

Romans 12:1 - The Secret To Living Is Dying To Self – 7 October 2012

In John, chapter 12 and verses 24 to 26, the Bible - Jesus gave us a very important secret to living. Jesus said, "Verily, verily or truly, truly I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone. But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be. If any man serves me, him will my Father honour." The secret is clear in a sense. But it's a secret because not many people really believe it nor live it. And the secret is this: the key to living is dying. This is a secret. This is a paradox. It's going to take us sometime to unpack what it means but this is it: the key to living is dying. The way to life is death. It is when we surrender and we give our lives over to Jesus that we will truly live.

It was some seventeen years ago that I gave my life to Jesus. I was saved a year earlier, I think. And a year later in this camp, in this revival conference, I heard the teaching of God's words and the Holy Spirit had a grip on my heart and I happily, willingly, joyfully died to self, as far as I know and wanted to live for Jesus. And I remembered those days as one of the happiest seasons of my life. I mean I have great joy.

0:02:00.5 Giving my life to Jesus, I was joyous, I was hungry for God's word. I believe I grew the most during that period of time. I have great fervour for the things of God. I really, really, enjoyed those times. And though my life since then has not always been on the same plane, this is what I learned: the degree of life I can have is very much dependent on the degree of dying I am willing to go through. Because the secret to living is dying. Death is the key to life. Maybe today you are someone who long for that life of joy, of abundance, of victory. You do not want to be defeated in a regular habit of sin. You do not want to be down and lifeless. You want joy to course through your vein. You want enthusiasm within your soul. You want to be able to wake up every morning and say: "God thank you for this life!" You don't want to drag yourself out of bed just to get to church. You want to live in victory. You want to experience God in a deeper way. You want your life to count. You want to do the greater things. You do not want to settle for mediocrity. You want to rise above the mundane. Maybe today you have already test... tasted that before but somehow it has ebbed away from you, you have lost it and you are longing to rediscover it. 0:03:25.3

Let me say this: there is no real living until there is first a dying. Because it is clear the secret to living is dying. Except the corn of wheat falls to the ground and die, it abides alone. It's useless, life is not released. This morning I want to give you all a gift

and the ushers are all prepared for it, whether in this room or in the overflow room. Can I ask the ushers to help me give out this gift to you? Now this is what I want to give to you. Er...it's very cheap... don't mention it. (Laughter from congregation) Ah...I think overall it cost me less... it's really cheap stuff but it did take a lot of time. Umm...please give it out right now. Please feel free... umm... my family was involved in this, including my son. He helped us with it. Umm...the better half team, the leaders helped me yesterday morning with it and so we did about 700 over. I hope it's enough for all of you for both first and second services. And it is a little illustration for you to take home with, to remember. I'm sure since young you've heard about how little children can grow bean sprouts out of green beans and so this is an exercise for you. I can't give you a corn of wheat, I don't think it'll work. But I'll give you a little green bean. Er... to be exact, five green beans in each cup, alright? Now what do you do with this? Well, go home... if you don't know Science, er... you just go home, moisture the cotton wool with some water. Make sure the green beans are on top of the cotton wool hor... (Laughter from congregation) Common sense alright? Green beans are on cotton wool, moisture it and within a day or two, you'll start to see what? Start to see what? Life! Yah... and this is an illustration that Jesus was trying to tell us. That corn of wheat needs to die, it needs to disappear. But when it disappears, life springs forth. So those in the overflow room, I hope you also have it. I'm sure you do. The ushers there will be helping you with it.

