

The Living Dead

*"...I no longer live but Christ lives in me."
Galatians 2:20 (NIV)*

The Christian message has a variety of unusual expressions to describe the walk of faith. Paul stated earlier in the verse that he was crucified with Christ. That sounds fearful to those who do not have a knowledge of the biblical message.

For those who practice believer's baptism, when the candidate is totally immersed in the baptismal waters, the ceremony is viewed as a funeral service. They understand the meaning of baptism to be first a physical portrayal of a spiritual funeral service. This is why the person is "buried" or put totally under the water.

Then the person is immediately raised up out of the water and that is symbolic of a resurrection. So the person being baptised wants those who witness the baptismal ceremony to understand they are "crucified with Christ". They seek to state by their actions that their old way of life is gone.

When they are raised up out of the water they are saying that they have a new life in Jesus. That is a lot of

meaning to put into a simple ceremony, but the Bible supports this way of speaking to describe what happens when a person becomes a Christian.

Scripture in many places indicates that if we are to truly follow Jesus we must give up our own ambitions for our lives (death to self). The Christian puts their entire existence into the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is what it means to be alive or resurrected in Jesus. He directs our moment by moment existence.

Those who are Christians do not call Jesus "Lord" for nothing. We recognize His right to do with us as pleases Him. Now this is the place where we begin to have problems. What if Jesus has different plans for us than we have? What if we wish to go here and do that and Jesus calls us to there and to do something different?

Well that question was settled when we first became Christians and confessed Jesus as Lord. We put to death our personal ambitions and gave our lives fully to the Lord to do with us what he

sees fit. When we die to self we are admitting that Jesus knows what we need better than we do. His way is a better way, both for us and for those we will connect with in this life.

This is an especially difficult concept to understand and accept when tragedy is on the horizon. Our sense of self preservation comes into play and we seek a way out to avoid the problem. That is natural and perfectly acceptable. No follower of Jesus goes looking for trouble. But, when the thing we diligently sought to avoid becomes a reality, we submit to God's will and accept the problem.

Genuine Christians are "The living dead". We have died to our own desires for freedom from the usual or unusual problems of life and we accept whatever God brings to us. We say with Jesus, "Not my will but yours be done." Luke 22:42

© Rumford Ministries
www.RumfordMinistries.org
Some rights reserved