



RAISED TO DIE TO LIVE

Galatians 2:20

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BIG IDEA: As Christ followers, abundant life comes only through death to the old self. Christ has saved us to die to self—so that we can really live.

Stephen: Martyred as he gazed on the Risen Christ

Acts 6:7-7:1

The Apostle James: From wanting first place—to becoming the first apostle to be martyred

Acts 12:1-2

155 A.D. Polycarp martyred

168 A.D. Justin Martyr beheaded by Rome

203 A.D. Perpetua killed in the coliseum

Yet, more Christians were martyred in the 20th century than in all previous centuries combined.

What empowers someone to die for Christ?

They already have died to self.

Galatians 2:19-20

For through the law I died to the law so that I might live for God.

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. (NIV)

Apostle Paul: I die every day... 1 Corinthians 15:31

For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. Philippians 1:21

Jesus: “If anyone would be my disciple, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.” Matthew 16:24



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So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.

Acts 6:7

Now Stephen, a man full of God's grace and power, did great wonders and miraculous signs among the people.

Acts 6:8

Opposition arose, however, from members of the Synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called)-Jews of Cyrene and Alexandria as well as the provinces of Cilicia and Asia. These men began to argue with Stephen, but they could not stand up against his wisdom or the Spirit by whom he spoke.

Acts 6:9-10

Then they secretly persuaded some men to say, "We have heard Stephen speak words of blasphemy against Moses and against God."

Acts 6:11

So they stirred up the people and the elders and the teachers of the law. They seized Stephen and brought him before the Sanhedrin. They produced false witnesses, who testified, "This fellow never stops speaking against this holy place and against the law.

Acts 6:12-13

For we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs Moses handed down to us."

All who were sitting in the Sanhedrin looked intently at Stephen, and they saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

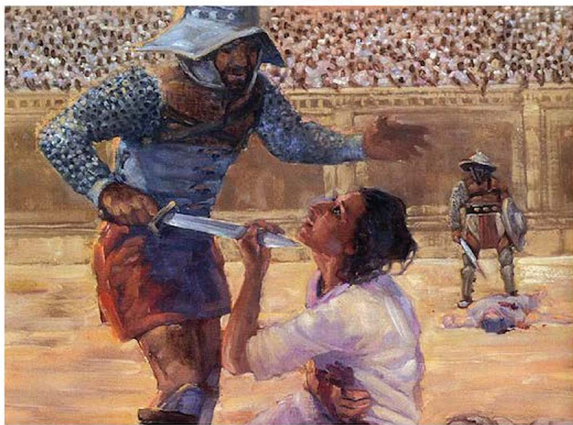
Acts 6:14-15

Then the high priest asked him, "Are these charges true?"

Acts 7:1

It was about this time that King Herod arrested some who belonged to the church, intending to persecute them. He had James, the brother of John, put to death with the sword.

Acts 12:1-2



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