



How we Sustain Change

Philippians 3:4-6 & 2 Timothy 4:6-8

Listen! Would you count your son successful if he died in prison?

Questions: How would you define success? When you get to the end of your life what would you measure in determining success? How do we know we are on a path of personal transformation? What does it look like to finish well?

Paul's first attempt at success was through religious respectability. Philippians 3:4-6

- Paul excelled in all things of the flesh:
 - Keeping rituals:
 - Perfect lineage:
 - Zealous religious fighting:
 - Zealous law-keeping:
- Application: Whatever I am doing in my own energy falls short of the purposes of God.

Paul's second attempt at success was through faithful service in God's mission. 2 Tim 4:6-8

- Element #1: Pouring out my life as an offering/sacrifice to God. (v 6)
- Element #2: Fighting the good fight for spiritual impact. (v 7a)
- Element #3: Finishing with endurance the path set before me. (v 7b)
- Element #4: Keeping "the faith." (v 7c)
- Element #5: Staying focused on future reward. (v 8)

Central Truth: Finishing well means that I look back on a life of faithful self-sacrifice in the cause of Christ.

- "Die to live." Robert Lewis.

Walking Papers

Practical helps for walking the Christian walk this week.

Central Truth: Finishing well means that I look back on a life of faithful self-sacrifice in the cause of Christ.

Please take time each day this week to think through these questions and ideas:

- In what ways did Jesus model a life of self-sacrifice? How does Philippians 2:5-11 bear on this question?
- The Gospel of Mark was written to demonstrate that "Jesus Christ is the perfect and tireless Servant of God and man." In that Book Jesus commits 143 acts of service toward God and others. What does that mean for our lives?
- Can you list people whom you have admired for their self-sacrifice?
 - What kinds of things did they do that were self-sacrificial?
- Who are the people who have made self-sacrifices to bless you?
 - What did they do?
- Ephesians 2:10 makes it clear that God puts acts of service right in our paths—acts that He prepared before hand for us to do. Can you see any of those in your path right now? What acts of service, good deeds, and self-sacrifice is God calling you to right now?
- What have you done to make personal sacrifice for the people of CBC? What would you be willing to do?
- What have you done to make personal sacrifice for your family? What would you be willing to do?
- Besides Jesus who are the most self-sacrificial people in the Bible? Why do you see them that way?
- Where does the New Testament command us to acts of self-sacrifice?
- How does self-sacrifice involve the use of our time? Abilities? Money? Possessions? Careers? Networks? Minds? Bodies? Families? Preferences? Dreams?

“Can I point to ongoing self-sacrifice in my life?”