

**Introduction:**

- Two engineering students, one a Seminole and the other from UCF, were out in a yard standing by a flagpole, vigorously discussing something. A Gator happened by and asked what they were arguing about. "Oh," replied the student from Florida State, "we were discussing how best to determine the height of this flagpole and what equation to use." "That's easy enough," declared the Gator student, and he took the pole out of the ground, laid it down on the grass, pulled out his tape measure and declared: "It's 10' 6" long." As the Gator student walked away, the engineer from Florida State turned to the one from UCF and declared: "Isn't that just like a guy from Gainesville. You ask him for height and he gives you length." Most likely what these Greeks thought after they asked for a meeting with Jesus.
- John 12:23-28
  - A sign which purportedly appeared in the window of a dry cleaning dye shop. "We dye to live, we live to dye; the more we dye, the more we live; and the more we live, the more we dye." APPLICATION Change out a single letter and the above sign is transformed into an edict for Christian living. As the Apostle Paul wrote, "I die daily," (1Corinthians 15:31). And as Jesus taught, "*whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it*" (Matthew 16:25). Thus, the more we die, the more we live! I want to talk with you about the Journey to the Resurrection.
- John 13:1 "*Jesus knew that His hour had come.*" And also 12:23 [The Greek word used here is hora which is "a point of time or a season when an appointed action is to begin."] John uses this word multiple times throughout his Gospel. He began His journey home, to the Father! The resurrection would give him back all that left behind to become a man.
  - Oh, that we all would recognize that 'hour' in our lives. The time when we leave this world behind and step into all that Christ has prepared for us.
  - Not only had Jesus hour come but He was ready to give us a "life" lesson.

**I. The Call To Fall****A. The Call to fall is the call to bow.**

1. The call to fall is an invitation to humbly bow before God. The call to bow in an invitation to literally make Jesus the Lord of your life. Living the Christian Life is about His Lordship. It is not just about praying the prayer. It is about Lordship. Restoration is about the Lordship of Jesus in our lives. Loving Clean is about the Lordship of Jesus in our lives.
2. "*that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,*" (Philippians 2:10, NKJV)
3. All will bow. You can bow now or you can bow later but you will bow. The believer should have no trouble bowing now!
  - a) To him who has experienced the saving power of Jesus Christ, bowing is not an issue.
  - b) To the him who has begun to forget what he has been given in Christ bowing becomes an issue. The messages on Restoration and the messages on Loving Clean have stirred things up in many of lives. Why? Because we have forgotten what we have been given and we have chosen not to be conformed to Christ's image. This message today is about the journey to resurrection. Jesus walked it to

demonstrate to us power that is revealed and obtained for all who chose to fall, die, and be fruitful

- B. There is a call to fall. This is the conviction/leadership of Holy Spirit leading a man to walk humbly with His God. Everyone receives this call so that no man is without excuse. Rom 1:20. It is this call to fall or bow before Jesus that lead a person to salvation.
1. *“No, O people, the Lord has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.”* (Micah 6:8, NLT)
  2. Jesus received this call. His was not a call salvation but to our salvation. *“Before the Passover celebration, Jesus knew that his hour had come to leave this world and return to his Father. He had loved his disciples during his ministry on earth, and now he loved them to the very end.”* (John 13:1, NLT) This was a call!
- C. Jesus uses the natural principle of a seed to illustrate the spiritual truth that there can be no fruitful life without death, no resurrection power without surrender.
1. There was nothing that Jesus had to die to but there was something He was willing to die for...*all who had sinned*. There was a condition at one time in which all things that existed were obedient to God. In that place was fruitfulness, life, goodness and glory. Jesus was bringing that back to humanity but He had to first die for that humanity. He was the Seed that was willing to bow to the will of the Father and be planted! How willing are you to bow before God to receive what He has promised?
  2. In and of itself the seed is weak and useless but when it is planted and "dies" it fulfills its purpose.
- D. The call to fall is a call to brokenness. Not my will but yours be done! You have to humble yourself to receive what God has promised. *“Then if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and restore their land.”* (2 Chronicles 7:14, NLT) It was pride that got Lucifer in trouble Is 14:12 and it is pride or worldly desires that still cause us to insist on our ways. To humble yourself, to answer the call to fall is the first step in the right direction. But it is not enough to fall you must die.

