

# The Supernatural Life

by A.B. Simpson

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*A.B. Simpson's sermon explores the transformative power of the supernatural life in Christ, emphasizing divine righteousness, regeneration, and the believer's relationship with God.*

**Scripture:** Jeremiah 33:3, Matthew 5:48, John 14:16-17, Romans 8:14-17, Romans 8:28, 1 Corinthians 1:30, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 2:20, Ephesians 2:8-9, 1 John 3:1

**Topics:** "Identity in Christ", "Supernatural Life"

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## Description

A.B. Simpson emphasizes the transformative power of living a supernatural life through Christ, as expressed in Galatians 2:20. He explains that true Christianity is not merely about moral improvement but about the divine presence of Christ within believers, which leads to justification, regeneration, and sonship. Simpson highlights that the Christian life is marked by supernatural holiness, divine guidance, and the power of prayer, showcasing how these elements reflect the character of God and serve as a testament to the world. He encourages believers to embrace their identity as children of God, empowered by the Holy Spirit to live out their faith authentically. Ultimately, the sermon calls for Christians to embody the essence of the Gospel, becoming living testimonies of God's grace and love.

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## Transcript

"I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me." (Gal. 2: 20.)

The best edition of the Holy Scriptures is a holy life. God wants to translate His supernatural book into the living experience of all His children.

When someone said to Sir Walter Scott that he was going to write a book, he answered, "Be a book."

When the enemies of the apostles saw the man who had been healed standing in their midst they could say nothing against it. A living consistent Bible Christian is an unanswerable witness for God and evidence for Christianity in every age. Christ Himself was the greatest miracle of the Gospels and so every Christian should be greater than all his works.

The radical distinction between Christianity and all other religions is in the characters that it produces. "By their fruits you shall know them" is Christ's own test and judged by this test Christianity is unanswerable. The Christian character is not the product of moral culture. The holiest men are the readiest to acknowledge that in them dwells no good thing, and that every virtue and grace is due alone to the power

of the divine Presence as it dwells within them and strengthens them against their temptations and weaknesses.

The first supernatural fact in the Christian life is a divine righteousness or what is termed in the language of theology, justification. The Apostle Paul uses a very fine phrase in unfolding this fundamental principle of the gospel by which man becomes right with God. He calls it the righteousness of God. It is not merely the mercy of God overlooking our fall but it is the righteousness of God settling our account and putting us right with Him. God wants us to stand approved in His presence not by our own works but by the imputed righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. God meets us at the very threshold when we come guilty, condemned, unworthy and excluded from His favor and His presence; and He clothes us in the very merits of His own Son, enabling us thus to look in the face of the very throne and even of the victims and witnesses of our crimes and know that we are without blame, justified and counted righteous in His sight and standing in the same attitude as if we had never sinned. This is the free gift of God, holy, supernatural and divine. We are clothed in God's own righteousness and while we have nothing of our own to boast, yet we can look up in the blessed light of the throne and say

Jesus, Your blood and righteousness

My beauty are, my glorious dress.

Sinless with these garments on

I'll face the splendors of Your throne.

The second supernatural fact of a Christian life is regeneration. This is quite different from justification. The latter makes our relations right with God. The former makes our nature right. It is the divine impartation to the human being of a new life communicated directly from God and pure and holy as His own very being. This is not moral elevation, self-improvement, doing or being better, but a miracle of grace, a new creation, a wonder so stupendous that Nicodemus, a Jewish professor of ethics and religion, could not comprehend it but looked with wonder in the face of Christ and asked how these things could be.

There is nothing parallel to it in nature. Perhaps the nearest analogy to it is the little ichneumon that deposits its tiny eggs through the coarse skin of the caterpillar in its body and leaves it there to hatch in the warm temperature of his victim until it germinates and feeding upon the flesh of the caterpillar grows to maturity and then bursts the shell and springs into life.