This morning my goal is this: my goal is to help you be able to see what it means to die. And I hope that at the end of the sermon today, you will say "Pastor, I want to die." 0:05:52.5 (Laughter from congregation) God I want to die! In fact you will say: "God, I need to die! I must die!" A church that wants to die, how about it? But this is my goal because I believe the secret to living is dying. In order to unpack what this dying means, I'd like us to look at Romans, chapter 12 and verse 1. As you know, in our church, we've been going through the series in the book of Romans and we come now to this wonderful verse. The last time I preached from this text, I preached from one word, the word: 'therefore'. Today we go on to a second phrase and it is the phrase 'living sacrifice'. And in this passage, I hope to unpack for you why we must die. And what it looks like when we truly die, on a daily basis. The Bible here says we are to present to God a living sacrifice. Our bodies are to be a living sacrifice. The idea, the concept of sacrifice is very familiar to the Jews. I'm sure you know that. In the Old Testament, every Jewish person offers sacrifice. But what do they bring to God as a sacrifice? They bring to God dead animals. It can be bulls, it can be goats, it can be doves. But they bring to God dead animals. You say why do they bring to God dead animals? Some people say, "Oh I know, because when you killed the animal,

that animal's death is to atone for the man's sin." The answer: wrong. An animal can never pay for man's sin. Common sense. So the idea of sacrifice in the Old Testament is not to pay for the man's sin. God's word tells us, the idea of the sacrifice is so that man is reminded of his sins. Everytime I go to church, in a sense, everytime I go to a temple to worship God. I present my sacrifice; I'm reminded of my sins. And at the very same time, I'm reminded that God will provide the sacrifice. I'm reminded that God one day will give us the true Lamb of God that will take away the sin of the world. 0:08:07.4 that's why John the Baptist when he saw Jesus, he said, "This is it! Behold the lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world!" Because the Jews understand. In the Old Testament when they worship God, they are looking to God to provide the sacrifice. Therefore, in the New Testament, we don't have to worship God with animals anymore. Anyone of you brought a goat today? I can do it right here. Except the blood will splatter all over. Anyone of you brought a cow and park it at the carpark downstairs waiting for me? None of us brought an animal. Why? Because in the New Testament, there is no need to sacrifice dead animals anymore because the ultimate sacrifice has already been given. Jesus, the lamb of God has already died on the cross and by His blood, atones for all the sins of those who believe in Him. It is finished! So today, there is none of us that will need to sacrifice something in order to earn salvation. It has already been done. You don't earn God's favour. You can't deserve forgiveness. It's already done! Yet, the Bible says you are to present a living sacrifice, your bodies a living sacrifice. Why? You see, the reason Paul says, I'm now to worship God with my body. I'm to worship God with my life. It's not so that I can be saved, but because I am already saved. Therefore he appeals to us through the mercies of God. Having tasted His grace, having known His love, having received that salvation, by the mercy of God, with a heart of gratitude, with a heart of love, with a heart that is absolutely willing, give now your life to God. You say why? Because Jesus first gave himself for you. That's why He says it is your reasonable service. 0:10:15.2 The word reasonable means logical, rational. It is not a mechanical thing I do but it is something I'm willing to do. It is a heartfelt worship from someone whose heart has been touched by grace, by mercy, by love and therefore now I freely gave my life. Why do you want to give your life? Why must you die? Huh... why is the secret to living, dying? Why must you do it? Because Jesus died for you. He gave himself freely for you and therefore according to that mercy, Paul urges us, now please by the mercy of God, present yourself a living sacrifice.

Religion tells you to do works but ultimately it is to serve yourself. Think about it. All religion teaches you really to serve yourself but it is only the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the message of the cross that truly frees us from serving

self to serving God. Because now, I don't have to serve myself anymore. Jesus has already given me all things. Every blessing, every acceptance, and now I don't have to serve myself; I can now present my entire life as a sacrifice to God. Seventeen years ago, that's what happened to me; I was saved a year before that. But at age that was just a year after I was saved, I gave my life to Jesus. Not because I want to be saved again. I was already saved, I was already forgiven. But I gave my life to Jesus because I realised just how much He loved me. And in the light of His mercy, I freely, willingly, lovingly gave. I love Him because He first loved me. So you say, "Pastor why do we need to die?" We need to die because of the grace of God, because of Jesus. He was given and therefore let us gave ourselves freely to Him. 0:12:23.2

