

The Advancing Disciple

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I. Introduction.

A. Text: John 12:23.

B. An hour comes when we must drive down a stake for the glory of Christ in our lives—a moment of surrender.

C. Commitment means death, hatred and service.

II. Commitment as death.

A. Believers are the fruit of Jesus' death.

B. When a seed is buried it disintegrates—it dies to itself.

1. People are seeds, the field is the world and the farmer is Jesus. (Matthew 13:37-38)

2. Fruitfulness is producing more from more.

C. We must “die” denying all inner reservations to do whatever it takes to reach others.

D. To deny the life is to gain it.

III. Commitment is hatred.

A. When we “hate” our lives, we deny our wills in favor of Jesus'.

B. Our life is the sum total of all our relationships and possessions. This means that our love for Christ is so singular and intense that by comparison everything else seems to be disliked. (Luke 14)

1. This is not advocating animosity in relationships. (Ephesians 5)

2. This can only be understood by way of comparison.

C. The one who seeks after possessions ends up being possessed by them.

IV. Commitment is service.

A. The Father honors the one who serves Jesus.

B. Elisha spent ten years as a servant to Elijah and God was willing to perform the same miracle for him that He did for millions. (I Kings 19-22)

Application questions:

1. What does it mean to “die” to oneself?

2. How would you distinguish hatred of one’s relationship in comparison to love for Jesus and animosity towards others?

3. How can you maximize your service to God? Explain.