But here there is a natural progenitor of this germ of life. In regeneration there is no human power that can propagate this life. No man can give it to his brother. No parent can communicate it to his child. "Which were born, not of the blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." The feeblest saint is a new order of being in the eyes of the angels as marvelous as when Adam stepped out upon the theater of Eden, as the morning stars sang together and the saints of God shouted for joy.

The next supernatural fact in the Christian life is sonship. We enter at once into the heavenly family. This, too, is a surpassing wonder and quite contrary to the precedents of the divine government. Angels were very high in the scale of being but they dared not enter the family of God, but sinful man stepped across the threshold of yonder palace and the prodigal came home to his Father's bosom and claimed a place no archangel can ever know. "Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God," was the cry of John, the man who stood nearest to the very center of the

throne.

We are the sons of God by virtue of our being born of God. We are not only "called" but we "are" the sons of God. Not only are we sons by a decree of adoption but every intuition of the new heart leaps to meet the Father and knows its own delightful place of filial recognition, for we "have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba Father."

We have a still higher claim to sonship by virtue of our union with Christ, the only begotten Son of God. Wedded to Him, we come into His peculiar sonship. And so we are called the firstborn ones, the very name that He holds. As a bride inherits her husband's home and is accepted as a child, so we go in with Him to the innermost chambers of the palace of the King while we hear Him say, "My Father, and your Father; . . . my God, and your God."

The indwelling of Christ is the next supernatural fact into which we are brought. This is a transition as stupendous as regeneration itself. "If a man loves me," Christ says, "he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." This is not a figure but a fact so glorious and real that the Apostle Paul declared it to be the very secret which had been hid from ages and from generations but which at last had been made known to the saints and which was committed to him to give as a talisman of the victory and the secret of heaven's own life to the children of God.

The baptism of the Holy Ghost is the fifth supernatural fact of our life. While the same in its effects substantially as the indwelling of Christ and while it is through the Holy Ghost that we come into union with Him, yet it is a distinct privilege and experience of the Christian life. The prophet Ezekiel in describing the experience of a converted soul, after telling of the new heart and the new spirit that He would put within them, adds this higher promise, "I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and you will keep my judgments, and do them." God's own Spirit comes into the new spirit. It is not only that we have a new heart but we have the Almighty God residing in that new heart. So stupendous was the change which this brought to the apostles after the day of Pentecost that all men took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. They were clothed with a new power. They were invested with a divine authority and efficiency by which their words brought conviction to the consciences of men, and the works of the risen Christ were wrought through their hands, and all men felt a supernatural presence and power around them and upon them.

A supernatural holiness becomes a fact of our lives, for sanctification is not our personal virtues, graces or attainments, but it is the life of Christ manifested in us. The finest definition of it is given by Paul in 1 Corinthians 1: 30: "But of him are you in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glories, let him glory in the Lord."

Sanctification is here distinctly recognized not as our character but as the inworking and the outworking of Christ's own life in us. He is made unto us of God our righteousness, our sanctification just in order that we may not glory in our own goodness but may recognize everything we are and do as the grace of Christ.

This is the same thought expressed by John in his Gospel where he says, "Of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." That is, His grace gives to us the supply which constitutes the different graces in us. Do we want humility? We take Christ's Spirit within us to be the spirit of humility. Do we want patience and love? We put on Christ as our patience and love and He works out in us and relives through us His own longsuffering, unselfish life, and out of His fullness we thus receive even grace for grace; and

when the work is accomplished we do not stand before men as paragons and patterns of our superiority to our fellows, but examples of the free and sovereign grace which they may have as well as we.

Not only does Christ give us a supernatural supply but a supernatural standard of holiness. In this respect Christianity differs from all human ethics. Chinese morality has crystallized itself in a proverb not unlike our golden rule though not nearly so clear and strong. But even the golden rule does not express the highest standard of New Testament holiness. "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" is the Old Testament morality; "A new commandment I give unto you, That you love one another; as I have loved you." This is the supernatural standard of Christianity. "Be therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." This is an aim transcending the highest dream of the world's teachers. "Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you."

