paul sums up the radical transformation: "But now you are free from the power of sin and have become slaves of God. Now you do those things that lead to holiness and result in eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 6:22–23).

We don't just sit, soak and sour in the pew—sitting Christians hatch hypocrites! We get up, go out and care for people around us with love, humility and power. Our identification with Christ's death isn't just a theory; it shapes our choices every moment. Our choices, though, begin in our minds. So letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace" (Rom. 8:5–6).

What do we think about all day, every day? If we charted the contents of our thoughts for 24 hours, what would they reveal

about our hearts and our values? To many of us today Jesus is saying, "I've given everything I've got for you. I'm tired of you taking Me for granted, using Me for your selfish purposes and complaining when I don't jump through your hoops. I have some hoops I want you to jump through. They'll cost you everything, but they'll give you what your heart really longs for."

✘ Adapted from *Christianity LITE* by Glenn Berteau, copyright 2013 published by Passio/Charisma House. This book calls us back to the gospel message: Jesus came to radically transform life as we know it. This narrow way—the way of grace-inspired obedience—is the only way to find the real Jesus, real meaning, real hope, and a life where we'll really live. To order your copy [click here](#).

PRAYER POWER FOR THE WEEK OF 4/29/2013

This week tell the Lord how much you love Him and thank Him again for giving His all for you. Tell Him how you understand that your life is not your own and you live to honor and serve Him. Praise Him for this privilege and commit to being obedient without hesitation or regret. Ask Him for opportunities to "get up, go out, and care for people around us with love, humility and power." Pray for those who have suffered losses through recent floods and devastation, those affected by the West, Texas explosion, and the surviving victims of the Boston Marathon terrorist attack. Continue to pray that revival would sweep our nation and the world, that our leaders would seek God for wisdom and that Israel would fulfill its purpose. John 12:24-26

25 Gifts of the Holy Spirit

25 gifts of the Holy Spirit mentioned in Scripture

Most Christians are familiar with the nine gifts of the Spirit that Paul describes in 1 Corinthians 12:4-10. But did you know there are many more? Though the exact number is debatable, here are at least 25 spiritual gifts the Holy Spirit gave to the early church—and continues to give today.

1. **Word of wisdom** (1 Cor. 12:8; Luke 6:9)
2. **Word of knowledge** (1 Cor. 12:8; Luke 18:22)
3. **Faith** (1 Cor. 12:9; Acts 3:6)
4. **Gifts of healing** (1 Cor. 12:9, 28; Acts 28:1-10)
5. **Working of miracles** (1 Cor. 12:10; Acts 6:8)
6. **Prophecy** (1 Cor. 12:10; 1 Thess. 5:20-21; Eph. 4:11)
7. **Discerning of spirits** (1 Cor. 12:10; Luke 8:29)
8. **Tongues** (1 Cor. 12:10; Acts 19:6)
9. **Interpretation of tongues** (1 Cor. 12:10; 14:13-33)
10. **Helping** (1 Cor. 12:28)
11. **Administration** (1 Cor. 12:28; Acts 6:2-3)
12. **Ministry/service** (Rom. 12:7; 2 Tim. 1:16-18)
13. **Teaching** (Rom. 12:7; Eph. 4:11-14)
14. **Encouragement** (Rom. 12:8; Heb. 10:24-25)
15. **Giving** (Rom. 12:8; 1 Cor. 13:3; Acts 4:32-35)
16. **Leadership** (Rom. 12:8; Acts 13:12)
17. **Mercy** (Rom. 12:8; Luke 5:12-13)
18. **Apostleship** (Eph. 4:11)
19. **Evangelism** (Eph. 4:11; 2 Tim. 4:5)
20. **Pastoral guidance** (Eph. 4:11)
21. **Grace** (Rom. 12:6; Eph. 3:7; 4:7; 1 Pet. 4:10-11)
22. **Willingness to face martyrdom** (1 Cor. 13:3)
23. **Intercession** (Rom. 8:26-27)
24. **Hospitality** (1 Pet. 4:9)
25. **Celibacy** (1 Cor. 7:8)

Spiritual Avalanche

Steve Hill
(Charisma House)

A wake-up call to the body of Christ, *Spiritual Avalanche* was inspired by a vision evangelist Steve Hill received in which he saw Christians swept away by an avalanche of false and heretical teachings promoted by pastors and teachers worldwide—an avalanche that grows larger and more spiritually deadly the longer it builds.

Lifestyle of a Prophet

James W. Goll
(Chosen Books)

This 21-day guide helps Christians develop a level of intimacy with God necessary to hear His voice clearly and proclaim His words faithfully.

Unfinished

Richard Stearns
(Thomas Nelson)

Richard Stearns, president of World Vision U.S., helps readers rediscover the true mission of Christ in our world today and the richness of God's calling on our lives.