

A Principle to Live By

by Major Ian Thomas

The Lord Jesus taught his disciples a principle to live by, which is that the kingdom of God is within them, and that they must wait for the promise of the Father, which is the baptism with the Holy Ghost, before they can fulfill their new responsibility as witnesses of Jesus Christ.

Duration: 1:19:48

Scripture: Matthew 16:13

Topics: "Identity of Christ", "Indwelling of the Holy Spirit"

Description

Major Ian Thomas emphasizes the importance of understanding the true identity and mission of Jesus Christ, as revealed to Peter, and how this understanding transforms the lives of believers. He explains that while the disciples recognized Jesus as the Messiah, they lacked comprehension of His mission, which included His death and resurrection. Thomas highlights that true life and godliness come from the indwelling of Christ through the Holy Spirit, which empowers believers to live out their faith. He urges the congregation to embrace the principle that Christ's resurrection is central to their spiritual life, enabling them to share in His divine nature and fulfill their purpose as witnesses of His glory.

Transcript

I'm sure the Lord Jesus as our creator had a wonderful sense of humor. If he as our creator had not had a sense of humor, he wouldn't have created us with a sense of humor. In point of fact, if he hadn't have had a sense of humor in all probability, he wouldn't have created some of us.

And I'm sure there were occasions when the Lord Jesus had fun with his disciples. And I think one of those occasions was probably that incident that is recorded for us in the 16th of Matthew. In the 13th verse of that 16th chapter when Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples saying, Whom do men say that I the son of man am? Or in so many words said the Lord Jesus, what's the latest? Because then as now, everybody had their own way out ideas as to who he was, what he had come to do and how he was going to do it.

And one of them said this little group down the road and they think of John the Baptist. Well, you know what happened to John the Baptist, he had his head cut off. And that little group down the road thought that the Lord Jesus, John the Baptist had had his head back on again and was back in town.

And they probably chuckled about that. And then another one of the disciples said there's a group the other side of town, they think you're Elijah. Well, you know what happened to Elijah? One of the two men together with Enoch who never suffered physical death, caught up in a whirlwind.

And there were those the other side of town who thought he'd been orbit all down the centuries, but he had landed and he was back in town. They chuckled about that. And somebody else said you'll never believe this, but there are some people even think that you're Jeremiah.

As if you look that miserable. And some people think you're this prophet and some people think you are that prophet. They said some say that John the Baptist, some Elijah, others Jeremiah or one of the prophets said the Lord Jesus to them, but whom say he that I am.

Whatever anybody else may have to say, no matter what way out ideas they may cherish. To what conclusion have you come? And Simon Peter answered and said, thou art the Christ, the son of the living God. And of course Peter was completely right.

He was the Christ, the anointed one, greater prophet than Moses, greater priest than Aaron, greater king than David. The one in whose person there was comprehended all those offices that these who had lived before foreshadowed of his coming. Said the Lord Jesus, blessed art thou Simon Bar-Jonah, flesh and blood, hath not revealed this to you, but my father which is in heaven.

You haven't, in other words, come to this conclusion because you're smart. It's because my father, God in heaven, has been pleased to reveal it to you. All truth ultimately is by revelation.

And you might well have imagined that having thus identified the Lord Jesus, together with the others who no doubt would have added their affirmation, they were now highly qualified to go out into the highways and the byways and tell the world that Jesus the Messiah had arrived. The ones of whom all Israel had been waiting all down the centuries. But it comes sometimes as quite a surprise to discover in the 20th verse of that chapter that the Lord Jesus then charged his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ.

Just so soon as they had discovered his identity and plucked up enough courage to bear testimony to the fact, the Lord Jesus placed them under a total prohibition and forbade them to tell nobody that he, Jesus, was the Christ. And you might wonder why it was that the Lord Jesus called men to be his disciples, some of them named to be apostles, and then forbade them under any circumstances to tell anybody that he, Jesus, was the Christ. And the answer of course is very simple.

At this stage of their understanding they hadn't a clue what it was all about. And I don't mean by this that they didn't have a sentimental attachment for the Lord Jesus or that they didn't have an affection for him. That they weren't motivated by a considerable amount of loyalty to his person and to his cause.

That they didn't have a considerable amount of enthusiasm to get the movement off the ground. But you see, to say that the Lord Jesus was the Christ is one thing, but to understand what is the Christ he'd come to do, quite another. To declare that he was the Messiah, one thing.

To understand his messianic mission, quite another. And at this stage they hadn't a clue. And that's why the Lord Jesus told them to keep their mouths shut.

You see, they hadn't yet learned a principle to live by. And the Lord Jesus knew that. And as we have already discussed, enthusiasm, dedication, activity, can never ever be a substitute for truth.

And they did not yet know the truth. From that time forth, in the 21st verse of that 16th of Matthew, it goes on to say, began Jesus to show unto his disciples how that he must go to Jerusalem, suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed and be raised again the third day. Whereas the Lord Jesus gave them a simple panoramic preview of that which he had come to accomplish.

And how he was going to do it. And nothing of what he said would startle us. I suppose to most of us here tonight it would be old hat.

Having known of it, most of us, from our mother's knee that the Lord Jesus would go to the city of Jerusalem and there he would be delivered into the hands of wicked men, be done to death. But the third day he would rise again from the dead, the conqueror over death and sin and hell and the devil himself. But Peter took him and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord, this shall not be unto thee.

