

The Christian Life and How It Is To Be Lived

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; **yet not I, but Christ liveth in me**: 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.” (Galatians 2:20)

“But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: **yet not I, but the grace of God** which was with me.” (1 Corinthians 15:10)

Oh to grace how great a debtor daily I'm constrained to be!
Praise the Saviour ye who know Him! Who can tell how much
we owe Him! Gladly let us render to Him all we are and have!

It is essential that every believer examine the Scriptures diligently to see what God teaches concerning the Christian life and how it is to be lived. Many false views are being held today, such as the view which says that the believer is under the law as a rule of life and as a means of sanctification. But the key to the Christian life is not found at Mount Sinai, it is found at Mount Calvary. The Christian life is based, not on a work which we must do, but on a work that has already been accomplished by Christ. May God open the eyes of our understanding to see how Christ's finished work on the cross relates to our daily walk with Christ.

The Lord Jesus Christ is our LIFE. “Wherefore, my brethren, **ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another**, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God” (Romans 7:4). By God's grace we have been united to Christ in a wonderful union. May the Lord open our eyes to see these things.

The following passages, arranged in various categories, might be of help to you in understanding the Christian life, what it is all about and how it is to be lived. The teaching of the New Testament epistles is very clear. May God help us to understand these things.

1) THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IS NOTHING LESS THAN THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

“I am **the Vine**, ye are the branches” (John 15:5)

“...that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should **walk in newness of life**” (Romans 6:4)

“**Christ liveth** in me” (Gal. 2:20)

“For to me to live is **Christ**” (Phil. 1:21)

“Christ in you, the hope of glory...when Christ **who is our life**, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory” (Col. 1:27; 3:3-4).

“That **the life also of Jesus** might be made manifest in our body...**that the life also of Jesus** might be made manifest in our mortal flesh” (2 Cor. 4:10-11)

“My little children, of whom I travail in birth again **until Christ be formed in you**” (Gal. 4:19)

The Christian life is Christ manifesting and outworking **His life** in the believer!

2) THE OUTWORKING OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST IS ACCOMPLISHED BY THE POWER OF THE INDWELLING HOLY SPIRIT.

“For He dwelleth with you and shall be **in you**” (John 14:17)

“He shall testify of Me...He shall glorify Me” (John 15:26; 16:14)

“But ye shall receive **power** after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you” (Acts 1:8)

“And **with great power** gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all” (Acts 4:33)

“For **the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus** hath made me free from the law of sin and death” (Romans 8:2)

“That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, **but after the Spirit**” (Romans 8:4)

“This I say then, **Walk in the Spirit**, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh” (Galatians 5:16)

“That ye might know...what is **the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe**, according to the working of his mighty power” (Eph. 1:18-19)

“Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to **the power that worketh in us**” (Eph. 3:20)

3) THE DYNAMIC OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IS GOD’S GREAT WORKING IN ME.

“That no flesh should glory in His presence” (1 Cor. 1:29; see also verse 30 where I learn that Jesus Christ is my sanctification or my holiness)

“For we are **his workmanship**, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Eph. 2:10)

“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, **but a new creature**” (Gal. 6:15).

“**For it is God which worketh in you** both to will and to do of his good pleasure” (Philippians 2:13).

“Without Me ye can do nothing” (John 15:5)

“Whereunto I also labor, striving according to **His working, which worketh in me mightily**” (Col. 1:29)

“Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, **working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight**, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen” (Heb. 13:21)

4) THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IS BASED UPON THE FINISHED WORK OF JESUS CHRIST.

The key is not what I do but what Jesus Christ has already done.

We all know that this is true when it comes to our salvation. We rest upon the finished work of Christ. When it comes to Christian living many believers stop doing this. Jesus Christ has done the work. We simply need to believe it and claim it.