## II. The Call To Die

- A. The way to fruitfulness lies in death. The simple truth is, if He/Jesus, does not die we cannot live! His death, is what produces the fruit of life! *“We die to live, we live to die; the more we die, the more we live; and the more we live, the more we die.”*
- B. Jesus is basically telling His disciples that to live they need to die. That’s not a comfortable teaching. Why not? Because most of us are not in a big hurry to die.
1. We’ve trained ourselves to defend our lives, our loved ones, our possessions. We’ve trained ourselves to survive. Dying does not come easy to people like that.
  2. One Commentator noted that there are 6 instances where Jesus mentions BEARING FRUIT as a Christian - and 5 of those are tied to the cross or dying.
  3. The man who loves his life is moved by two aims, by selfishness and by the desire for security. Not once or twice but many times Jesus insisted that the man who hoarded his life must in the end lose it, and the man who spent his life must in the end gain it.
  4. It is in dying that we start ‘being’ Christian.
- C. *“This is what the Lord says: “Cursed are those who put their trust in mere humans, who rely on human strength and turn their hearts away from the Lord. They are like stunted shrubs in the desert, with no hope for the future. They will live in the barren wilderness, in an uninhabited salty land. “But blessed are those who trust in the Lord and have made the*

*Lord their hope and confidence. They are like trees planted along a riverbank, with roots that reach deep into the water. Such trees are not bothered by the heat or worried by long months of drought. Their leaves stay green, and they never stop producing fruit. "The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is? But I, the Lord, search all hearts and examine secret motives. I give all people their due rewards, according to what their actions deserve."* (Jeremiah 17:5–10, NLT)

- D. "The man whose priorities are right has such an attitude of love for the things of God that it makes all interest in the affairs of this life appear by comparison as hatred.
1. The things which possess the heart and which are unlike God fasten them there because the inner being is not subject to the will of God.
  2. One of the reasons for such a low standard of Christianity is the failure of Christians to die to themselves and live for God.
  3. *"Those who love their life in this world will lose it. Those who care nothing for their life in this world will keep it for eternity."* (John 12:25, NLT) "We must be prepared to renounce present interests for the sake of a future inheritance." "To love one's life here means to give it priority over the interest of God's kingdom" [F.F. Bruce; The Gospel & Epistles of John, p. 265].
  4. By death of the martyrs the early church grew. Except for John isn't it interesting that all of Jesus disciple who became the early apostles were martyred. "The blood of the martyrs was the seed of the church." Unless it dies it remains only a single seed.
- E. The wheat dies to what it was in order to become what it is called to be (fruitful).

### III. The Call To Bear Much Fruit

- A. In the economy of God - death comes before resurrection. But in resurrection come multiplication.
- B. Christians " ....are like seeds. We are small and insignificant, but we have life in them, God's life. However, that life can never be fulfilled unless we die to self so that we may live unto God (Gal. 2:20; Rom. 6:). The only way to have a fruitful life is to follow Jesus Christ...."
1. The old us has to be crucified in order for the new us to be made visible.
  2. To get into the resurrection power for this life requires us to die to ourselves.
- C. *"If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God."* (Colossians 3:1–3, NKJV)

### Conclusion:

- You can only share in the resurrected life of Jesus if you take up your cross and follow Him.
  - We triumph by defeat (2 Cor. 12:7-9)
  - We find victory by glorying in our weaknesses (2 Cor. 12:5)
  - But perhaps most difficult of all for us: We live by dying (John 12:24,25; 2 Cor. 4:10,11)
- The truth is that we lose everything that we associate with this life at some point; it just a matter of time. We cannot hold on to our youth no matter how hard we may try. We cannot hold on our athletic ability. We cannot hold on to our mental capacity. We cannot even hold on to our loved ones. It's just a matter of time. Jesus tells us to prepare now. Don't focus on grabbing and keeping what you have.

- Corrie Ten Boom said, "I have learned to hold all things loosely, so God will not have to pry them out of my hands." It is less painful to hold loosely to the things of this world so that God does not have to pry from our grasp.