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Jesus didn't give his life to make you a better you - Or me a better me!

We need much more than forgiveness.  
We are dead in our sins. We NEED LIFE!

Rom. 6:11 Consider yourselves to **dead to sin**, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Your family - This city - The world; does need a FORGIVEN YOU or me!

Gal. 2:20 "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ **lives** in me; **OUR LIVES SHOULD BE PROOF OF HIS DEATH!!! OUR LIVING SHOULD BE A TESTIMONY TO HIS DYING!! Every day - every way**

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting **LIFE**.

LIFE - in that verse is ZOE - Life like God has it - 'the Life of God'. **LITERALLY!!**

2Pet 1:4 ...you may become partakers of *the* divine nature - We TAKE PART in Divine Nature! Or - Divine Nature becomes PART of us! (The Good PART☺)

Receiving His death - and LIFE - should be our un-doing! An unraveling of us - a REVEALING OF CHRIST IN US.

To be a New Creation in Christ (2 Cor 5:17) means that we 'BECOME' - NOT BE DO! Can't 'be do' until we 'become'!! In one moment - or AT ONE MOMENT (ATONEMENT!!) we become something that did not exist before.

We don't go from pig to clean pig. Not RECYCLED TRASH that has now been RE-PURPOSED! We go from EARTHWORM to EAGLE - from SLUG to STALLION!

If we DON'T SEE WHAT GOD SEES - AND KNOW WHAT GOD KNOWS - (**ABOUT US**)- WE WILL NEVER BE **WHAT** GOD SAYS WE ARE - OR **WHO** GOD SAYS WE ARE!

And - as WE go, so goes the church! This church is US! The communities' picture of who Christ is - is us! **And as the church goes - so goes the world!**

That is a HEAVY DEAL!! **THIS IS ON US!!!**

The book of Acts tells us that when we come to Christ, we are added to the Church. BUT – we have to make it clear that the CHURCH got ADDED to us! In many of the countries where we work giving your life to Christ IS A LIFE AND DEATH DECISION!

Jesus didn't die for SPECTATORS! HE DIED FOR 'PART'- ICIPATORS!

2Cor. 5:21 He made Him who knew no sin to *be* sin on our behalf, so that we might become the **righteousness of God** In Him.

Righteousness in the verse is given – from a bookkeeping term – imputed or charged/credited to one's account! So we are now in RIGHT STANDING WITH God. You might not feel that way – but that's NOT YOUR CALL! His Word TRUMPS YOUR Feelings!! But we have to DO OUR PART in that!

John 3:30 "He must increase, but I must **decrease**."

That 'given' righteousness has to move from the inside to the outside!

Phil. 2:12 ... **work out** your salvation with fear and trembling;

Divine Nature needs to WORK ITS WAY OUT – out of mouths! Our hands!!! Our hearts!!!

SO WHAT IS OUR PART?!

#1) Give UP – You have to give up to grow up! We can't keep being US and be 'Christ in US!' THERE IS NOT ROOM FOR THE KING OF THE UNIVERSE **AND ME** IN THE SAME CONTAINER!! We must decrease – he must increase. We die – He lives!

TO BE A CHRISTIAN MEANS TO BE 'CHRIST LIKE' OR 'LIKE CHRIST'. The word Christian is only used three times in the Bible. It is first used in Acts 11:26 ... and the disciples were first called **Christians** in Antioch. Stephen had been martyred 4 chapters before this! DEATH TO 'ME' IS THE ONLY WAY TO REPRESENT – OR REPRESENT HIM!!

If all we are is a bunch of forgiven 'USSES' YUCK! We have to give US up!! Surrender.

#2) We have to GROW UP – You have to grow up to GO UP!!!

Eph. 4:15 but speaking the truth in love, 2 we are to **grow up** in all *aspects* (every way) into Him who is the head, *even* Christ,

Truth is the surgery – LOVE is the anesthetic!! Takes both to Grow UP!

Grow Up in EVERY ASPECT OF HIM!! That is the charge!

I am fine with feeding our 10-month-old grandson. But if I was still feeding my 33-year-old son – we are dysfunctional! NOT FUNCTIONING!

If Sunday morning is the only time we eat – and we have to be spoon-fed – and we don't like the food – HOUSTON, we have a problem!

1 Cor. 13:11 When I was a **child**, I used to speak like a **child**, think like a **child**, reason like a **child**; when I became a man, I did away with childish things.

Being childlike is OKAY – Being CHILDISH IS NOT!!

EVERY BELIEVER IS A CHILD OF GOD – BUT MOST OF US NEVER MAKE IT TO SONSHIP.

Is. 9:6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: (There is a difference!)

Children care about themselves! ME, ME, ME, I, I, I, yie, yie, yie! We can listen to ourselves and find where we are pretty quickly! WHINERS? **OUCH!!!**

Not once has He asked for MY OPINION! Maybe it's not that valuable?

Jesus did not MINISTER until the Holy Spirit came to reside in Him as the Jordan river. (Matt 3) Then in 4:1 he is LEAD by the HS into the Wilderness to be tested!

(CHILDREN RUN AWAY FROM STORMS – SONS RUN INTO THEM!!)

Rom 8:14 says 'those that are LED by the Spirit of God, THOSE ARE the sons of God.'

Eph. 4:28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with *his* hands the thing which is good, that he may have to **give** to him that has need.

We don't work for a living! We work for a giving!! (Fruit – not Seed!!)

Matt. 5:9 Blessed *are* the **peacemakers**: for they shall be called the HUIOS of God.

Fruit of Character! SONSHIP IS ROOTED IN CHARACTER AND FRUITED IN LIVES!

Matt. 5:44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; 45 That ye may be the HUIOS of your Father which is in heaven:

That is impossible for children – only possible for sons. I can't do that! Only if I am willing to give my life away can that happen! Only Christ in me can do that!!!

Col. 1:27 ... **Christ in you**, the hope of glory:

#3 - You have GO UP to GIVE OUT!!

The First Call is always UP! COME.

The Second Call is always OUT! GO.

Mark 3:14; Matt 22:38-39

John 4:34 Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work."

Luke 2:49 And he said unto them, Why are you looking for me? Don't you know that **I must be about my Father's business?**

AS SONS AND DAUGHTERS - Our LIVES become the commodity of heaven on earth! AND what we HAVE - what moves through our hands is the commodity of heaven!

The only legitimate prayer a son or daughter can pray is 'Father, How do YOU want to spend this life you purchased with the LIFE of your only Son?'

This all belongs to Him!

ALL Time is His. ALL TIMING (When) IS HIS!

Every Talent is His. Every Gift, Ability, Aptitude, Skill

Every Treasure is His.

WHO WE ARE - AND WHAT WE HAVE - IS NOT SOMETHING WE KEEP - IT IS SOMETHING WE GIVE AWAY!!

When we get THAT - we get it ALL!

Rom. 8:16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the sons of God: (The word for sons here is *Teknon* - 'of legal age')

Rom. 8:17 And if sons, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.

Give UP - Grow UP - Go UP - Give OUT