“Knowing this, that **our old man was crucified with him**, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin” (Rom. 6:6). The crucifixion of the old man is not something that we need to do. This was something already done approximately 2000 years ago.

“I have been crucified with Christ” (Gal. 2:20--it’s an accomplished fact!)

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Cor. 5:17). We are not told to be a new creature. This is not a command to obey but a fact to believe!

“Lie not one to another, seeing **that ye have put off the old man** with his deeds; And **have put on the new man**, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him” (Col. 3:9-10). Notice that Paul does not tell us to put off the old man and put on the new man [although he does tell us this in Ephesians chapter 4]. In Colossians chapter 3 the emphasis is upon positional truth

and Paul says that putting off the old man is not something that the believer needs to do, because it has already been done. **YE HAVE PUT OFF THE OLD MAN**, and that’s a fact! We must claim God’s fact by faith.

5) THE GREAT TRUTHS OF IDENTIFICATION

To be saved I believed the glorious fact that Jesus Christ died and rose again for me. To live the Christian life I must believe the glorious fact that I died with Christ and rose again with Christ. Both of these facts have been accomplished. The truth that relates to my salvation (justification) involves **SUBSTITUTION** (Christ died for my sins!). The truth that relates to my Christian life (sanctification) involves **IDENTIFICATION** (I died with Christ!). Notice the following verses which involve **IDENTIFICATION**:

“How shall we that **have died to sin** live any longer therein?” (Romans 6:2)

“Knowing this that **our old man was crucified with Him**” (Romans 6:6)

“I have been **crucified with Christ**, nevertheless I live” (Gal. 2:20)

“**Ye died with Christ**” (Col. 2:20)

“For **ye died and your life is hidden** with Christ in God” (Col. 3:3)

“Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, **being dead to sins**, should live unto righteousness” (1 Pet. 2:24)

6) CLAIMING THE FACTS OF GOD'S WORD BY FAITH

These facts are true of every believer. The key to having these facts become true in our actual experience is FAITH. The more we believe the facts the more those facts will become true in our actual experience. Too often we turn away from the facts of our perfect position in Jesus Christ and we get our eyes wrongly focused upon our failing and struggling condition. One believer gave this helpful illustration: "Fact, Faith and Experience were walking along the top of a wall. Fact walked steadily on, turning neither to the right nor left and never looking behind. Faith followed on, and all went well so long as he kept his eyes focused upon Fact; but as soon as he became concerned about Experience and turned to see how he was getting on, he lost his balance and tumbled off the wall, and poor old Experience fell down after him." Faith is the key!

"Likewise **reckon** [count on the facts!] ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:11)

"Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him **through the faith of the operation of God**, who hath raised him from the dead" (Col. 2:12)

"**I live by the faith of the Son of God** who loved me and gave Himself for me" (Gal. 2:20)

"For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; **but faith** which worketh by love" (Gal. 5:6)

"So we see that they could not enter in **because of unbelief**....Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief" (Heb. 3:19; 4:11)

"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, **even our faith**" (1 John 5:4)

"That Christ may dwell in your hearts **by faith**" (Eph. 3:17)

"**The just shall live by faith**" (Heb. 10:38)

7) THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IS TO CONTINUE JUST AS IT COMMENCED.

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, **so walk ye in him**" (Col. 2:6)

"For **we walk by faith**, not by sight" (2 Cor. 5:7)

"Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? **having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?**" (Gal. 3:2-3)

"For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith...Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?" (Gal. 5:5-7)

"Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith" (Heb. 12:1-2)

8) AS IT IS WITH THE GOSPEL, SO IT IS WITH THE CHRISTIAN LIFE: THE CROSS MUST BE CENTRAL!

“But God forbid that I should glory, **save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ**, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world” (Gal. 6:14)

“I have been **crucified with Christ**” (Gal. 2:20)

“Knowing this, that **our old man was crucified with Him**” (Rom. 6:6)

“For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, **and him crucified**” (1 Cor. 2:2)

“That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, **being made conformable unto his death**” (Phil. 3:10)

“Always bearing about in the body **the dying of the Lord Jesus**, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live **are always delivered unto death** for Jesus’ sake” (2 Cor. 4:10-11).