And for all his dedication, for all his loyalty, for all his affection for the Lord Jesus, Ben placed himself squarely between Christ and the cross. He didn't want the cross because he didn't understand the cross. And he didn't understand the cross because he didn't see the need for the cross.

And he didn't see the need for the cross because he didn't understand his own case. In common with a whole race of fallen men, born dead, for whom the only remedy would be resurrection. And the Lord Jesus turned and he said to Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan.

Thou art an offense unto me. You're offensive. Thou savest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

Your concepts, your philosophy, your theology is of the earth, earthy. It is that which is of man. And the one whose lips, only so short a while before, had been the mouthpiece of the Father God in heaven, were the next moment the mouthpiece of the devil himself.

Sad, isn't it, that when the Lord Jesus said, Whom do men say that I the son of man am? They could quote every Tom, Dick, and Harry. They knew everything that man had to say about the Lord Jesus. The one thing they did not know was what God had to say about the Lord Jesus.

And it was because of this abysmal ignorance of the issues involved that the Lord Jesus placed them under this total prohibition. It was a prohibition that is repeated in the following chapter, as well you know, in the 17th chapter in the Mount of Transfiguration. The Lord Jesus revealed in that glory that was a foretaste of that which was his forever.

Moses and Elijah together with him. An exotic experience that you might imagine would well have undergirded their faith and motivated them to go out with added enthusiasm. But as they came down, verse 9 from the mountain, this is the 17th chapter, Jesus charged them saying, Tell the vision to no man until the Son of Man be risen again from the dead.

In other words, no matter what you may have seen, no matter what you may have heard there in the Mount of Transfiguration, not a word until the Son of Man be risen again from the dead. Because the Lord Jesus knew perfectly well that in spite of all their affection and dedication to his cause, nothing would make sense until the resurrection. That's why as you may well discover from the book of Acts, as also

constantly in the epistles, the disciples were excited about the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

Because that's when it happened. Not until the Lord Jesus was risen again from the dead did they discover a principle to live by. We're told of what happened in the 24th chapter of Luke's gospel.

Remember when the women came excitedly telling them that they had been rebuked by angels because they sought the living amongst the dead, that they had seen an empty tomb. And on the way even to break the good news to his disciples, they had seen him. And their words in the 11th verse of the 24th of Luke were as idle tales.

And they believed them not. This was Peter, James, John, and the other of the disciples. They said, women you're hysterical.

We've all had a tough time and if your nerves have snapped, we don't blame you. But don't come talking that kind of nonsense, idle tales. We buried him.

He's dead. Now that was the only gospel, that was the only good news, that the disciples had at that time to tell the world Jesus is dead. Little wonder the Lord Jesus told them to keep their mouth shut.

They didn't want the cross and didn't believe in the resurrection. But something happened to them as it happened to Peter. That which of course completely transformed their lives as it is intended in God's timeless economy to transform yours and mine.

The Lord Jesus rose again from the dead and appeared to his disciples in the upper room. As they repudiated the testimony of the two disciples who too had encountered the Lord Jesus on the road to Emmaus, though they didn't recognize him, telling their risen Lord about their dead Jesus. But those to whom he revealed himself as they constrained him to spend the night under their roof and sat at his table, though their guests playing the role of host, he took the bread and broke it.

And it says their eyes were opened and they knew him. In the 31st verse of that chapter. For you see two pairs of eyes watched one pair of hands and they saw the print in the nails.

Then he disappeared, vanished out of their sight and they came to excitedly. Did not our hearts burn within us while he opened the scripture. And as they thus spake, telling the other disciples how they had encountered the Lord Jesus and was known of them in the breaking of bread, verse 36, as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them and he said, Peace be unto you.

But they were terrified and affrighted. Suppose they'd seen a spirit treated in terror, thought he was a ghost. And the Lord Jesus said, why are you troubled? Why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet.

Didn't you hear what these two disciples said about my hands when I broke the bread at their table? Well, behold my hands and for good measure, have a look at my feet. That it is I myself. Handle me and see.

And they rediscovered the Lord Jesus in the power of his resurrection. And the consequences were immediate. We're told they could hardly believe for joy.

That's always the characteristic of somebody who knows experientially from within their own hearts that Jesus is alive. Not just academically, not giving a mental consent to a theological proposition. Not saying I believe it because the Bible says it.

Even though it does, and you have the right to believe it, but saying it because you know experientially every moment of every day that he having suffered a death like yours, you right now are enjoying and sharing a resurrection like this. Jesus is alive because he lives in me. And momentarily I am drawing upon those illimitable resources that have become mine by virtue of who he is, my once crucified now risen Lord living now where he does within my heart.

Sharing his life. Clothing his divine activity with my redeemed humanity who has been added to the Lord as a living individual member in particular of that new body corporate that the father gave him on the day of Pentecost. The church, not an institution, not a piece of real estate, but a fellowship of redeemed sinners cleansed in his blood indwelt by his Holy Spirit pulsating with the divine energy.

Joyfully anticipating every new day to dawn so that they can let God loose in the world in which they live by virtue of their availability to his divine indwelling. I am a Christian. That's exciting.

As exciting of course as life is always intended to be once you've learned the principle to live by that Jesus is alive and all that he is you've got because he lives within you as once the father lived within him. You can't have more and you need never ever enjoy less. A new joy.

