



The Scalpel

*“If I had the gift of prophecy, and if I understood all of God’s secret plans and possessed all knowledge, and if I had such faith that I could move mountains, but didn’t love others, I would be nothing.”
The Apostle Paul | 1 Corinthians 13:2 (NLT)*

A friend said that nothing would change my life more than having kids. In a battle of wills, yours vs. the child’s, whose wins? Piece by piece, the self-love of a good parent is removed. Resistant, self-love manipulates, giving up only at the hand of a deeper, more powerful love – The Scalpel.

The cutting edge that forms when higher love intervenes painfully divests the living from the dead. Does something already dead feel pain? Does it cost you anything to give up?

A young mother, desperate for rest, wakes at night hearing her baby’s cry. Her body rightly screams “no!” but who else could fill her role? The love of a mom overrules and a slice of her self-love falls away ...at great cost!

Reflect: **Where is your self-love being tested by The Scalpel?**

Advancing your Mission brings forth The Scalpel. Isn't life hard enough as it is? It'd be a lot easier to ditch your Mission. Only a masochist chooses such a path, right?

"This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you. There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command." Jesus Christ (John 15:12-14)

If only Jesus hadn't said this!

Consider: **Jesus says "Do as I have done."**

Loving others as Jesus did requires action. Will you contest the one who saved your life? How quickly we forget the trajectory we chased before knowing Christ and the significance of his sacrifice... the ultimate demonstration of self-love succumbing to higher love.

"My Father! If it is possible, let this cup of suffering be taken away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine." Jesus Christ (Matthew 26:39)

Jesus faced the pain of The Scalpel. The higher love he understood so well overruled, evidenced by his sacrifice. Self-love's destruction always comes with a price.

The central theme of your Mission must be loving others. Yet such love cannot be mustered by willing it. Your self-love is too strong, too crafty, too alive. Can you will yourself to endure the death of your will

itself? At best you can placate it by pursuing what costs you little. Is this the love that Jesus commanded? Self-love protects what it considers most sacred. "Don't go there!" our subconscious directs... it's self-preserving.

Imagine: Courageously loving others at the cost of my self-love, and being filled by it!

Instead, Jesus said, commit yourself fully to loving the Lord... first! Only then will you begin to grasp his power, glory and love for you and your neighbor.

"Jesus replied, 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" Jesus Christ (Matthew 22:37-38)

Humbled, your passion now tied to the Lord's, you'll have the courage needed to love others at the cost of your self-love... especially those you are particularly suited to serve.

"When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us. The Apostle Paul (2 Corinthians 1:4)

Your Mission often comes from your pain, the one you think of most when you thank Jesus for saving you. The world is full of others experiencing this same pain... your "friends" ... love them! Embrace..

The Scalpel

Go off the grid and ask these questions:

Coach's Questions

- What step will I take to more deeply grasp the full extent of what Jesus did for me?
- Who are my friends, those kindred spirits I am particularly suited to serve?
- What courageous step will I take this week to love them?

Spirit Talk

Post this where you will see it regularly.

I love my friends at the cost of my self-love.

"We love each other because he loved us first."

The Apostle John | 1 John 4:19 (NLT)



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