

Life in the Spirit

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The gift of God is the gift of life. The life He gives is eternal life, and it is in His Son. The Spirit of God is the Lord and Giver of life, and He gives eternal life through the Son of God. Therefore, He that hath the Son hath the life of God, and he that hath not the Son hath not life. The life is given in the Son, and it is realized through the Spirit who takes of the things of Christ and reveals them to us. The Indwelling Presence is interchangeably spoken of as the Spirit and the Christ. The unity of the Godhead cannot be divided, and it is of the Trinity we are a habitation of God by the Spirit. The One cannot be present without the Other and it is by the Holy Spirit the Presence is revealed.

When the Christian is challenged to state what Christ has to give to cultured, healthy, happy, and well circumstanced people, the answer is LIFE. Eternal life is not an everlasting duration of existence. It is a Divine quality of life. On this basis the New Testament concludes to be dead all who have not the life of Christ, and divides all men into the living and the dead. There is no third classification, neither is there any middle class. The division is sharp, vital, and decisive: and the responsibility for the division is with God.

The Spirit of Life

Our Lord came that we might have this quality of life, and that we might have it in abounding fullness. That fullness came at Pentecost when Christ had ascended to His Coronation glory. It still comes with the Spirit, wherever the Son is glorified. The Nicene Creed confesses the Christian faith in the Spirit, as the Lord and giver of life and the Spirit of Truth.

Pentecost brings fullness of the life of God in the soul, and gives an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in Christ. The Spirit of God dwells in the believer and the believer lives in the Spirit. He endues the believer with the power of God, and clothes Himself with the believer's personality, through whose sanctified powers He works the good pleasure of the Divine will. This is all unintelligible to the mind unrenowned of the Spirit, but it is revealed to the understanding in the experience of those who have received the gift of the Holy Ghost.

The charter of the Spirit-controlled life is set forth in the eighth chapter of Romans, and the most vital point in it is that "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." (Romans 8:2). The life of the unsaved is regulated according to the flesh: that is, it is dominated by considerations of time and sense, the appetites of the body, and the ambitions of the mind. Whereas those who have received the gift of the Spirit walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Seven Spirits of God

The Book of Revelation speaks of the seven Spirits of God, and identifies them with the seven horns and the seven eyes of the Lamb in the midst of the throne. They represent the seven-fold qualities of the Spirit, and the Charter of Life in the Spirit has seven corresponding qualities in experience, as they also correspond to the seven stars. He is the Spirit of Life, the Spirit of Truth, the Spirit

of Adoption, the Spirit of Sanctification, the Spirit of Wisdom, the Spirit of Power, and the Spirit of Prayer. The Charter follows the line of experience, and it sets forth the life that is our inheritance in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1. No Condemnation

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." The latter part of the verse is omitted by the Revised Version, but if it is left out of the first, it is supplied in the fourth. "No condemnation" implies more than forgiveness or justification. It has to do with conditions rather than with transgressions, and it does not imply a righteousness imputed, but an expression realized. The things God condemns have been taken away. He condemns sin, and sin has been cleansed out of the heart by the blood of His Son. The carnal mind is enmity against God, but the body of sin "has been done away," and we have been set free from the law of sin and death. Doubtful things bring us into condemnation, but all doubtful things have been settled in the light of God's will, as revealed in His Word and by His Spirit. The heart is cleansed, the nature sanctified, and life adjusted to God. There is no condemnation, and to those who walk in the light, no condemnation comes, but walking in the Spirit we have the witness that we are well pleasing to God. Life is not faultless, but it is without blame in His sight. There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. The light of the glory of God shines in the soul and upon the face.

2. Vitality

The fullness of the Spirit brings the Resurrection life in all its quickening, vitalizing power. The Spirit that raised up Jesus from the dead dwells in our mortal bodies. Vitality is a question of spirit. When the spirit droops, energy wanes and health fails. The Spirit of God is the Spirit of Life. He dwells in sanctified humanity, clothes Himself with consecrated gifts, talents, and power.

The blessing of the indwelling Spirit does not give a new body, another temperament, or another set of brains; but it does awaken dormant powers; it does sanctify natural faculties; it does vitalize all a man is and has with a new spirit, and it also adds some gifts that were not already there. That is how God makes such extraordinary men out of very ordinary people. He is always choosing the unlikely and surprising the world with the impossible. No one else would have chosen Jacob and David, Peter and Paul. Dwight L. Moody, and William Booth; and none but the Spirit of God would have made them what they became.

The measure of possibility is not in us, but in the power of the Spirit who brought again the Lord Jesus from the dead. Vitality and vivacity are qualities of life in the gift of the Spirit of life. The life that is drab, insipid, fearful, conventional, and ineffective, never came from the energy of the fiery spirit of Pentecost.

3. Assurance

The Spirit gives certainty. Those who live

in the Spirit know the things of God, and they know that they know. He is given for a witness. He searches the deep things of God, takes of the things of Christ, and makes them known to us.

In the day He comes, men know. What illumination He brought to those in the upper room! Who taught Peter the certainties of the Pentecostal sermon? It was the Spirit who revealed to him the truth about Jesus of Nazareth, the Cross of Calvary, the empty grave, and the ascension into glory. He reveals the deep things, makes known the hidden things, and makes sure to the heart the mysteries of God. He reveals the truth, witnesses to the truth, verifies the truth, as truth is in Jesus.

He witnesses to the sonship and inheritance, to the mind and promises of God, to certainty of the Covenant, and to the unfailing love of God. We know we are the sons of God. We know the love of God, and we know that all things work together for good to them that love God. Those who have life in the Spirit know and are sure, and they witness to the witness they have received.

4. Prayer

"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."

In nothing is the Spirit so wonderful as in the prayerlife of the soul. Apart from the Spirit there is nothing in which we are so helpless as in prayer. Christ ever lives to make intercession for us at the right hand of the Father, but to the Spirit it is given to inspire and direct our prayers from within. We pray in the Spirit, and the Spirit takes our prayers and makes them His own with an intensity and passion that is unspeakable.

Pentecost gave a new meaning and power to prayer, and wherever the Spirit of Pentecost comes, the same result is found. It makes prayer a matter of the Spirit. In nothing can the form of the letter be so deadly, and nowhere is the power of the Spirit so mighty. The Spirit instructs and inspires prayer, gives intelligence and intensity to intercession, and brings reality and joy to communion with God. The Spirit-filled love to pray, and prayer that is in the Spirit must prevail.

5. Victory

"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us." The Spirit of God is the Spirit of Power. It was in His might that the heroes upon the Honor Roll of Faith prevailed. "Ye shall receive power," was the parting promise of the Risen Lord. Power! More than conquerors! What a reproach then is failure and futility to those who are heirs of the Spirit of God!

6. Love

The gift of the Spirit is love. The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us. Herein is love made perfect. Who shall separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord? They that live in the Spirit are made perfect in love.

7. Passion

The eighth chapter overlaps into the ninth. The passion for souls is begotten of the Spirit. A Calvary passion is born in the Calvary heart. The passion of the Saviour flows through passion-swept souls. The rivers that flow out in redeeming streams have their source in the heights. Thus spake our Lord of the Spirit.