These are the words of the Lord Jesus which I spake unto you while I was yet with you that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Lord Moses and in the prophets and in the Psalms concerning me and he opened their understanding that they might understand the scriptures and added to their new joy they got a new Bible. A Bible that made sense. Thus said he it is written and thus it behoved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day that repentance and remission of sin should be preached in his name.

I have accomplished that reconciling act that will allow you to the uttermost ends of the earth to proclaim forgiveness to all who in true repentance toward God will put their trust in God's Son and claim cleansing through his shed blood. A new joy, new Bible, a new message and said he to them in the 48th verse you are witnesses of these things. Added to your new joy the new Bible added to your new Bible a new message on the basis of my redeeming atoning death and now a new responsibility.

But he said you're not ready yet to discharge that responsibility because you haven't learned a principle to live by. Slowly laboriously you've come to recognize that I didn't drift to disaster. That my death upon the cross was not that of a noble idealist who lived before his day.

I didn't pay the price of being too progressive nor was it simply a sentimental gesture. I lay down my life a ransom for many by that atoning death I have satisfied the last demand of a holy God for every sin ever committed in all time. One sacrifice for sins forever.

But in spite of the fact that you've now come to understand why I died you haven't entered into the good of it. So tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you be endued with power from on high because the purpose of my atoning work upon the cross was that you being reconciled to a holy God might become the recipients again of that quality of life for which man was made. Who so created man that the presence of the creator within the creature is indispensable to his humanity.

And that hasn't happened yet. And of course he enlarged upon this in the first chapter of the book of Acts and we might turn to that for a moment if you would care so to do. In the first chapter of the book of the Acts the former treatise says Dr. Luke author of this his second book as he was the author by inspiration of

the Holy Spirit of the gospel of Luke.

The former treatise have I made of Theophilus of all that Jesus began both to do and to teach. Until the day in which he was taken up after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen to whom also he showed himself alive after his passion. By many infallible proofs being seen of them 40 days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

What do you think the Lord Jesus was talking about during those 40 days when he spoke to them of those things that pertained to the kingdom of God. But he wasn't talking about heaven. Glorious of course as heaven indeed will be for said the Lord Jesus in my father's house and many mansions if it were not so I would have told you.

If I go I will prepare a place for you and if I go to prepare that place for you I will come again that where I am there you may be also marvelous. But he wasn't talking about that he had already talked a whole lot about that to them but it wasn't this that he talked about on this occasion when he for 40 days spoke to them concerning the kingdom. In order to discover what he was talking about we need just to flip the pages back though we will return to this chapter to the 17th of Luke when there were those who came to the Lord Jesus in the 20th verse of the Pharisees who asked when the kingdom of God should and the Lord Jesus answered them and said the kingdom of God cometh not with observation literally you probably have it there in the marginal translation that you'll have in the center of your Bible not without which show.

The kingdom of God can't be defined in terms of religious real estate it can't be defined in terms of a religious body an organizational entity a denominational group or evangelistic crusade it won't be represented by a bunch of people dressed in peculiar clothes swinging incense it doesn't come by outward show said he neither shall they say look here it is look there it is for behold said the Lord Jesus the kingdom of God is within you is within you. You see you were made that way you were created in such a way that the presence of the creator as king in his kingdom is indispensable to a man's humanity.

The kingdom of God where God should be king is within you so if God is the king and you and I are the kingdom where should the king be in his kingdom and this is what the Lord Jesus was talking to his disciples about during those 40 days what was involved in this reconciling act that would restore guilty men on the grounds of redemption to that relationship to a living God that would allow him actually to re-inhabit their humanity so that they would literally be added as individual members to a new body corporate that the father intended to give to his son so that as once incarnate in the flesh and blood that was born on that first Christmas morning in Bethlehem he might now occupy another body that body which is his church and incarnate in their flesh and blood continue with their hands

and continue through their lips to do and teach the things that he had begun to do and begun to teach in the body the first the father first gave him when we was born at Bethlehem the kingdom he said what it's going to take for you to discharge your new responsibility as those who having a new joy in a new bible in a new message are being commissioned to go to the last end of the earth and tell the world that there is redemption through the shed blood of Christ repentance and remission of sins what is going to take for you to discharge this responsibility to God's holy satisfaction is the restoration to you of that quality of life for which man was made and which was lost in Adam in the day that he fell which was the day that man died and this hasn't happened yet so that last you know why

I was born lived and died and though now at last though somewhat reluctantly you admit that I'm risen again from the dead you are not yet equipped for that purpose which having first created you I have now redeemed you so being assembled together with them in verse four he commanded them he didn't just throw out the suggestion it was a categorical command he commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem that is in the discharge of their new responsibility get on with the job they were not to depart from Jerusalem but to wait for the promise of the father which saith he you've heard of me and then he went on to explain what the promise of the father was that had not yet been fulfilled and for which they were to wait that they might be enabled for their new responsibility John

he said truly baptized with water but ye shall be future tense baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence said the Lord Jesus this hasn't happened yet it's the promise of the father which you have already heard of me long since I've told you about it during those three years in which I was with you I told you that this was the ultimate purpose of my coming my living my dying and my rising that that might be restored to you was forfeited in Adam the life of God but it hasn't happened yet but not many days hence and then of course that day dawned the day of Pentecost the birth of the church the day upon which the father God in heaven presented to the son the new body that day on which the first 120 men and women in all human history since Adam fell were restored to life were born