“For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then all died: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but **unto him which died for them**, and rose again” (2 Cor. 5:14-15)

“Verily, verily, 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” (John 12:24-25)

“For **ye died** and your life is hidden with Christ in God” (Col. 3:3)

“Forasmuch then as **Christ hath suffered for us** in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind” (1 Pet. 4:1)

9) THE CHRISTIAN IS NOT UNDER THE LAW AS A RULE OF LIFE AND THE CHRISTIAN IS NOT UNDER THE LAW AS A MEANS OF SANCTIFICATION.

“For sin shall not have dominion over you: **for ye are not under the law, but under grace**” (Rom. 6:14 and see verse 15)

“This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit **by the works of the law**, or by the hearing of faith? **Are ye so foolish?** having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?” (Gal. 3:2-3)

“But if ye be led of the Spirit, **ye are not under the law**” (Gal. 5:18)

“The just shall live by faith and **the law is not of faith:** but the man that doeth them shall live in them” (Gal. 3:11-12)

The law cannot give life. The law cannot make a person holy. It cannot sanctify. There is no problem with the law (Rom. 7:12) except that sinful, depraved people cannot keep it (Rom. 7:14). Those who put themselves under law will certainly

experience bondage because sin will have dominion over them (compare Rom. 6:14). Jesus Christ is our rule of life: “For to me to live is Christ” (Phil. 1:21). Our fleshly struggles and striving to keep God’s holy law can only end in failure. “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death” (Rom. 8:2). The law can never be fulfilled by us, but it can be fulfilled IN US by the power and working of God appropriated by faith: “That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (Rom. 8:4). Salvation is “by grace through faith” and so is sanctification.

10) THE CHRISTIAN OWES EVERYTHING TO THE GRACE OF GOD!

“That no flesh should glory in His presence” (1 Cor. 1:29)

“But **by the grace of God I am what I am**: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me” (1 Cor. 15:10)

“For **by grace** are ye saved through faith...For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them...For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God” (Eph. 2:8-10; Gal. 6:15-16).

“What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but **under grace**? God forbid” (Rom. 6:15 and see verse 14)

“For **the grace of God** that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, **Teaching us** that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world” (Tit. 2:11-12)

“And **God is able to make all grace abound toward you**; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work” (2 Cor. 9:8)

“**His grace is sufficient** for thee” (2 Cor. 12:9)

“Thou therefore, my son, **be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus**” (2 Tim. 2:1)

“Paul and Barnabas...persuaded them to **continue in the grace of God**” (Acts 13:43--we are not just saved by grace but we must continue in grace. The Christian life must continue as it commenced)

“That as sin hath reigned unto death, **even so might grace reign** through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 5:21)

“We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also **that ye receive not the grace of God in vain**” (2 Cor. 6:1)

“I do not frustrate the grace of God” (Gal. 2:21; and see Gal. 5:4 and Heb. 12:15)

“But grow **in grace**” (2 Pet. 3:18)

Grace means that God gets all the credit! It is His salvation! It is His LIFE! It is His working! It is His power! To God be the glory! Worthy is the Lamb! May Christ be magnified in our bodies (Phil. 1:20)! May the beauty of the Lord God rest upon us! May Christ be formed in us (Gal. 4:19)! May His fruit be to His glory (Phil. 1:11)! May we be trophies of His grace (Eph. 2:7)! OH TO GRACE HOW GREAT A DEBTOR DAILY I’M CONSTRAINED TO BE! “By the grace of God I am what I am!” (1 Cor. 15:10). “That, according as it is written, He that glorieth (boasteth), let him glory (boast) in the Lord!” (1 Cor. 1:31)