

Acts 4- Living Martyrs

they all rushed at him (Stephen), 58 dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. Meanwhile, the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. Acts 7:57-58

And Saul approved of their killing him. On that day a great persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. 2 Godly men buried Stephen and mourned deeply for him. 3 But Saul began to destroy the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off both men and women and put them in prison. Acts 8:1-3

New life in Jesus always begins with the death of self.

24 Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Galatians 5:24

Have you been crucified? Are you a living Martyr?

Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest 2 and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. 3 As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. 4 He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"

5 "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. Acts 9:1-5

Most of sins are well thought out and we make a conscious decision to disregard God.

Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. 1 Timothy 1:15

Challenge- Try living as if the Gospel message is completely true for just 6 months and see if your life is not fundamentally changed for the better.

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. Galatians 2:20

“let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us,” Hebrews 12:1

Identify all of the things in your life that hinder AND the sin and get rid of them.

7 But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ.

8 What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ. Philippians 3:6-8