

A Life that is Worth Living

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To begin a life which is worth living one must have spiritual life – a new life altogether.

It was this which Nicodemus could not understand. Our Lord had said, “Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Nicodemus answered, “How can a man be born when he is old?” As a religious leader of the Jews he could understand ordinances and observances, but to be “born again” – to have a new beginning of life altogether – puzzled him completely.

But nothing less will do – what we are by nature is unfit for God – “That which is born of the flesh is flesh” – and “the flesh profiteth *nothing*.” “The mind of the flesh is enmity against God – it is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be.”

The one who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God – this new nature is his – he has begun to live and the Holy Spirit is given to him that he may live a life which is really worth while. This life is.

A SPIRITUAL LIFE

It is on another plane altogether from that which is natural. The Christian lives “in the Spirit” and consequently is exhorted to “walk in the Spirit.” So doing he will exhibit “the fruit of the Spirit.” “Love, joy peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control” will mark him in greater or less degree, according to his spiritual growth.

Our Lord Jesus Himself has “left us an example that we should follow His steps.” He has shown us what our lives should be in a life worth living. In John 12 we read His words concerning Himself and concerning us, “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 but 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 serve Me him shall My Father honour.”

Our Lord has died that we might live. He, the Corn of Wheat, was here incarnate in order that He might suffer for us and so save us. He must be lifted up upon the cross if life – eternal life – were to be ours. His death is our life. His suffering is our salvation. We are some of the many grains of wheat, the result of His falling into the ground and dying. He abides not alone – we live of Him – we live in Him. He has become our life. Thus He can call us to follow Him in His pathway. And following Him we shall live a life worth living. That life is. . .

A SAVED LIFE

Have you ever thought that even a true believer may live a lost life? It is true. You may live a life that will not count at the judgment seat of Christ. You may live a life which will not count in eternity, whatever it may appear to be worth now. One may be forgiven and blessed of God, justified from every charge and assured as to a heavenly home and yet, as to the present, live a lost life. This has been expressed in the words of Bonar, the Scottish preacher,

“One little life, ‘twill soon be past,

Only what’s done for Christ will last.”

All that man builds of fame and fortune; all the “castles” erected by him at such cost of thought and toil, all will fail and pass.

“And like the baseless fabric of a vision

Leave not a wrack behind.”

One man lives for science, another for music, another for business, another for money, but when it comes to the last analysis of any of these, “self” is found. As some one has put it,

“I lived for myself,

I thought for myself,

And for none else beside

Just as if Jesus had never lived,

As if He had never died.”

For the believer such a life is a lost life. But the one who hates his life in this world, who refuses the self-life, keeps his life to an eternal day. Such an one seeks not self-exaltation, self-gratification, selfaggrandisement here; he is set for that which is for the glory of Christ, his Saviour, and of God, his Father, and for the good of others on all sides. Honour shall be his in another world.

So it was with the apostle Paul, He could say, “I through the law am dead to the law *that I might live unto God.*” His old life had been brought to a close in the death of Christ who died for him at Calvary. The law had done its work and had slain the sinner in the person of his sinless Substitute. Now a new life was his – that he might “live unto God.” He adds, “I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” Brought to an end in judgment as to his old existence – he now still lived. Yet it was not old Saul the persecutor, the blasphemer, the foremost of sinners, it was Christ living in him – the Christ-life being continued on earth in Paul, he drawing all his strength for this life worth living, from Christ Himself. Thus he adds, “And the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

Oftentimes that sentence “the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me” is quoted as though our salvation from judgment was in view exclusively. It was in view, surely, when our Lord in His deep love gave Himself for us. But is not the setting of the verse this, that He gave Himself in love for us that He might have us for Himself, and live His life through us in the world out of which He was cast? Faith in Him – present, continuous faith – draws down power for this.

The trolley-pole of the street car draws down the power for progress and light and usefulness, and does this moment by moment. Apart from this power the car would be valueless for service and only a block to the traffic. But through this it is enabled to assist many on their way. So the believer living by "faith of the Son of God," faith which has Him as its object, will have force to succour others as the Christlife is expressed. His life will be. . .

A SERVICEABLE LIFE

A simple incident may illustrate this. A child was asked the question, "Where does the Lord Jesus live?" The answer looked for was, "In heaven." The questioner wished to turn the thoughts of the child to the Saviour seated now in the glory of God because the work of redemption had been perfected at Calvary.

But the child gave a new turn to the teacher's thoughts, as she replied, "He lives down our court." What did the child mean?

A girl named Bessie had been converted. As a sinner she had come to the Saviour. He had received her and she knew that her sins which were many were all forgiven. Now she drew her strength from her Saviour and in that dingy slum-alley her life shone as a bright light for Christ.

If a neighbour were sick Bessie would be found caring for her, sweeping her room and ministering in other manners. If an errand were to be run Bessie was willing to be the messenger. In any way in her power Bessie was at the service of those around her. It was Christ living in her. Hers was a life worth living.

Someone may be saying, "I have tried to live such a life and have failed again and again. For me it is impossible; I admire it in others, but cannot produce it in myself." Stay friend! You have not to produce this life. It is Christ living in you. Only maintain communion with Him – abide in Him – and that life will be expressed. As He Himself said, "Abide in Me and I in you."

Put your life into His hands. Keep in contact with Him and all unconsciously to yourself His life will be seen shining out of you, as light shines from the electric lamp.

What can a coil of electric wire do to give light? In itself it is dark and dead. But link that dead wire with the electric main and the power from the power house will flow through it and light will be available for house or street. It is this contact with Christ which is necessary for a life worth living.

"Abide in Me and I in you." Mark well the order of His words. We abide in Him. We commune with Him. We maintain our link of fellowship with Himself, then He abides in us for life and power and victory. The virtue of healing went out from Him of old when He was touched in faith. The virtue of spiritual force flows from Him when He is touched by faith today.

If the enemy cannot rob us of salvation, he will seek to rob us of power for witness. If he cannot pluck us out of the hand of Christ, he will endeavour with all his wiles to hinder our being for the honour of Christ. He minds not what it is, however "harmless" it may appear to be, if only our living by faith of the Son of God is checked.

A mountain between us and the sun will hinder our seeing it. The leaves of a book may shut out our view of it as fully.

So *anything* which checks the flow of our communion with Christ will suit the enemy's purpose. He knows that apart from this abiding communion with Christ we are powerless and valueless in service and testimony. The more innocent the thing which comes between our hearts and Christ the better it will suit the devil's purpose.

“He that abideth in Me, and I in Him, the same bringeth forth much fruit” (John 15:5). May it be ours thus to abide and so to live a life worth living.

Scripture Truth, 1933, p. 105