**More Like the Master**

In His Death, Burial, and Resurrection

Lesson 24

*“And he said unto all, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself,*

*and take up his cross daily, and follow me”* (Luke 9:23)

**A New You**

Many people want to make changes in their personal lives especially in the area of their physical looks or their health. They spend time and money to get a “makeover”. They are looking for “a new you”. Spiritually speaking, everyone of an accountable age needs a “makeover”. God wants us to be “conformed” to the image of his son (Romans 8:29). We are to be “transformed” (Romans 12:2) and we are to be “renewed” (Ephesians 4:23). All of this requires that we make some spiritual changes. It requires a spiritual “makeover”. We are to put to death the old man of sin and we are to work to have “a new you”. This is done by following the example of Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection.

Jesus spoke on different occasions about the importance of his disciples bearing their cross. He said that his followers must deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow him (Matthew 10:38; 16:24; Luke 9:23; 14:27). The cross is a symbol of sacrifice and death. When a follower of Jesus takes up his cross, he will be sacrificing some things and he will be putting to death some things in his life in order to be pleasing to God. Let us study how we can be “More Like the Master” in his death, burial, and resurrection.

**Jesus and His Death, Burial, and Resurrection**

Jesus was crucified. Jesus was put to death in a cruel manner. After he was mocked and scourged, he was *“delivered to be crucified”* (Matthew 27:26, 31). He was *“condemned to death”* by crucifixion (Luke 24:20). Crucifixion was designed to be a slow agonizing death. Jesus hung on the cruel cross of Calvary for six hours, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. (Mark 15:25, 34). Jesus experienced *“the suffering of death”* (Hebrews 2:9). The crucifixion of Jesus was confirmed by the Roman soldiers who did the crucifying (Matthew 27:35-38; Luke 23:33; John 19:23,24), by the angel (Matthew 28:5; Mark 16:6), by Peter (Acts 2:23,36; 4:10; 1 Peter 3:18), by Paul (1 Corinthians 1:13, 23; 2:2,8), and by John (Revelation 11:8).

Jesus was buried. Jesus died on the cross and was taken down and buried in a nearby tomb. John writes: *“Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new tomb wherein was never man yet laid”* (John 19:41). Jesus was buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathaea. A stone was rolled in front of the tomb and the tomb was sealed. Jesus was completely buried and entombed. The burial of Jesus was confirmed by Joseph of Arimathaea and Mary Magdalene (Matthew 27:57-61), by the Roman soldiers who guarded the tomb (Matthew 27:62-66), and by Paul (1 Corinthians 15:4).

Jesus was resurrected. The death of Jesus was not the end of his life. His death marked the beginning of a new life. He died, but that was not the end of the story. He *“died and rose again”* (1 Thessalonians 4:14; see also Romans 8:34; 14:9; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4). Jesus said, *“I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore”* (Revelation 1:18). The bodily resurrection of Jesus was confirmed by the angels and the two Marys (Matthew 28:1-10; Mark 16:1-11; Luke 24:1-11; John 20:11-18), by the Jewish authorities (Matthew 28:11-15), by Peter and John (Luke 24:12; John 20:1-9), by two men on the way to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35), by the apostles (Matthew 28:16-20; Mark 16:12-20; Luke 24:36-52; John 20:19 – 21:23), by 500 brethren at once (1 Corinthians 15:6), and by Paul (Acts 26:15-16).

**The Christian’s Death, Burial, and Resurrection**

We must be “crucified with him” (Romans 6:6). When a person obeys the gospel he makes a conscious decision to make a change in life. He wants to stop the old life of serving sin and start a new life of serving God. When a person obeys the gospel, he has been united with Christ *“in the likeness of his death”* (Romans 6:5), he has been *“crucified with him”* (Romans 6:6), and he has *“died with Christ”* (Romans 6:8). What does this mean? It doesn’t mean that a person is literally put on a cross like Jesus. It means that a person has *“died to sin”* and no longer wants to live a life of sin (Romans 6:2). Peter writes: *“…that we, having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness…”* (1 Peter 2:24). When a person dies to sin he also dies to the ways of the world. Paul writes: *“If ye died with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, do ye subject yourselves to ordinances…”* (Colossians 2:20). Being crucified with Christ is a daily act. Paul said that he died daily (1 Corinthians 15:31). Each day brings opportunity for suffering and self-denial for Christ. Each day a Christian must *“put to death the deeds of the body”* (Romans 8:13). Each day a Christian must remain faithful to Christ and live in him. Paul writes: *“For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God ... Put to death therefore your members which are upon the earth…”* (Colossians 3:3, 5).