again from above in receiving the gift of God in the person of the Holy Spirit through whose presence in life their state of death would be abolished regeneration the renewing of the Holy Ghost now of course we recognize and we may need to touch upon this very lightly tomorrow night again that there was a time lag between the understanding of the redemptive act the death of the Lord Jesus and the regenerated purpose the coming of the Holy Spirit in spiritual new birth the baptism of the Holy Ghost whereby they were to be added to the Lord and added to his body baptized into that body there was a time lag a time lag of course that no longer exists because the Holy Ghost the life of God restored to the soul of man was not yet given because Jesus was not yet glorified he hadn't ascended from

the Mount of Olives into his father's presence so that from his father's presence there glorified he might in the person of the Holy Spirit come to inhabit their humanity as for 33 years he had allowed the father to inhabit his for said he is the father sent me I'm going to send you on exactly the same basis and with the same resources at your disposal as the father sent me marvelously furnished by his divine indwelling for every act in which I was to engage every word that I was to speak everything that I was to do so I'm going to send you marvelously furnished by my divine presence for every act every word every decision for as I without my father could do nothing so you without me can do nothing that's why you're to wait until this endearment this endearment with power from on high

when the Holy Ghost is come said he 8th verse 1st chapter then you will bear witness because it's not power as an impersonal entity that God gives you it's a person somebody in whom you'll draw upon all those illimitable resources that will become yours by virtue of the fact that through his presence in you you will share my life as for 33 years by his presence in me I shared the life of my father Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost Luke 4 1 so the day of Pentecost came marvelous thing happened that for which the Lord Jesus died who said I am come that you might have precisely what God gave on the day of Pentecost life in the person of the Holy Spirit through whom they were to share the resurrection of Jesus Christ and on that day Peter stood up excitedly for at last it had penetrated he

had learned a principle to live by every moment of every day 2nd chapter the book of Acts verse 22 Peter standing up on the day of Pentecost said you men of Israel hear these words Jesus of Nazareth a man

approved of God that was the startling discovery that Peter made on the day of Pentecost that although they had long since recognized his deity co-equal in deity with the Father and the Holy Ghost in the triune Godhead the one who was in the beginning with God was God and by whom all things were made and without whom was not anything made that was made the creative deity and in him alone that life which is the life of men they had long settled for his deity but the great discovery on the day of Pentecost was his humanity that for all those years and in particular while he taught them

during those latter three years he'd been trying to tell them what it takes to be a man God that my presence in you will be as imperative through the Holy Spirit as the presence of my Father in me has been imperative through the Holy Spirit and on the day of Pentecost Peter suddenly understands you men of Israel hear these words Jesus of Nazareth a man approved of God what are the characteristics of a God-approved man well Peter goes on to explain you men of Israel hear these words Jesus of Nazareth a man approved of God by miracles signs and wonders which God did by him and now it penetrates I realize now what was the dynamic of his life who died and rose again and ascended to be with his father the dynamic of his life was the Father in the Son he kept telling us but though we listen and

listen and listen we never heard the Father who lives in me does the work and at last on the day of Pentecost it penetrated miracles signs and wonders which God did by him a God-approved man and Peter discovered what it means to be a God-approved man a God-approved man is a man with that state of heart that lets God do it and of course this was life transforming for Peter I see it now the Lord Jesus though God played the role of man though the creator he came to fulfill the role of creature and in the sinlessness of his humanity he allowed the father to play that role in him as man that he our Lord Jesus as God intended always that he should play as God in us and he was trying to teach us the whole time without my father I can do nothing my father is imperative to every act in which I

engage every decision that I make every word I speak the words that I speak unto I speak not of myself my doctrine is not mine but his that send me but now our Lord Jesus having accomplished the redemptive act having shed his blood to cleanse our hearts he's now risen from the dead he's been ascended to the father he's glorified there and he's come in the person of the Holy Spirit to live in us and be to us now as God all that that for 33 years he allowed his father to be to him as God I see it says Peter marvelous I realize now why he died for us he died for us that dealing with our sin he risen from the dead might come again to play that role in us as God for which man was made and which he allowed his father as God to fulfill in him sky's the limit Peter suddenly realized if only we as

men will be prepared now to be to the Lord Jesus as God what he as man was prepared to be to his father as God he the Lord Jesus now as God will be to us all that the father as God was to him that's the gospel that's the gospel in all its glorious sublime simplicity for the Lord Jesus uncome that you might have life what life that quality of life for which man was made the life of God the life of God in other words something fantastic had happened to Peter and he explained it very simply the two great discoveries that became his after the resurrection in the first chapter of his first epistle let's glance at those two verses that are relevant in the first chapter of the first of Peter's two epistles that comprehend the two great discoveries that completely revolutionized his life and that

of course are absolutely imperative to you and to me if we're to enter into the good of all that so which the father God in heaven in infinite compassion and love and mercy sent his son in the 18th verse of the first chapter of Peter's first epistle for as much as you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold from your vain behavior received by tradition from your fathers but with the precious

blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world manifest in these last times to you well something's happened to Peter this is the same Peter who said not so Lord that can't happen to you this is the same Peter upon whom the Lord Jesus laid that total prohibition and said not a word tell