But you know in our dying, not only is it because of the grace of God, it's also because of the glory of God. The dying life glorifies God. You see, the Bible says, this is your acceptable, this... this living sacrifice is acceptable unto God. What is the meaning of the word - acceptable? It means to be pleasing. What pleases God? When your life is a living sacrifice. The Bible uses another word – service. In the Greek, this is a word that can be translated as worship. So what is it that God desires? It is when you please Him in giving your life to Him and that is worship that glorifies God. I propose to you, nothing glorifies God like a consecrated life. Think about it. Nothing glorifies God like a consecrated life. Nothing says, God you are worthy, you are glorious, like a man who is willing to give his life to God. That makes Him glorious, you see. That makes Him looks glorious before the world that He is worthy of our worship. Worship, my friends is not just about giving a few dollars or coming to church or sharing the word to some people. Worship is more than this. Worship is about your life. And let me say this, worship cost us something. True worship costs us something. True worship is costly.

It was David, King David who said, "I will not worship God, I will not give to God anything that costs me nothing." It's good principle of life, by the way. We don't give God leftovers. True worship is costly. Remember that man, that old man who was tested for his love for God. God said to him, "Abraham, take now your son. Your only son, who you love. Take Isaac." You know those words spoken by God are exactly painful to a father's heart. Take your son. Not someone else's son, your son. And he adds: your only son. Of course, he has other children but Isaac was a child of promise. His only son that is born by Sarah. And God says take your son, your only son whom you love. Take him up and present him as a sacrifice. He's got to die. And Abraham said to his servant, "Come you stay here. My son and I, we will go up and..." What's the word he used? We will go up to... to what? To worship. By the way, that's the first time the word 'worship' occurs in the Bible. And it is tied in to this process of

sacrifice. Something that costs us a huge deal. Worship is costly. Abraham has to give his son. 0:15:57.0 Worship costs us something. In the book of Malachi, God rebukes the nation of Israel, why is it that you bring to me mangled and broken and bruised animal as sacrifice? Why you bring the “bai kar”, “bai chew” (Dialect words meaning broken legs and broken hands)? All the “or cheh” (Dialect word meaning blue-black bruise), the eyes hang out. Why are all the diseased ones brought to me? You know God is not angry with them because the animals are blemished. Not that God needed to eat them or what. But God was angry, displeased with their heart. They gave to God what is leftover. They gave to God what is rejected. And that was not at all worship. Worship is costly. It’s not giving to God our leftovers. Worship is precious. You know when Jesus was in the house. This lady, Mary came and everybody must be saying that she’s such a wasteful person. Breaking a marble box, alabaster box and spending all and using all the precious oilment on the feet of Jesus. We would have to work one year to pay for that oilment and you spent it all like that! But you see, she understood. It was worship. The aroma, the fragrant filled the house because worship when costly brings glory to God. My friends today, the Christian life of worship is not just coming to church, two hours a week, singing a few songs, and hearing a sermon, putting some money into the bag. Neither is it about us sharing the Gospel to one or two person and think that the rest of it is there. Worship is costly and what God is looking for is not just your acts but he’s looking for your life, your heart. See, nothing glorifies God like a consecrated life. God is glorious, when men and women are willing to give their lives over to Him.

