

- Choosing to lose one's life for the sake of the gospel is the only way to truly save it and gain full and abundant life in Him.

"Dying to Self" — Learn from the Sermon on the Mount

- The Beatitudes: Indicators of a Renounced Self
 - Matthew 5:3–12 describes the results of God's Kingdom coming into one's life.
 - Poor in Spirit requires "dying" to self-sufficiency. Blessed are those who acknowledge their own littleness and rely entirely on God's strength.
 - Meekness is the humility to trust in God, the willingness to serve God, and do His will above our own.
 - Mourning involves a change of mind allowing us to see ourselves and the world as they truly are, grieving over sin rather than hiding from reality.
 - Persecution for Righteousness is the willingness to endure opposition, mockery, and/or isolation for standing up for what is right, rather than prioritizing personal safety or social acceptance.
- Surrendering Mastery and Security
 - In Matthew 6, Jesus explicitly addresses the need to put to death the "stinking thinking" that prioritizes earthly security over God's kingdom (Ibid).
 - Dying to self means recognizing that no one can serve two masters.
 - We must choose between the pursuit of money/possessions and a singular devotion to God.
 - Instead of obsessing over basic needs, which centers the self at the middle of one's concerns, we are commanded to seek first God's kingdom and His righteousness.
 - Jesus warns against performing religious acts (giving, praying, fasting) to be noticed by others.
 - True kingdom living involves doing these things quietly, dying to the desire for human praise so that God receives the glory.
- The Lord's Prayer as an Act of Surrender
 - The Lord's Prayer is described as a "dangerous, life-changing prayer" because it requires us to offer our life again and again as a sacrifice.
 - Thy Will Be Done specifically asks for God's will to become our own.
 - It is a prayer of indifference to anything but God's will, surrendering personal agendas.
 - To pray for forgiveness is a test of love.
 - It requires letting go of personal grievances and the need for revenge, and releasing others from the "penalty box" of the soul.
- The Narrow Road
 - Finally, the Sermon concludes by contrasting the crowd with the narrow road that leads to life (Matthew 7:14).
 - Taking this road involves
 - focusing on our own shortcomings (removing the plank from our own eye) rather than critiquing others, and
 - acting on Jesus' words as a solid foundation rather than just hearing the words.
 - This reflects the "radical commitment" required to lose one's life for the sake of the gospel to truly save it.