nobody that I Jesus and the cross who didn't want the cross now he says we're redeemed not with silver and gold but with the precious blood of God's dear son as of a lamb without blemish verily foreordained before ever the world was far from thinking that Jesus had drifted to disaster that they had buried him now he sees that the unfolding of a timeless redemptive purpose Peter has discovered the grounds of our redemption the death of the Lord Jesus for us and for him now that was the first part but there was better to come for that in itself would not have been adequate for his salvation or ours in the third verse of that same first chapter I like the way it's put here in the Amplified New Testament very succinctly blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ by his boundless

mercy says Peter we have been born again to an ever-living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead we have been born again through his resurrection Peter has made this dual discovery that our redemption demands his shed blood and our regeneration our new birth demands his resurrection that we're redeemed by his death and we're born again by his resurrection in other words that the Lord Jesus suffered a death like ours redemptively so that we now might share a resurrection like his regeneratively he discovered that it takes the death of Christ to reconcile us to God redemption and it takes the life of the Lord Jesus Christ to restore to us what it takes in regeneration to fulfill the function for which man was made because Peter has learned that man was so engineered if

I may dare to say it again in such a way that the presence of the creator in the creature is indispensable to his humanity and Peter has discovered that the death of the Lord Jesus for him wouldn't be enough if it went for the life of the Lord Jesus and if it was the death of the Lord Jesus for him that redeems him and the life of the Lord Jesus in him that regenerates him then something had to happen between his death for us and his life in us resurrection and the Lord Jesus knew perfectly well until that had happened nothing would make sense nothing but now everything made sense and Peter realized that the resurrection was the very heart of the gospel he recognized of course there could be no resurrection apart from the death of the Lord Jesus nor would God in heaven in his holiness

have the right to restore the life of God to anybody apart from that atoning death that would be accomplished vicariously by the Lord Jesus for us but Peter fully understood that the death of the Lord Jesus for us would never have been adequate in itself to make us once more functional from God's point of view but what happened when man fell into sin was that he forfeited the divine content and only the restoration of that divine content God himself could ever make a man morally competent to discharge the office for which he was made that's why he enlarges upon this in the first chapter of his second epistle and I'd like you to turn to that in the second of Peter's two epistles and of course he addresses himself to those who have obtained like precious faith and you understand what Peter

means by that who've learned to adopt that disposition towards God that gets God going and lets God do it that's the nature of faith faith as I have already indicated to you I believe is never demonstrated by what you are doing for God what you're doing for Christ that only demonstrates faith in yourself that you've got the capacity to do it and God says you don't faith that disposition that God demands of you and me without which it's impossible to please him is a disposition that recognizes I can't God never said I could but God can always said he would it's a principle to live by and Peter says those who have obtained like precious

faith who've learned by disposition to let God do it it is according he said as his divine power has given to us all that pertains to being alive God's

divine power something he says which demanded the release of all the illimitable dynamic of deity all the power of God according to his divine power he's given to us all that pertains to being alive that's the first thing he says in the third verse now what would you say pertains to being alive without making it complicated life life when the Lord Jesus was confronted with a man four days dead and stinking and they somewhat reluctantly at his command rolled away the stone and the Lord Jesus wanted now to give that man back all that pertain to being physically alive what did the Lord Jesus have to give to him physical life and we call that resurrection in other words the Lord Jesus four days later restored to Lazarus what four days before he had forfeited physical life because the Lord

Jesus knew perfectly well that if Lazarus was ever again to be physically alive they had to be restored to him that which pertains to being physically alive physical life well what pertains to being spiritually alive if the Lord Jesus comes to you and to me recognizes as he does that we were born as the seed of a fallen Adam spiritually bankrupt alienated from the life of God dead in trespasses and sins and the Lord Jesus wants to restore to you and restore to me what it takes all that pertains to being spiritually alive what's he got to restore spiritual life well the big question is what is spiritual life I mean we talk glibly and sing glibly and preach glibly and pray glibly about eternal life but what is eternal life it isn't going to heaven something a million to a million times more

wonderful than that this is the record that God has given to his eternal life and this life that he's given to us that which pertains to being spiritually alive this life is in his son he that has the son has life he that doesn't have the son of God a person actually resident within him doesn't have life he's dead only two kinds of people as you well know on the earth those who are indwelt by Jesus Christ and those who are not that's the essential difference between a person who's born again and one who isn't because this life which alone is eternal God's life is in his son in him was life this life that was in him was the light of men and says Peter it's according to his divine power that he has given to us what pertains to being spiritually alive and the only way that he can give us

what pertains to being spiritually alive is by giving us himself but in this third verse Peter goes on to say that that which pertains to being alive life is that also which pertains to godlikeness godliness in other words if ever by what you and I do say and are we to reveal the glory be restored to image so that others in us see him then his presence within us is indispensable as the one who by his holy spirit shares his life with us and who through that holy spirit now is allowed by us as the father was allowed by him to teach our minds control our emotions so direct our wills that he Christ from within might govern our behavior so by his divine power God has given to us all that pertains to being spiritually alive and that which pertains to being spiritually alive Christ living within

us is that which pertains to godliness righteousness glory that's why of course Paul to which we shall later return tomorrow in the epistle to the Colossians first chapter 26 27 Christ living in your heart whose presence in life pertains to being spiritually alive is your only hope of glory glory isn't heaven glory is the restored image glory is that from which man has fallen for all have sinned and come short of the glory and Christ living in your heart his presence that pertains to being alive is that which alone pertains to being restored to glory godlikeness the image in which man was made illustrates very simple way have you ever sat after dark in a room you know with the light on writing a book writing a letter or reading a book and suddenly the light goes out you say that's funny