Can I suggest to you a third reason why you need to give your life to Jesus? 0:18:00.1 Well, we gave our lives to Jesus because Jesus gave His life for me. We gave our lives to Jesus because when we do so, it greatly glorifies Him. And a third reason why you need to give your life to Jesus is because God’s goodness is found in this dying. You see, it’s when we present ourselves a living sacrifice, that in verse 2, 2nd half in particular, that we may now prove the good, acceptable and perfect will of God. What is God’s will? God’s will is always good, acceptable, and perfect! It means beneficial, pleasing and satisfying. Those are the words. To cut it short, it means the best way to have your life live out is when you live a life of sacrifice. And living sacrifice enters into the goodness and the blessedness of God. You say, this is weird you know, Pastor. The best way to live is to die? Yah, I say so. Yes, it’s true. But isn’t this a little bit paradoxical? Let me tell you, all or most of Christian teaching is very paradoxical. Think about it. Jesus Himself said, “Blessed are the poor in spirit.” Why? For theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Wow! I thought those who are rich will obtain. No! Those who are poor in spirit will have the Kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are they who

mourned. Happy are the sad. That's what it means. You said why? For they shall be comforted. Paradox! Blessed are the meek, non-assertive, gentle. Why? Because they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness. Why? Because they shall be filled. It's paradoxical. The first shall be last. The last shall be first. Humble yourself and God will exalt you. 0:19:56.7 God's strength is made perfect in your weakness. The poor are rich in faith. He that gains his life shall lose it and he that loses his life shall gain it. Paradoxical! You see the secret to living is in our dying. It's tied in our dying. And so if you want to enter into the blessed life God has for you, it's in dying. Now, I know all these are still on the theoretical level. I'm going to bring it down to help you apply this to your life. But this is my goal like I say, I hope at the end of the day, you'll be able to say, "Pastor I want to die. I need to die. I must die." But how can I die? How can I die? How can I be a living sacrifice? Let me point you to Jesus. Look at Jesus. Look at Him on the cross. When Jesus gave His life away on the cross, the power of sin is broken and the purpose of God is fulfilled. Think about it. When Jesus died on the cross, the power of sin is broken and the purpose of God is fulfilled. This is what He is saying about Himself, except the corn of wheat falls to the ground and die, it abides alone. But if it dies, it brings forth much fruit. So Jesus said, I need to die. The secret to the power and success of the ministry of Jesus is that He came to die. And when he died, the power of sin is broken and the purpose of God is fulfilled. So how can I die? What happens when I die? You see when you die to yourself and lived unto God, you will realise that the power of sin will be broken.

This is where I apply it on a personal level. Suppose today you are struggling with a sin of worry. How many of you are worry warts? Don't raise your hands! (Laughter from congregation) Because once you raise your hands you will worry even more people know. (Laughter from congregation) If you are a worry wart, this is it for you, alright? You are constantly in fear, in anxiety, in worry. By the way, I'm not talking about legitimate concerns. There is something that is right and in order in concern. But there is a line you cross that brings you into the realm of worry. And worrying is a sin. 0:22:20.4 The Bible say so. Worrying is a sin. Now if you are someone who's worrying, a worry wart, this is how it works for you. You always feel worried, about your kids, about your exam results, about your work, about your promotion, about finances, about your future, you're worrying about these things because you feel that you are not in control. That's why you worry. A worry wart, someone who is stricken with a sin of worry has a deep underlying root and the underlying root is this: I must be on top of things. And the root of worrying is self-reliance. And in the root of worry is idolatry. I just can't live without this. You take this away from me, I rather die. And

so he worries. Because he feels he's not in control and he feels like if this thing it's taken away from him, he will rather die. This is the ultimate thing he's living for. And so when you have a friend who is a worry wart, what do you say to him or her? Generally, what do people say to counsel people who are worry warts? Do not worry... aiyah, don't worry! Even kids can tell you, I tell you! Young ones can say do not worry don't worry you will be...ok. You are capable. You are intelligent. You're able to do it. You will get on top of things. You know what we're doing? We're just fuelling the self. To increase his self-reliant and it comes to a breaking point when he totally collapses. What we do about helping people with worry is that, unless we get to the root of the problem, it will not be solved. The only way you can be delivered from worrying is when you die. Let me say this, the only way (laughing) you can be delivered from worrying is when you die. When you die to your self-reliance. When you die to the idols of your life. When you say I am loved by Jesus. 0:24:36.1 The mercies of God. I'm richly blessed. I am totally forgiven. I will never be separated from the love of God. I am an heir and co-heir with Jesus. I am destined for glory. I am graced. I need not fret over these things. These are not the ultimate things I'm living for. I'm living today for the glory of God. It's only when you realised how richly you're loved that you can now die. And it's only when you die that you can be set free from worry.

