

# Christ Imparts Life

by Major Ian Thomas

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*The key to a victorious life is walking in the spirit and ceasing to walk after the flesh, and God expects nothing but faith from a Christian.*

**Duration:** 45:04

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, John 14:6, Romans 8:9, 2 Corinthians 13:5, Galatians 2:20, 2 Peter 1:3-4

**Topics:** "Life"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the fallen nature of humanity and the expectations that God has for us. He emphasizes that in our flesh, apart from Christ, we are destined for failure. The preacher uses the analogy of a pig finding delight in mud to illustrate the inherent nature of our sinful flesh. However, he also encourages believers to rely on Christ and expect Him to work in and through them, conforming them to His will. The sermon concludes with a cautionary reminder that leaving the door open to sin can have disastrous consequences.

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## Transcript

The issues that we are facing have become increasingly clarified in your mind. We've discovered that man as he is, in his unregenerate condition, alienated from the life of God, has been invaded by a principle which in the Bible is called the flesh, or sin, as opposed to sin, of satanic origin. Usurping the sovereignty of God in the area of human personality, mind, emotion, will, so that the body is made by the flesh an instrument for unrighteousness.

That's what we've discovered. That's what we are, by our natural birth as the fallen seed of the fallen atom. And that this principle that is within us is inherently hostile to God, not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

And this principle within us of satanic origin, this agency, that has taken over the keyboards in the music room, perpetrating nothing but discord, cannot and will not satisfy the demands of God's righteousness, as declared in the law, nor has it in itself the capacity to emulate nor imitate the life of Christ whose life satisfies that law. It is true that it has a certain perverted bent which enables it to simulate righteousness, but it's not true righteousness. And when the flesh simulates righteousness, it's always self-righteousness.

And self-righteousness is always self-conscious righteousness, and self-conscious righteousness will always fill you with self-praise, and will always desire to be recognized, applauded, and that makes you an

extrovert. When the flesh in its pursuit of righteousness or pseudo-righteousness fails, instead of being filled with self-praise, you're filled with self-pity. And instead of becoming an extrovert, you become an introvert.

And the devil doesn't mind which you are, as long as you're one or the other. Because so long as you're preoccupied with self-praise or self-pity, you'll be egocentric instead of being Christocentric. Now that's the best that the flesh can ever achieve.

And all that you are, apart from regeneration, the restoration to you, of the life of the Lord Jesus by the gift of the Holy Spirit, all you are before that happens, is the flesh. The carnal man, the animal man, alienated from the life of God. This is our problem.

And that's why, as we turn to the first epistle of John and the third chapter, we read, in the eighth verse, He that committed sin is of the devil, for the devil sinneth from the beginning. He that committed sin is of the devil. All sin, in other words, is of satanic origin.

Now it's important that we should understand this, lest we should minimize the simpleness of sin. He that committed sin, what it is in you that prostitutes your humanity, makes your body the instrument of unrighteousness, causes you to act in this attitude of independence of God, godlessness. This that makes you do this is of satanic origin.

He that committed sin is of the devil. And it is this principle from within you which forces you in this direction. That is why the Lord Jesus, in the seventh chapter of Mark's Gospel, said, verse 20, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man, from within, out of the heart, from this evil source of satanic origin, out of the heart, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness, all these evil things come from within.

They defile the man. You're not defiled because you rub shoulders with a defiled word. You are defiled personally from within.

It's not that which from without that makes you dirty, it's that which is from within that makes you dirty. It's there from the very beginning. For you are born as a fallen member of the fallen race, within you having the usurper of divine sovereignty, the flesh.

The satanic agency is there that Satan himself, for all that he is as the one who sins from the beginning, might be incarnate in terms of your behavior. If you turn with me to the eighth chapter of John, John chapter 8, the Lord Jesus said to the Pharisees, verse 40, Now you seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God. This did not Abraham.

There is murder in your heart. There was no murder in his heart. Ye do the deeds of your father.

Then said they to him, we be not born of fornication, we have one father, even God. The Lord Jesus said unto them, if God were your father, then your attitude to me would be my father's attitude to me. If this claim of yours is legitimate, that you are truly a child of God, and that my father has full sway to express what he is, his attitude, through your personality, then quite obviously your attitude to me would be my father's attitude to me.

For I proceeded forth and came from God, my father. Neither came I of myself, he sent me. Why do you not understand my speech? Even because you cannot hear my words.

Ye are of your father, the devil. And the lusts of your father ye will do. What he is, you will do.

He was a murderer from the beginning. And he will want to kill in terms of your humanity placed at his disposal. He abodes not in the truth, because there is no truth in him.

When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own, for he is a liar. And the father of it. All he wants is your humanity to do what he is.

To kill because he is a murderer, and to lie because he is a liar. Now this is the nature of sin. This is the nature of all unrighteous.