What does it mean to be “crucified” with Jesus? First, we must understand that crucifixion is a symbol of death and death is a symbol of separation (the body and the spirit are separated in death). Thus, to be crucified with Jesus means that we are willing to separate ourselves from the selfishness and worldliness that will keep us out of heaven. Paul writes: *“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live…”* (Galatians 2:20). Note that Paul writes “it is no longer I that live”. To be crucified with Christ means that we no longer have our way but we let Christ have his way with us each day. We are not going to allow fleshly lusts to rule our life but the word of Christ. Again, Paul writes: *“And they that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof”* (Galatians 5:24). Not only are we to crucify self, but we are to crucify ourselves to the worldliness around us. We will not allow worldliness to dictate our life but the example of Christ. Again, Paul writes: *“But far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world”* (Galatians 6:14).

Another area of the Christian’s life that corresponds to the crucifixion of Jesus is weakness and suffering. Just as Jesus displayed weakness and suffering on the cross, so Christians will be weak (in the eyes of the world) and they will suffer for Christ. Paul writes: *“for he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth through the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him through the power of God toward you”* (2 Corinthians 13:4). Again, Paul writes, *“that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, becoming conformed unto his death”* (Philippians 3:10).

We must be “buried with him” (Romans 6:4). When a person obeys the gospel and becomes a Christian the first thing he does is die to sin. Then, he buries the old man of sin in baptism. Paul writes: *“Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him through baptism unto death”* (Romans 6:3-4). Again, Paul writes: *“having been buried with him in baptism, wherein ye were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead”* (Colossians 2:12). Baptism is not a sprinkling or a pouring of water. Baptism is a burial (immersion) in water.

We must be “raised with him” (Colossians 2:12). When a person obeys the gospel, he dies to sin, he is buried in baptism, and then he is raised to *“walk in newness of life”* (Romans 6:4). Paul writes: *“For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection; … But if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him”* (Romans 6:5, 8; see also 1 Thessalonians 5:10; 2 Timothy 2:11). We are to be *“alive unto God in Christ Jesus”* (Romans 6:11). Again Paul writes, *“having been buried with him in baptism, wherein ye were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead”* (Colossians 2:12). The new life of a Christian is a life spent in serving Christ and not serving self. Paul writes: *“… and he died for all, that they that live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes died and rose again”* (2 Corinthians 5:15).

**More Like the Master in His Death, Burial, and Resurrection**

Christianity requires two things: a crucified Christ and a crucified Christian. Many in this world are content to let Jesus be the crucified one, but not themselves. However, it is important that we be crucified as well. The Lord’s crucifixion accomplished great things for man’s salvation and our own crucifixion will accomplish great things too. When we are *“crucified with him”* (Romans 6:6) we will die to self and put Jesus first in our life where he needs to be. When we are *“buried with him”* (Romans 6:4) we will wash away that old man of sin in the waters of baptism. When we are “raised with him” (Colossians 2:12) we will experience the power of a new walk of life with many spiritual blessings in heavenly places (Ephesians 2:6). Let us be “More Like the Master” in his death, burial, and resurrection.

**Questions**

1. What changes will take place in a person’s life when he takes up his cross to follow Jesus?

2. What kind of death did Jesus experience?

3. How was Jesus buried?

4. What evidence exists for the bodily resurrection of Jesus?

5. What happens when a person is “crucified with” Jesus and when does this take place?

6. How often will a person have to “crucify” or “put to death” the old man of sin?

7. What happens when a person is “buried with” Jesus and when does this take place?

8. What happens when a person is “raised with” Jesus and when does this take place?

9. What important changes will take place in a person’s life when he is crucified with Christ, buried with Christ, and raised with Christ?

10. What is the biggest hindrance to being crucified with Christ or dying with Christ?