What about purity? I'm talking about sexual purity. Singapore and world-wide today, everyday there's a sex scandal that is swirling around every time. I mean, I guarantee you, you go back to Straits Times, Sunday Times today, you open, there will be a sex scandal. There will be, must be, has to be, because this is a sex craze world. Not only are...are adults getting into such problems, young people are as well. If I were to believe the statistics, then in this room and in the overflow room, many young people today, you would have given yourself over sexually even before you are married. And this is the reasoning you'll have. What's wrong with it? What's wrong with it? There's nothing wrong. It's between two consenting persons. We hurt no one. We don't have to tell anyone. And what's best is everybody's doing it anyway. I heard my classmates do this. I heard my friend do that. And if I never had this experience, I'm out of the gang, I'm not cool. What's wrong with it? Ah, my friends, we can never really expect people to have that pure life until they are willing to die. The Bible says you are to present your bodies a living sacrifice, for this: Scriptures remind us that our bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost. We are living temples. Do you know that? OK, turn to yourself...nope...not turn to yourself...turn to your neighbour. Turn to your neighbour and say, "I am a temple." (Laughter from congregation) If you are a Christian you can say that. If you're not a Christian, you are not a child of God, don't

say that alright? But if you are a child of God, turn to your neighbour and say, “I am a temple.” 0:27:11.0 And the Holy Spirit lives in you. And God says present your body a living sacrifice. That means I am to hold or live and uphold this vessel as a vessel of honour. Why is it I can’t indulge in pre-marital sex? Because Jesus gave His life for you. You are not your own. So give yourself back to God. Now, it’s not that sex is wrong. There is marital bliss. It is a beautiful thing God has designed. But pre-marital sex defiles the will of God. So why is it I must maintain that chastity? Well, because Jesus gave His life for you. And because your body, your life now can be lived for the glory of God and not for the abuse or sex. Sex does not become your idol. Sex does not become the thing you live for. God is the person you live for. And you know, living the life of chastity is the best way to live your life. You ruin your life; you hurt yourself because you depart from the good, acceptable and perfect will of God when you do so.

It’s sad when people dress inappropriately. Maybe provocatively. Now, I’m not trying to be legalistic and I’m not saying these things so that in our church we have a rule where the, where the skirt must be a certain number of centimetres below the knees and that you must come in like a “bachang” (Dialect word meaning dumpling) all wrap up and umm... like a mummified.... No... no... no... no, that’s not my point. My point here is not about the external, it’s about the internal. There are people today who... who... who feels they need to dress sexily, provocatively because that’s how everybody dresses and that’s how they can be seen as cool. Madonna dress like that. So I also dress like that. I want to dress like a sex object because she’s a sex object and everybody adores her. My friends adore her, so I must be like her. Maybe Madonna is a bit passé lah. Lady Gaga... (Laughter from congregation) I must be a Gaga follower, so I go gaga with her. But my friends, you’re not called to be a Gaga follower, you’re called to be a Jesus follower. It doesn’t matter if your friends doesn’t... don’t think you are cool, you are cool... according to the most important person here on this earth – God! He thinks you are cool! He loves you in Jesus. You don’t have to find your identity in how your friends define you. You present yourself a living sacrifice. 0:29:55.9 Purity.