and you fiddle for the switch wonder whether it was half cocked and then suddenly flipped but you discover that it's on so you think well maybe a fuse but under the crack beneath the door into the next room you can see light and so far as you know it's on the same circuit so you say to yourself well it couldn't be a fuse because this is on the same circuit as that the current the light must be flowing through the wires so the switch is on the current's flowing but there's still no light well you say it must be a broken lamp so you unscrew it or take it out of the socket take it into the room where there's light and you examine the bulb very carefully and to your surprise you discover that the filament is intact it isn't broken so now you're presented with quite a dilemma the switch is on

the current flows the bulb is intact but there's no light but as you examine the bulb a little more closely you discover that at the point of contact dirt dirt now you understand what's happened at the point of contact where the light that flows should get in dirt and you realize that when the dirt got in the life went out and the light went off and in all sublime simplicity there you've got the story of the fall of man into sin an electric light bulb actually is a very beautiful picture of a man you know it's got a body the bulb and our bodies tend to take on that shape after a bit we don't call it bulb we call it bulge so there's the body you see that's the body through which the light is released into the world around us the physical visible audible body that God gave us to reveal his

glory the bulb in the bulb there's the filament that's the soul mind emotion and will that's your behavior mechanism where the life of God through the holy spirit teaching the mind controlling emotions directing the will governs behavior so that he controlling your behavior will reveal through your body to the world God behaving that's life or righteousness god-likeness you see if it's God who teaches your mind God who controls your emotions and God who directs your will so that God through mind emotion and will governs your behavior who will other people see when you behave God he made us that way that's why the Lord Jesus in the sinlessness of his humanity who allowed only the father by the holy ghost indwelling his human spirit to have complete total unchallenged access to his soul

teaching his mind controlling his emotions and directing his will always governing his behavior who testified without my father i can do nothing he could say he that has seen me seen my father but you see if there's a bulb representing the body if there's a filament representing the soul there's got to be a point at which the life of God gets in to motivate the soul to produce that righteousness that is revealed through the body to the world in light that's the human spirit that unique capacity that God gave to man as opposed to any other form of animal life that allows God by the holy spirit within the human spirit to impart his life to man so that man is not only physically alive but spiritually alive so that that life God's life in the person of the holy spirit might have access to the

soul the filament so motivate our behavior patterns that what we do say in art reveals his righteousness now what happened when Adam fell into sin was that the dirt came in the life went out and the light went off as by one man sin came into the world dirt in and death by sin life out that turned the light off for in him was life and this life was the light of men and when the life went out the light went off and man was plunged into the abysmal darkness of spiritual death and degradation now tell me this if this would have happened to you what would you do about it well you say I get some sandpaper and I clean the dirt off well that's reasonable so you get the sandpaper and you clean the dirt away so dirt out so now you've got a nice clean lamp or if you like a redeemed lamp the dirt has

been removed for the blood of Jesus Christ God's son cleanses us from all sin he bore our sins in his body on the tree behold the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world dirt out redemption what did it

demand his death for us reconciled not with corruptible things like silver and gold but the precious blood of God's dear son dirt out so now you've got a nice clean lamp you've got your sandpaper you've got the dirt out so you bring that nice clean lamp into the dark room stick it on the table and say now I've got a nice clean lamp I can go on writing my letter or reading my book would that help how much more light would you get from a nice clean lamp on the table than from a dirty lamp in the socket you get no more light and getting the dirt out would of course be an exercise in

futility unless you were prepared having got your sandpaper and got the dirt out to screw the lamp back into the socket and get the life in because only that will put the light on that's the gospel that's what Peter's saying according to God's divine power he has given to us all that pertains to being alive and that pertains to God-likeness God has done according to his divine power all that pertains to putting back into man what it takes to produce life it's what he continues to tell us in the fourth verse is involved in spiritual regeneration or new birth fourth verse by the exceeding great and precious promises we are made partakers of the divine nature that's incredible that's what it means to be saved living together with Christ on the grounds of redemption dirt out he our risen Lord

Jesus coming to take up residence within your humanity by the gift to you of the Holy Spirit that first took place on the day of Pentecost so that you might by his divine indwelling become a partaker of the divine nature so that his nature might be revealed by what you do and say and art of the world in which you live and as once they looking at him this is all the father so now others looking at you see the son look at the second chapter of Paul's first chapter of Paul's second epistle to Timothy to Timothy chapter one according he says end of verse eight to the power of God who have saved us and called us with an holy calling in other words he's called us to holiness he's called us to godlikeness he's called us to reveal righteousness who have saved us and called us with an holy calling

not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ who has abolished death our Lord Jesus as the Savior has appeared to abolish death how do you abolish death how did the Lord Jesus abolish death physical death in Lazarus he restored physical life if he came to abolish spiritual death what must the Lord Jesus do restore spiritual life there's only one way to abolish death restore life and says Paul the Lord Jesus our Savior has appeared to abolish death and hath brought that life and immortality by which he has abolished death to life how does the Lord Jesus bring that life to light the restoration of which to you and to me abolishes death how

