

## “Living for Jesus” #2- Willingness to Crucify Self

Our previous lessons on this year’s theme dealt with the prerequisite of becoming “Dissatisfied with our Current Life/Living” by *refocusing our value system* (from Matt.5 – 6). To accomplish this changed perspective, we noted that we had to recognize that our current *quarrels and conflicts* in life all derive from our misplaced *pleasure sources* based in in *selfish lust* (Jas.4:1-10); and then accordingly change our *motivations* and *goals* for life itself. Perhaps over-simplified, to “Live for Jesus” we must first recognize and accept that we currently are living *for self*, and then become dissatisfied with so doing! Having hopefully accomplished these initial objectives, now we can take the next forward in the process of preparation toward “Living for Jesus”- **the Crucifixion of Self.**

### Why must we *crucify ourselves*? Rom.6:1-6?

There are many ways to take a life- some quick and relatively painless, and others slow and excruciating. So why was this particular metaphor of “crucifixion” the one chosen to represent the destruction of our *old self*? Was it just because that’s the way Jesus died, Rom.6:3,5,6, or is there more to it than that? God, the creator of human (as well as all) life, certainly knows how to take it quickly, mercifully, and painlessly, cp. Deut.32:50; 34:4-5. So why was this method of accomplishing death the one chosen for Jesus, and our own “*man of sin*”?

Think for a moment about the *process of physical crucifixion*, as well as what is required to accomplish it:

- **Absolute *disregard for the condemned*.** A crucifier cannot be sympathetic to the condemned one’s pleas for mercy, or the begging of his family and friends not to do it, John 19:25b-27; Luke 23:27. (Jesus did not beg for mercy, nor does the text indicate that His family or friends did so either; these verses are given to help us realize what surely must have taken place in other crucifixions). There must be a *heartless disregard* for the crucified to be a successful crucifier.
- **Complete *commitment to the process*.** A crucifier must keep driving the nails, and even break the legs if necessary, to accomplish the objective, John 19:31-34. To be a successful crucifier, one must be willing to use *ruthless physicality* to accomplish everything required in the process.
- **Unwillingness to change your mind and relent** once it has begun. A crucifier must see the through to completion regardless of how long it takes; (usually many hours, even days to accomplish the objective). One must be obliviously unmoved by screams of pain, and instead *cast lots* for His garments while awaiting the inevitable, cf. Jn.19:23-25a; Luke 23:35-37.

Now, please understand that these same elements are essential for the “crucifixion” of our own “*old self / man of sin*,” Rom.6:6. To accomplish this execution, we must:

1. **Have an absolute disregard for the condemned-** our *old self / man of sin*, Gal.2:20; 5:24; 6:14;

2. **Be completely committed to the process and therefore willing to do whatever is required to accomplish the objective;** to keep driving the nails, Heb.6:4-12; 10:26-39; 13:22; and,
3. **Be unwilling to change our minds, *relent*, or *give up*** because of the difficulty, 2Cor.7:8-10.

**Conclusion:**

- It might be that *crucifixion* was just the capital punishment process used by the Romans at the time- but I kind of doubt it.
- The heartless disregard for the condemned, the brutality required in the process, and the unwillingness to relent, give up, or give in are essential elements of crucifixion...and are also exactly what it takes to “*put to death*” our “*man of sin!*”
- Before we can “Live for Jesus,” we must be willing to *crucify self*. Perhaps this lesson will help us understand a little better what is required.