Your humanity, prostituted by the satanic agency in you, the flesh, that enables the devil himself to be what he is in terms of what you do, and are, and think, colouring all your attitudes. Now that isn't a very pleasant picture. But this is fallen man.

From this Thames, the abysmal darkness in which this poor world lies in wickedness. Now I tell you that for your encouragement. It may not sound very encouraging, but it is.

Because this being so, what do you imagine that God has ever expected of you? By virtue of what you are, in the flesh. And apart from what Christ is in you, through the spirit. What do you imagine would God ever expect of you in this condition? Nothing, but unrelenting, complete, total, and relentless faith.

Now isn't that encouraging? It was a tremendous relief to me in the day that I discovered that God had never expected anything of me except hopeless, utter, and continual failure. What a relief! Because for years as a Christian I had been labouring under the misapprehension that being a forgiven sinner, all that God expected of me now was that I should re-educate myself to live like Christ and be worthy of the one who died for me 1900 years ago. And so for 7 solid years from the day of my conversion at the age of 12 I tried to improve myself, to make myself more like Christ and to present myself to God in a better light.

And I was always having to come to God with apologies. It was a tremendous task. It was a bewildering task.

I was baffled and buffeted constantly because of, I was seeking to achieve the impossible. What a relief it was for me to discover that nothing that had ever shocked me about myself had ever shocked God. He knew it all from the start.

And furthermore he knew a thousand times more about myself than I ever knew that would have shocked me a thousand times more. It's a wonderful thing to know that nothing that ever shocked you about yourself ever shocked God. He knows it from the start.

He expects of you nothing, nothing, nothing but faith. For what you are, apart from what Christ is. Now lay hold of this fact and you will be relieved of the awful frustration of self-effort.

The futility of trying to pull yourself up by your own bootstrap. It is impossible. What you are now in the flesh you always will be, even if you live for another hundred years.

You could become the most wonderful Christian on earth, but I want to tell you this, that what you are in the flesh you always will be. There is absolutely no salvageable content whatever in what you are apart from what Christ is. That is to say in the flesh, none.

Imagine that my wife and I decided to engage in a little experiment. We've come to the conclusion that the popular supposition that a pig is always dirty is basically false. That given a change of environment, the pig will be as nice and gentlemanly as our own little boy.

And so we decide that we are going to engage in an experiment and vindicate the nature of the pig. That it may be emancipated from this entirely false idea about its habits and behavior. And so we take a little silky baby pig into the home.

I've got three boys, Christopher, Mark, and Peter, and we explain what we're doing to them. And we say, well now we've adopted this little pig. And we're going to count him as a member of the family.

We want you to accept him as one of yourselves. And just treat him like your little brother. And we believe that so long as we give him this chance, change his environment, and we treat him just like one of us, he'll soon take on our characteristics.

So we put him in a little pink shirt and little velvet trousers, and put a bow in his little curly tail, and we begin to instruct the pig in good manners. And we make remarkable progress. We teach it to wipe its feet when it comes into the house.

It'll stand when a lady enters into the room. It's got quite a custom now to go into bed beneath the sheets. It sits up at tables.

It's remarkable. Our friends are amazed at the progress that we have made. And in three or four months' time, we are really feeling that we have achieved our aim.

We are vindicating the inherent nature of the pig. It's nothing like what people had always thought. Until we made one fatal blunder.

We left the door open. And when the fresh spring air came in through the door, its little snout sort of flapped its wings, if snouts have wings. And almost before we knew what had happened, it was through that door like a bullet from a gun, and racing across the field, until it found the dirtiest puddle of mud that it could find, and plunging in with uncontrolled delight, rolled itself over and over with its little feet kicking in the air, little blue pants and all, and shouted at the top of its own piggy voice, Home sweet home.

Because you see, no matter how you may dress it up, no matter how you may seek to discipline it, and no matter how much encouragement it may appear to give you, pig is pig. And mud is always home sweet home. Now that's what God has to say about your nature in the flesh.

No matter how you may woo it, win it, threaten it, educate it, discipline it, pig is always pig. He that committeth sin is of the devil. It is within its own nature to be what it is, of satanic origin.

Now if you and I walk in the flesh as a Christian, like the foolish Galatians whom we mentioned this morning, seeking to be made perfect in the resources that we had in the flesh before ever we were regenerate, we are fighting a battle already lost. Instead of walking in the spirit, in the power of the imparted life of Jesus Christ, and thereby enjoying a victory already won. We saw this morning that the

Lord Jesus had to be what he was in his perfection in order to do what he did in his death for redemption.

That we as forgiven sinners reconciled to a holy God on the basis of his vicarious suffering might be qualified to receive what he is. The restoration to us of the Holy Spirit, the true divine nature for which man was created. That he in his turn might oust the usurper and take over the area of our whole human personality.

