

'A Million Ways to Die' Is About the Only Way to Live

Rick James, publisher of CruPress, has been on staff with  Campus Crusade for Christ for 21 years. He's a conference speaker and the author of Postcards From Corinth, Flesh and Jesus Without Religion. His latest project is A Million Ways to Die, which helps believers understand what it means biblically to truly live.

Where did the book's title come from?

Rick James: We, here in America, aren't faced with martyrdom on a regular basis, and yet that's the death that Scripture calls us to ... the little deaths that occur in our day, whether it's death to self or humbling ourselves.

Jesus called His followers to take up their cross every day. Is that what you mean?

James: We are, to put it bluntly, a piñata. The Spirit of God is in us and the more you beat the thing, the more life comes out, so it really is a daily thing of embracing these little deaths and allowing the life of Christ to shine out and then through us.

Could you give us an example of "little deaths"?

James: Let's say you don't want to do the dishes for someone. Your desire would be to sit on the couch and watch TV—there's a choice to die. It's a small thing; but I think when Christians think about death, they tend to think about martyrdom and think, That's not for me, that's something that goes on in the Third World. But, really, in Scripture they don't talk about capital-D death; they do the small-D death that is a part of everyday life—to die to the flesh. Choices to humble myself, choices to confess my sins are a little

death to my personality or a death to my reputation.

You also talk of “rebranding death.” What does that mean?

James: When we think of death as believers we tend to see it as something negative, something just like the world sees it. But really the New Testament rebrands it. It shows us that death is now really the leading force of life. What I mean by that is, it's the mechanism by which we experience the resurrected Christ.

How do you think the cover is going to draw attention?

James: I do think that most Christians these days are starting to feel a sensitivity to stop telling me 10 ways I'm going to get a bigger house—tell me the real story. So I think that we didn't want to run from that in the marketing and say just the new way to live, or whatever, but to literally say, death is the new life. It is the new way to live, and so we want you to think differently about that. I think that starts with the cover. You wouldn't typically see a dead body on a Christian book, but yet the first thing you see when you walk into churches is a dead body hanging on a cross, so that is reality.

[Click here to purchase A Million Ways to Die.](#)