How about unforgiveness? Some of you today struggle with bitterness. Eee...wah... once I mention this word, a face comes up in your mind. This man... this woman who just did something unbelievable to you. She said something really mean to you and if you have a chance you want to squeeze her neck and kill her. Of course you wouldn’t do it physically, but you’re doing it mentally. I wish I could kill her! And this person is now in your brain, in your mind. And you felt... you thought you have deal with it in the past but it keeps coming up, it keeps coming up, it keeps coming up. You see...

I don't know... I thought I have deal her this but it keeps coming up. Why? Because you cannot deal with unforgiveness, bitterness, hatred until you are willing to die. That's right! If there's one word you remember out of this sermon – die. Alright? Die... Dying is the key to living. You've got to die. You say, how does it work? Well, let me give you an example. I say, in a place where there is an apartment we take lifts. I know this is really petty. Pardon me if you think I'm petty. But I was with my son; we got out of the car. We were going up... we were waiting to go up to our house. He was rushing, maybe he wanted to pee or what, I can't remember. But we were on... in a rush. And then there was another family that was ahead of us. He takes a long time to get out of his car. But a family was ahead of us. And they were going to the lift. By the way, there's a family that comes here to worship who are my neighbours, by the way, it's not you. So don't... don't be... don't be nervy... it's someone else alright? But they were in front of us, just a little bit and uh... I thought they would wait for us lah... But er... when I got... when I got near I realised they were already up there. And I thought to myself. Wah... this is really ungracious, this is... can't you just wait for a moment. I don't know. This is really petty, I know but it was something in my soul. Few days later, it's now my turn. (Laughter from congregation) I realise I'm ahead of them. Remember this family, remember this couple, you never wait for me har... now you are... you are...we're going to see what's going to happen. So what happens is, I got ahead... I think they were... they were parking their car. I got ahead, I was alone, and my son is not with me so I could be faster. And a titanic struggle happens within my soul. I tell you, it's really a small thing but a big struggle. You know, spiritual things are like that. It can be really, really small but it's a titanic struggle leh. Because part of me says, now I can show you how it feels like... but on the other hand, I say, I... I... cannot leh...Christian leh... some more pastor. (Laughter from congregation) But it was really a struggle. Should I do this... should I not do this... should I do this... but wah... they were really... maybe this will teach them a... and so it went on and on and... I decided... Jason you just got to die. You got to die. And so I decided to die. I decided to die to getting even. I decided to die to self, wanting them to pay the emotional debt. I decided to die and so I decided to press on the lift - the door open button to wait for them. And I waited, and I waited and I waited, they never came. (Laughter from congregation) I pop out and they were still in the car and... and so I say, since I've already waited, keep waiting. And I waited and waited.... And finally they came and when they saw me, their eyes were opened; they were amazed that I was waiting for them. They have a kind of coy smile and something happen... beautiful happen within my soul. I realised, I realised that in that process of dying, I was experiencing something. I was experiencing the reality that the living sacrifice brings forth an aroma. There's a smell. There's a fragrance. I realised that they... it

was a fragrance to this party, to this family. 0:34:17.9 I realised that day it was something that was pleasing to God. And I realised there was a joy that filled my heart. It was a truly blessed way to live when you die to yourself. You see, you can't have victory over sin until you are willing to die. Jesus has victory over sin when He died on the cross and gave His life away. And the power of sin today is broken in your life if you die to yourself and gave your life away.