does it come to light well by what we do and what we say and what we are dirt out redemption life in new birth regeneration light on sanctification sanctification isn't you know a pious stance a religious pose you don't have to have your bible under your arm and head slightly on one side or wear black stockings sanctification is simply being used intelligently for the intelligent purpose which intelligently created that's sanctification anything can be sanctified when I put my shoes on my feet and walk down the street with them on my feet I sanctify them I use them for the intelligent purpose which they were intelligently created I don't have to I could go barefooted down the road and put my shoes on my head you might think I was a little unusual and you'd be right when you look at your

watch you sanctify it you don't look at it to admire it I mean you may but you don't do that more than once or twice after you've just been given it or bought it but after that you look at it to find the time because that was the object in the mind of the person who created it so when you look at your watch you sanctify it probably some of you have already sanctified your watch several times since I started tonight how do you

sanctify your glasses well you put them on your nose because that was the object of the exercise that's why they're made that particular shape two things that stick out like that go over your ears a little bit that goes over your nose you sanctify them you stick them on your nose and you look through them now you don't have to there are all kinds of other uses to

which you can put your glasses as you probably do I open my letters with mine do you excellent letter opener and in an emergency which quite often occurs when you're traveling as I do I stir my coffee with them all kinds of things you can use the glasses for but they really weren't intelligently designed to that end if you want to sanctify your glasses you stick them on your nose and look through them these are a little unusual because I don't need the top half so I can only half sanctify these glasses you understand what sanctification is you see when you get a lamp that's got dirt and therefore the light went out and you clean the dirt off to let the light in by screwing it back into the socket you sanctify it because the light in then produces the light that can be revealed and banish

the darkness and so to be sanctified simply means that claiming redemption through the shed blood of the Lord Jesus knowing perfectly well why he died for me so that he risen again from the dead might come and live his life in me I can allow him now to behave through me so that by allowing him to work with my hands speak with my lips see with my eyes hear with my ears and walk with my feet clothe his divine activity with my humanity others in me will see him sanctification isn't a blessing it's a person of God is he Christ made unto his wisdom righteousness sanctification redemption it's somebody whom you are allowing to be who he is God in the man because that's what it takes to be a man and it's all according to his divine power one last thing Paul follows up on this in the first

chapter of his epistles of the Ephesians and it's his supreme concern on Sunday evening we recognized that it was his prime preoccupation to know Christ and the power flowing out from his resurrection that I might know him not master new techniques or become an expert in certain theological propositions but says Paul I want to know the Lord Jesus in the power of his resurrection so that I might enjoy that spiritual and moral resurrection that lifts me out from among the dead knowing that only that spiritual resurrection the restoration of the life of Christ that pertains to godliness can bring about that moral restoration that I may in that same way come to know the power outflowing from his resurrection which exerts over believers that if possible I may attain to the spiritual and moral

resurrection that lifts me out from among the dead even while still in the body on earth Philippians 3 11 and he says this my preoccupation for myself that I may so know Christ that the power that flows out from his resurrection may be demonstrably obvious to the world in which while I live so they may know who he is that inhabits my humanity by what I do and what I say and what I am he said this is my supreme preoccupation also for you and so in the 16th verse of that first chapter of his epistle to the Ephesians I cease not to give thanks for you making mention of you in my prayers that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ the father of glory may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ the eyes of your understanding being enlightened that you may know

and here are three things to which we're going to come back tomorrow night but briefly comprehend it first the hope of your calling for you have been called to holiness and he said I want you to know what hope you've got of fulfilling that calling and becoming holy which simply means godlike he said I want you to know the hope of your calling Christ living in your hearts your only hope of glory and he said I want you to know the riches of his inheritance in the saints not just your inheritance in him but his inheritance in you and thirdly what is the exceeding greatness verse 19 of his power to us would who believe now what

power is he talking about the exceeding greatness of God's power to us would who believe well he's talking about the same mighty power that Peter was talking about

third verse first chapter of his second epistle the mighty power whereby he gives unto us that which pertains to being alive and Paul says I want you to know as Peter wants you to know what is the exceeding greatness of God's power to us would who believe and then he goes on to describe that power according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ when he God raised him from the dead chapter 2 verse 1 and you and you do you know what the power was that God exercised in your life when you believed did you think that salvation simply meant a little decision for Jesus filling out a decision form or raising your hand or just saying a prayer did you realize at the moment of your new birth on the grounds of redemption what power was released by God to bring about in you

that which God had in mind in sending his son the apostle Paul tells you the exceeding greatness of God's power to us would who believe according to the mighty working of his power which he wrought in Christ when he God raised him from the dead and you have he quickened who were dead in trespasses just as surely Paul says as God exercised all his illimitable resources in the dynamic of deity to raise his son from the dead that is exactly the power that got exercised when he God raised you from the dead God verse 4 chapter 2 who is rich in mercy for his great love where we beloved us even when we were dead in trespasses and sin what tense is that that's the past tense even when we were dead in trespasses and sins ha quickened us together with Christ what tense is that past tense when we

were dead he has quickened us together with Christ what sort of resurrection is he talking about physical resurrection well of course not because they were still physically alive they've never suffered physical death how could they enjoy physical resurrection when they've never never suffered physical death he's not talking about physical resurrection he's talking about that spiritual resurrection that constitutes a spiritual new birth which is nothing less than the restoration to us now of that life that God the father restored to his son then when he God raised him from the dead that's new birth and it takes as much divine energy to restore a boy girl man a woman to life in new birth as it took God when he raised his son from the dead because you see that life that the father God

