

Get Better or Deader

n/a

Ready:

“So, you too consider yourselves dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.”

-Romans 6:11

Set

Coach Sleepy Thompson coached football at my high school for 32 years. His teams boasted 29 winning seasons, 12 conference titles and three undefeated seasons. Coach Thompson had a gift for taking whatever boys came through the door (including myself) and turning them into winners. He coached in such a way that took the entire team to a higher level of competition.

Personally, I'm fascinated by what makes a great coach like Sleepy Thompson. The word “coach” actually comes from the word “stagecoach,” implying that they take passengers from Point A to Point B. Coach Thompson knew where he wanted his teams to go, even though players like me didn't have a clue. His Point B was very well-defined, and we had a clear destination.

In life, our Master Coach, Jesus Christ, also has a clear game plan for us. He wants us to get from Point A to Point B, but sometimes I think we get His Point B mixed up with our own assumptions about what the Christian life should be. We think God wants us to get better—to improve, become better people, or to be nicer Christians. But His call goes much deeper than that. Looking at how he challenged His followers and the leaders of the day, He never encouraged them to get better but, instead, deader. That's right, deader.

Jesus always flipped things around when He taught what it meant to be an authentic disciple. His teaching and training didn't fall in line with the world and its point of view. If you wanted to be rich, He said you should give it all away. If you wanted to be a leader, He taught that you should become a servant. If you wanted to be a friend, He said you should give up your life. If you want to live, He said you must die. Paul wrote in Galatians 2:20, “I have been crucified with Christ.” That's what it means to get deader. When Paul wrote this, he didn't mean physical death, he meant dying to our desires. Getting deader means dying to yourself daily!

German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote, “When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die.” It is a radical call that doesn't give us warm, fuzzy feelings. It cuts through the surface and pierces the heart. We realize that we cannot play it safe when it comes to following Christ. Nowhere in Scripture does Jesus encourage us to surrender our lives to Him and just get better. Instead, He calls us to surrender the very things we don't want to give up. Just as he called the rich man to give up his wealth and follow Him (Matthew 19:16-22), Christ

pinpoints the very things that we want to hold back for ourselves. We all have something that Christ's call touches. It pierces our hearts because He knows what prevents us from following hard after Him. When we are willing to surrender that one thing to Christ, that is what it means to get deader.

We all must die to sin. Jesus wants to take us to a new place spiritually, but it probably won't be the place we thought we were going. It will be an unexpected Point B mapped out by our Master Coach. He has a way of transforming us each day, but only if we are willing to crawl up on the altar and offer ourselves as living sacrifices.

Today, let's become deader, not just better. It's all or nothing!

Go

1. Have you ever had a coach like Coach Thompson? What made that coach great?
2. How does your Master Coach, Jesus Christ, want to coach you up? Are you following His game plan or your own?
3. Are you holding back in a certain area like the rich man in Scripture? What is it?
4. What does the Lord want you to do about it?
5. Does God's call touch you deep in your soul? How?

Workout

Mark 9:35

Luke 17:33

Romans 6:6-12

2 Corinthians 12:9

Galatians 2:19-20

1 Peter 5:6

Overtime

"Father, I want to get deader. I am not sure what that means or how to do it, but I am asking You to help me in this journey. There are things in my life that prevent me from being all in. There are things just like the rich man that hold me back. Reveal to me what it means to be a living sacrifice. Help me die to myself daily. I want to get deader so I can live for You. Thank You, Lord. Amen."



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