

Make Church a Part of Your Life

WEEKLY SERMONETTE

The Christian's Passion — "Denying Oneself"

By Preacher/Teacher Terry L. Laughlin, CrossRoads Ministries

There is a tale of the great English actor Macready. Macready was once asked by a preacher, "What is the difference between you and me?" You see the actor appeared before crowds night after night proclaiming fiction and people listened with delight. The preacher spoke of the essentials and the unchanged truths of God, yet, most listened with no passion upon their hearts. Macready's answer was this, "I present fiction as though it were true; you present truth as though it were fiction."

Over the course of time the cankers of legalism, traditionalism, denominationalism and faddism will choke the life out of a church. True believers do not want a church that has only a form of godliness but denies the truth and power of God (2 Timothy 3:5). It is a necessity that the church of Jesus Christ maintains a vibrant walk with the Lord. Pastors must preach messages that reflect Holy Spirit revelation and illumination of the Word of God.

Jesus has this description of what is to be expressed in the child of God who is passionate for Him, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself... For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it. What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? Or what can

a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mark 8:34-37) This is a very powerful truth presented by Christ which enables the child of God to express a life of passion for Him and it begins with "denying oneself."

If there is anyone who deserves our attention, our loyalty,

our time, our money, our efforts, our adoration, our devotion, our worship and praise, it is Jesus Christ. The Christian's passion is to accomplish the complete will of God for him and he must have a desire in his heart to die to self-will. "Deny" (Greek *aparnomai*) means to disown,

disregard, forsake, renounce, or reject. The application is to subdue the flesh and bring it under submission to the Highest authority. This is not negative, such as denying oneself something, but rather it is positive action. It is saying "No" to self in order to say "Yes" to what Jesus Christ wills you to do. This enables you to let Jesus be truly Lord of your life allowing you to enjoy the benefits of being a child of God. People all too often forfeit God's best for them by not denying self.

The apostle Paul knew the joys, victories and blessings of denying self to achieve God's will for him; every child God has the same opportunities that the apostle Paul had. The key to accomplishing this is through mortification of the flesh. The apostle Paul exhorts the church with this, "For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Holy Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live." (Romans 8:13). Paul also wrote, "Those who belong to Christ have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires." (Galatians 5:24).

Do you have a passion for Christ? Does it reflect a life of self-denial to sin and the influences of this world? If not, sacrifice your life to Him, He sacrificed His for you!

We pray the Risen Christ is alive in YOUR heart today!

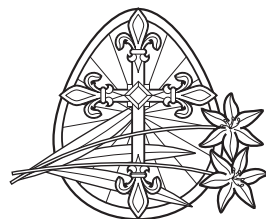
All Sewn Up



"A stitch in time saves nine." This old saying is timeless and wise advice.
Do you ever feel as if your life is coming unraveled? Misfortunes can increase until it seems like nothing is going your way.
There's a way to patch things up! Allow God to help you regain optimism. Experience the peace of mind that comes from unconditional trust in His power. Let Him repair your problems.
Trust God and make regular worship a part of your life. With His help, your life can be "all sewn up".

Sunday Ezra 9.1-15	Monday Nehemiah 1.1-11	Tuesday Nehemiah 8.1-18	Wednesday Nehemiah 9.1-37	Thursday Esther 4.1-17	Friday Isaiah 37.1-20	Saturday Isaiah 37.21-38
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Scriptures Selected by The American Bible Society
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