This, when exemplified in living obedience, awes the human heart and convicts it of a power superhuman and divine.

Divine guidance is one of the supernatural privileges of the Christian life. For every consecrated soul God has a distinct plan and a divine program lifting it above all common lives and making it marked and sublime. It may be a very simple life and exercised in a very humble sphere but the fact that God is shaping, molding and using it gives to it a dignity unspeakably high. The life of a Joseph, the life of an Esther, the life of a Paul is a romance of Providence, and every one of us may possess such a charmed life and know that God has made of us a pattern of our earthly temple and is building better than we know.

When the great Hildebrand was dying, he told some of his friends that the secret of his life was that he had taken St. Peter as the patron saint of his whole career and that all along the way he felt that the influence of this mighty spirit was directing all his ways. How much better for us to take Peter's Master as the pattern of our life and let Him so possess it that He will have a loving pride in making out of us the very best possible for a trusting soul and a human career.

Along with this it may be added that divine providence enters directly into the life of the child of God. Especially is this true when our whole life is dedicated to God and conformed to His high calling. Then for us the promise becomes true, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." This is not true in the same sense of every Christian but only of those who are living according to His purpose, as stated in the context, to be conformed to the image of His Son.

If that is the character of our life and if we thus truly love and live for God with the singleness and strength of an undivided heart, we shall find that all the wheels of Providence move at the touch of the Hand that is leading us.

How wonderful is the story of providence in God's Word and especially in the lives of those who truly belonged to God. He ruled and overruled in the story of Joseph, Moses, Nehemiah, Daniel, Philip in his meeting with the eunuch in the desert, Peter in his marvelous deliverance from prison while his pursuer was stricken in the same hour by the hand of God. How inadequately we realize and claim that overshadowing promise that covers all our way, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. . . . And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." How often we forget that the affairs of nations and even the business of the world moves simply for the sake of Christ and His people. He is Head over all things for His body, the church. Our vast political systems and commercial activities are but the agencies through which He is preparing the way for the witnessing of the gospel and the evangelization of the world. Oh, to ride forth with Him in His chariot and see Him triumph over all our

enemies and His! This is the supernatural privilege of the sons of God and the service of Christ.

There is no wonder more supernatural and divine in the life of the believer than the mystery and the ministry of prayer. The mighty statesman Daniel turned away from his official task and the courtly visitors that awaited him, and for three whole weeks was prostrate on his face in prayer before the throne of a greater King than Cyrus. As he prayed, the earth's mightiest conqueror was unable to sleep. He called for the archives of his kingdom and the records respecting the Jews, and when the morning dawned, sent for his scribe and dictated this decree: "All the kingdoms of the earth has the Lord God of heaven given me; and he has charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The Lord his God be with him, and let him go up."

How did this heathen conqueror know about the Lord Jehovah? What did he care for Israel's God? What cared he for fear or favor respecting the little captive bands of Israel in his land? What but a touch from the throne could put such a thought in his heart or such language on his lips? Ah, it was the answer to Daniel's prayer. It was the moving of a scepter which is touched in the silent closet. Those captive bands arose and started forth on their homeward way with Zerubabel, Ezra and Nehemiah; the temple was raised from its ruins; the city walls were restored; the ages rolled on until the Son of God Himself preached the gospel of the kingdom. The vision given Daniel in answer to his prayer does not close until the latest ages have all rolled by and the course of empires is finished and the vision of prophecy fulfilled and the times of the Gentiles ended and the Lord Himself has come.

Wonder of wonders! Mystery of mysteries! Miracle of miracles! The hand of the child touching the arm of the Father moves the wheels of the universe. Beloved, this is your supernatural place and mine, and over its gates we read this inspiring invitation, "This says the Lord . . . Call unto me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you knew not."

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