

The Successful Solution for Lasting Victory Over Sin

For so many years, I insistently strived to live a victorious Christian life—free of impurity, wrong thoughts and other sinful behavior.

I believed that the key to victory over sin was directly related to how many spiritual methods I engaged: how often I fasted, how long I prayed, or even a routine cleansing of my house to ensure no “cursed” objects somehow slipped in. After a lot of doing and fighting, I realized that I still didn’t have the victorious life that the Bible assured that I could have.

Then, in a season when I was almost at my wit’s end, the Lord showed me that my efforts alone couldn’t hold me in holiness and victory; but the efforts of Jesus would. *He said it’s all about living the crucified life.*

The Stigma of the Crucified Life

For some people, the idea of the “crucified life” is scary. Perhaps just the phrase evokes thoughts of legalism, do and don’ts, or haves and have nots. Still, despite the stigma, we can’t ignore what Jesus instructed: “If anyone will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me” (Matt. 16:24, MEV). In no uncertain terms, Jesus’s words here are a call to a crucified life.

But what does it mean? And how does someone really live it?

Let’s first look at what it isn’t. Notice Jesus doesn’t ask that we take up *His cross*. He doesn’t encourage that we afflict ourselves with pain in order that we “share in His sufferings!” He didn’t say this to institute new religious laws like living a life without nice possessions, living a

life that's void of any entertainment or pleasure, or even maintaining a lowly opinion about oneself. It's also not about living in persistent guilt regarding mistakes. Certainly, no amount of condemnation or pity can pay for sin.

What Is the Crucified Life?

Bible scholars often instruct that "Scripture interprets Scripture." By this they mean that we must be careful not to derive doctrine from a single verse, but to use other similar Scriptures to glean more insight into difficult or unclear concepts. Certainly, this principle helps to understand the idea of the crucified life.

The book of Galatians offers several verses to aid our understanding. First, Paul speaks of the crucifixion of *self*. He boasts, "*I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me*" (Gal. 2:20, MEV, emphasis added). Next, Paul speaks this way regarding the *flesh*: "*Those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh*" (Gal. 5:24, MEV, emphasis added). And finally, regarding the *world*: "God forbid that I should boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world *is crucified* to me, and I to the world" (Gal. 6:14, MEV, emphasis added). It's crucial to note that in each verse, whether regarding the self, the flesh, or the world, Paul speaks of crucifixion as something that already happened (past tense)—not something yet to happen. Keep reading.

How to Live Crucified?

So what does this all mean? In a word: Our crucifixions ultimately happened some 2,000 years ago with Christ's crucifixion. This means that living crucified isn't the result of your efforts, but the result of applying Jesus' efforts to your life today. How? It's as Paul instructs: "Likewise, you also *consider* yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:11, MEV, emphasis

added).

The key here is the word *consider*—a verb meaning “to think carefully about.” This is just another phrase for the process of renewing the mind. In other words, living the crucified life is really about seeing the situations of your life through the lens of Jesus’ finished work. It’s about considering—knowing—that because of the cross, the power of sin is canceled, shame is eradicated and your past is removed.

Tempted with lust? Consider yourself dead to it with this: “I put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill its lusts” (Rom. 13:14).

Struggling with addiction? Kill its power with this: I will not “be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good” (Rom 12:21).

Taunted by guilt or shame? Silence it with this: “I overcome the accuser by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of my testimony” (Rev. 12:11).

Remember, in Christ, you are *already* crucified to sin and all its effects. That’s a done deal! Now you must consistently think about, speak about and see yourself accordingly.

This doesn’t mean you’ll live perfectly. But when you believe these truths in your mind and confess them with your mouth, your actions will begin to catch up so that you’ll truly *live* crucified. {eoa}

Kyle Winkler equips people to live in victory. His mobile app, *Shut Up, Devil!*, is the #1 spiritual warfare app; and his recent book, *Silence Satan*, has helped thousands shut down the enemy’s attacks, threats, lies and accusations. Kyle holds a Master of Divinity in biblical studies from Regent University. Get daily encouragement from Kyle on Facebook and Twitter.