Got to die. Got to... that's the only way to have victory. And you know when you live such a life. Not only is the power of God seen in breaking the power of sin. You start to live out the purposes of God in your life. You start to. So many of us, our mindset of worship is to get to church on Sunday morning for that one and a half, two hours and say, God, this is my worship to you. I sing with all my heart. I gave whatever's in my pocket and say God; this is my worship to you. But do you know you are robbing yourself of a lifestyle of worship. 0:35:30.1 Worship is a lifestyle. Worship is everyday, everywhere, everytime. You say how is it possible? It is possible when you live a life of living sacrifice. Then worship is everywhere. It happens whenever you die. You know you can worship God whenever you die. You can worship God in the office when you die in the office. Now I know many of you feel like dying in the office anyway. (Laughter from congregation) But if you intentionally die in the office, you are worshipping. You say, Hah? How does it work? Some of you are dying in school but let me tell you if you intentionally die in school, you are living a life of worship. You say how does it work? Let me say this, it means that when you get to work, you die to your self-ambitions. It means when you go to your school, you die to your self-ambitions. And now in school and now in work, instead of working for the dollars and cents for the bottom line and for recognition and promotion, you die to these things and say I... I live for Jesus. Do you realise that when you die to those things in your work place and you present yourself as a living sacrifice, you are worshipping God. So many of God's people today believe, erroneously that only full time staff can live for God. Har... you guys are the blessed ones. You can serve in church full-time, you live for God... and... and... poor us, we have to live in the world and we have to live for these sinful things of the world and we come to church every two hours just to recharge a little bit. Ah... friends you missed out. Everytime you die in the office, you are worshipping. Die to dollars and cents. I'm not saying work for free. God does ordain work as a means of provisions but that is not the ultimate thing you live for. That is not the ultimate thing you work for. You don't work for rank, you don't work for promotions, you don't work for recognition, you don't work for the money, and you work for Jesus Christ. That's what it means to die to self. And now the way you work changes. You work with integrity. You work with honesty. You work diligently.

You treat the people around you kindly. You don't step on people in order to get better profits. You submit to your bosses even if they are unreasonable. Why? Because we are all doing it for Jesus. You have died. You have die to self and now you are living for Jesus. In the armies, it's the same. In the sports arena, it's the same. In schools, it's the same. Recently, PSLE has ended right? I'm sure there're plenty of stressed out parents. Stress why? Because grades. Grades. I want them. I want my children to get all As. PSLE must be 290. (Laughter from congregation) That is what they study for. That is what Singaporean study for. Our prime minister say, let the children play more. Basically he's saying, ok lah, ok... better don't say. (Laughter from congregation) But the Christian theology is, you study hard not because you want the good grades but because God has called you to it. Whatever you do, do it with all your heart. So, in other words, when you study, the motivation should not be just grades and better schools and better career but it's because of Jesus. So now when you do your homework, you study, you listen to trigonometry, calculus, quantum, physics, economics, wah liao... how to make the ox, don't know what... the geography stuff I can't remember, I threw it back to my teacher. But if you're studying all these things - Romeo and Juliet. It's boring. It's not interesting to you but God has called you to it. Does it well? Do it with all your heart. And if God blesses you with good grades, praise Him. Otherwise you have your reward from God anyway. I'm... in a sense, er... glad that I was saved after I have um... completed most of my secondary school, J.C. school days, because in those days I will photocopy, I will copy. I would... I would never do homework. In the morning 6:30am arrive early in school, get my friend... he's a... he's a model student... get my friend's notes and I will start to copy and when I got to J.C., I upgraded my services, instead of copying with hands, I went to photocopy. (Laughter from congregation) I say this because students you are not supposed to do it. I have done it, I can do it already, I have done it. But for you, you don't do it. Because you now no more working for the teacher, you're no more studying for your parents, you're doing it for the glory of God. So your ethos, your ethics change. Because you have died to self and you live unto Jesus Christ. Can you imagine what it will be like, when we live such a life? There will be an aroma from you, you know? Your colleagues will look at you and say, wow, how come when boss is not working or boss is not here, you're still working so hard? Hey, how come this question is so unreasonable, you're still attempting to solve it har? I can't understand why you do this? A sacrifice is something weird to the world. They can't understand why you would give yourself. And that is where you would proclaim to them the worth of Jesus in your life. That's what I think it means when we say we must live the Gospel. Let our lives reflect Romans chapter 12. Let our lives reflect the grace of God that now calls out for the love to God. That will allow us to have a