restored to the son when he raised him from the dead I'm not talking about his physical resurrection which he enjoyed three days after they took that dead body from the tomb and from the cross and placed it in the tomb true enough the Lord Jesus came back into that dead body and he enjoyed a physical resurrection and in that resurrection body he appeared to his disciples and for 40 years as we have seen taught them but I'm not talking about his physical resurrection I'm talking about that spiritual resurrection of the Lord Jesus whereby he was the first man to be raised from the dead the firstborn the first begotten and that life that the father restored to him when he the father God raised him from the dead is precisely that life that he restores to you and to me in the moment of new

birth by the gift of the Holy Spirit the life of God restored to the soul of man indispensable to the likeness of God in the character of man this is the good news of the gospel that we're redeemed by his blood not with corruptible things like silver and gold says Peter but by the precious blood of God's dear son that we are born again by his resurrection because says Peter as surely as his life was given for me his life now has been given to me and all that he is to whom that life was restored that he so gladly and lovingly laid down is mine because that life restored to him he by his presence in me has been restored to me I'm alive in God and Christ living in my heart now is my only hope of being restored to glory for his life in me pertains to being alive and that life in me that

pertains to being alive is that life alone that pertains to God likeness and apart from who he is living now where he dies I can do nothing I am nothing and I have nothing for said he to me without me you can do nothing but if only you will be to me as man what I then was to my father as man I now as God will be to you what he then as God was to me and from that moment sky's the limit it's a principle to live by foolish Galatians who has bewitched you who has bewitched you do you remember having begun a brand new life by the gift to you of the Holy Spirit through whose presence you share the life of Jesus Christ who by his presence in life abolishes death are you not made perfect in the flesh he says can you be that done that having claimed redemption through the blood of Jesus Christ

dirt out having received the gift of that person God the Holy Spirit through him his life comes in you're trying to turn the light on in the energy of the flesh poor silly thoughtless unreflecting senseless Galatians that's the amplified New Testament amplified not exaggerated just amplified because you see the English language is so weak and poor compared to the rich language in which God in his wisdom chose to give us the original we use one poor little miserable inadequate word foolish Galatians what God really meant was you poor silly thoughtless unreflecting senseless Galatians in other words can you be that done what have they done to deserve that love let me ask you said he this one question did you receive the Holy Spirit the very life of your risen Lord as the result of obeying

the law and doing its works or was it by hearing the message of the gospel and believing it and immediately you understand what Paul presupposes is the consequence of obeying the gospel not getting out of hell in and heaven but receiving a person God the Holy Ghost through whom we share the life of Christ in spiritual new birth to be marvelously furnished by his presence unto every good work well they knew the answer to that they haven't received the Holy Spirit as a big pat on the back from God because they did so well it was because they heard the good news of the gospel that God though we never deserved it for his day for his sake who died in our place was prepared to restore to us the Holy Spirit through whom we'd share his life when he says let me ask you this one question are you so

foolish so senseless so silly having begun your new life spiritual will you the Holy Spirit are you now reaching perfection by dependence on the flesh you receive the Lord Jesus to indwell your humanity to impart to you all the fullness of deity to be to you as God all the father was to him as God and you ignore his presence lock him up in the cellar live on as though he might just as well be dead hanging on the cross at very best in heaven behind the clouds peeping at you on earth you ignore his presence and try to be made perfect in that all that damning nature that you possess before ever you were redeemed the flesh that can only abuse misuse and prostitute your humanity he said can you be that dumb that you get the dirt out without realizing that God put the life in and so although

alive you go on living as though you were dead can you imagine going down the road and there's a lady on the side of the road with a head under the hood and you start out of the kindness of your heart and say excuse me madam can I help and she says yes this thing won't go and so you get into the front you switch the engine on and as you anticipate it there's no no petrol in the tank and so you say excuse me madam would you take your head from under the hood under the bonnet I'll tell you exactly why this thing won't go it doesn't have any petrol and cars seldom go without petrol um but I'll tell you what you say to this dear lady I've got a rope in the back of my car and I'll tell you to the next petrol pump so you tow her to the petrol pump and you say to the man there fill the tank and

so he fills the lady's tank and to her great embarrassment she discovers she has no money with her and so you say oh please don't allow that to embarrass you that's my my privilege and you pay the bill you pay

a debt you did not owe because she owes a debt she cannot pay redemption that's redemption he paid a debt on that cross he did not owe because we owed a debt we could not pay redemption but why on behalf of this lady have you paid a debt you did not owe because she owed a debt she could not pay why'd you do it fill the tank to give her what it takes to drive home well she thanks you profusely you get into your car begin to drive off but just as a final gesture you stick your head out of the window to say goodbye and to your amazement you see this lady pushing the car home with a

full tank can you imagine anybody being that dumb are you that dumb foolish Galatians pushing a car with a full tank having received Christ as your redeemer so that he risen from the dead might come and live within you and share his life with you and you live as though you were still dead trying to be made perfect in the flesh how easy it is in our stupidity to miss the whole point that Christ gave himself for you only that he might give himself to you now because he's the only one who's got what it takes so why not stop pushing why not get on board switch on put your foot in the gas and go for a ride and discover that he's big enough for the job it takes Christ to be a Christian because Christ in the Christian puts God back into the man

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