radically different life in society, in workplace, at home today. It changes the way you fried your eggs if you're a housewife. You may have quarrelled with your husband but you still fry your eggs well. Changes the way we live, totally. So my dear friends, I've given you a little tool, I've given you a little gift. Go back, add some water. Add some water when you say I'm willing to die, I'm willing to lose that green bean. That in the place of it, there will be life. There will be fruitfulness. And then take this little cup; place it where you need to be reminded most. Maybe it's in your car when you drive. Urrhhh (angry sounds)... put the green bean there. I need to die! (Laughter from congregation) If you don't die to... to yourself and live for Jesus, you may really die on the road. (Laughter from congregation) So put that in your car and let it remind yourself how Jesus died and how you can die so that the power of sin can be broken. Maybe some of us need a reminder in our office, where everytime you go for meeting, you want to kill people. Bring it; put it on your desk. People ask you why? Because I want to die. (Laughter from congregation) Bring it everywhere you go. Put it on your Facebook; take a photo, whatever it is. But let this be a remembrance, that the secret to living is in dying and let me say this, if we as a church live that, we will be a sweet smelling savour to God and to the people around. Can you imagine what this church will be like when we really die? When we die to self, the possession, the wealth, the riches that are in our hands today given by God, we will not use it for ourselves, we will use it for Jesus. Can you imagine the number of poor people that can be sss... helped and blessed? Can you imagine the saints that will be supported, the ministries that will go on. You see that can only take place when people die. It's not about just giving a few spare cash. We, we really give only after we've given our lives to Jesus. Can you imagine what it will be like if we use our power today not to abuse people but to serve people? What will it be like if we don't insist on our own preferences but we die to self and seek the welfare and benefits of others? You know, we will have a church that is deeply united. There will no scepticism; there will be no divisions, because we are all dead to ourselves and living for the glory of God. Jesus will be the most popular person here. Not some guy, not some preacher, not some pastor, but Jesus alone. Can you imagine what it will be like? If we have a people surrender to God, there will be a deep passion in our ministry. We don't have to say umm... serve God in this area, it's easy, it's convenient. No, we don't have to say such things anymore. Serving God is sacrificial and I'm willing because I've first given myself to Him. We don't have to squeeze blood in ministry. And you will be a beautiful witness. My friends, I'm deeply burden that the church today must live a life of worship. And the church today must live a life of witness right where God has planted you. So every day in your work place, you will be OCBC, IBM, wherever you are called to work, whichever building you are in. God has placed you there, to be a living sacrifice. Die

there. Burn there. Let the aroma arise there. Please God and let it draw others to Jesus through your life. You don't always have to bring people to church. You can be the witness right there. If we live a life of dying.

So may the good Lord today help us, help us all, to be that living sacrifice, dying to self. Look to Jesus, He first gave His life and may we now gave our lives for His glory. Let's bow for a word of prayer. It's a simple message this morning; I seek to make it applicable. I seek to help you understand the reasons why. But at the end of the day, my friends, the secret is always in Jesus, isn't it? Look to the cross, where the dearest and best left it all. He died to self to live for us. He became that corn of wheat that fell to the ground and die, that it may bring forth life. In the light of Jesus giving himself to you, would you give yourself to him? Would you be able to say, Lord, not because I am forced to, but because I want to. Would you today, believe that as you give your life away, the power of sin is broken and the purpose of God will be fulfilled? That you can live a life of worship everywhere, everytime in everyway. In your office, in your school, in your homes, with your friends, you are that sweet smelling sacrifice. Pray to the Lord, God help me to learn the secret to living is in dying. And so Father, this morning we are grateful for Jesus, your son. He did not just come to give us a code of conduct, He himself gave His life that we today may through Him have life. May we today deeply embraced and internalised the secret to living in dying. Help us, dear God to die with Jesus and to rise with Jesus. Bless your people, as we live the Gospel every day. We thank you, we pray all these now in Jesus's name, Amen.