That the Lord Jesus himself might live his life divinely imparted by the restoration to us of the Holy Spirit in us and through us. A new nature imparting a completely new capacity for life. Now this is the reason for which you have been redeemed.

The Lord Jesus had come that you might have life and that you might have it in a superlative quality, life more abundant. What life did he come that you might have? Physical life? No you have that. By your natural birth from your natural parents you receive natural life.

He came that you might have spiritual life, divine life, eternal life, God's life. Made partakers of the divine nature. Now turn back with me then to the first epistle of John and the same third chapter and we read on.

Verse 8 He that committeth sin is of the devil for the devil sinneth from the beginning. That which in us commits sin is of the devil. It is the flesh and in it there is no good thing.

For this purpose the Son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil, render them null and void. Whosoever is born of God does not commit sin for his seed remaineth in him and he cannot sin because he is born of God. Now it well may be that this verse has baffled you in the past and if you've never before read it it's probably baffling you now in the present.

Because what it says is this whosoever is born of God does not commit sin his seed remaineth in him and he cannot sin not only does he not he cannot because he is born of God. Has that proved a difficulty to you difficulty to you maybe in the past? Because you say to yourself that doesn't seem to fit my experience. I've been completely convinced that I've been born of God and yet not only can I but I do still commit sin.

But this says that a person born of God doesn't commit sin nor the neither can he. So either I'm not born again because I can and do or this doesn't mean what it says. Well now I'm fully aware of the fact that some will interpret it that way and say it doesn't really mean exactly what it says what it really means is this that whosoever is born of God does not habitually commit sin for his seed remaineth in him and he cannot habitually sin because he is born of God.

Well that may be true but I think there's a simpler explanation. Who is it that's born of God? Who was it that was born of God in the womb of Mary? Jesus Christ. And when he was born of the Holy Spirit in the womb of Mary to walk this earth in his own humanity presented to him by the Father which he in his turn presented to the Father his seed remained within him uninhabited by sin only inhabited by God he could not and he did not sin for in him there was no sin he was born of God therefore said the angel Gabriel to Mary this holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God now he had to be what he was born of God that he might do what he did redeem that you might have what he is born of God and what happens when you are redeemed through the shed blood of Christ is this nothing less than the imparting to you by the indwelling Holy Spirit of the life of the one whose seed remains within him who in you cannot and does not sin who is that?

Jesus Christ he's the one who is born of God in you that's what Paul means in the epistle to the Galatians when speaking of his own conversion he said verse 15 of Galatians chapter 1 when it pleased God who separated me from my mother's womb and called me by his grace to reveal his Son in me this was why he prayed for these newly converted men and women in the Galatian church in chapter 4 verse 19 of the same epistle my little children of whom I travel in birth again until Christ be born in you it's a very wonderful thing but when you were reconciled to God by putting your trust in the Lord Jesus by virtue of his atoning sacrifice God sealed this transaction whereby you were reconciled to himself by the restoration to you through the Holy Spirit of none other than Jesus Christ who came to

live his life in you if this is not true you are not a Christian for Romans 8, 9 says if any man have not the Spirit of Christ living in him he is none of his turn with me to the last chapter of the second epistle to the Corinthians to Corinthians chapter 13 and verse 5 having written two epistles to this church having outlined to them their privileges and responsibilities having rebuked them for their inconsistencies he now as it were sets them in examination and in the fifth verse of the thirteenth chapter he says examine yourselves whether you be in the faith prove your own self know ye not your own selves how that Jesus Christ is in you except ye be reprobate the word reprobate means that you have been tested and found to be a counterfeit an imitation of the real thing an article that

is not genuine he says this is the examination Christ is in you unless you are a counterfeit that the only criterion as to whether you are regenerate or not is the presence of the living Christ in you by his Spirit well now you know that to be true and if I were to say to you does Jesus Christ live in your heart you would say oh yes indeed he does would you tell me what kind of a Christ it is that lives in your heart is it the same Lord Jesus Christ that lived on earth 1900 years ago is it the very same Lord Jesus Christ who walked in his own humanity on earth or you say yes the very same Jesus Christ then I must ask you this question can he and does he sin today any more than he did then will you say no of course not he can't and he doesn't then exactly where you are sitting tonight on

that chair where you are sitting here on this campus at Westmont there is somebody living in you who cannot and does not sin who is it Jesus Christ does the Bible therefore teach sinless perfection yes who his but not yours the Bible teaches the sinless perfection of Jesus Christ sinless perfection as applied to the person of Jesus Christ is a doctrine sinless perfection as applied to you and to me is a delusion there is a sinless perfection it is found in the person of the Lord Jesus and only in him who is the divine nature 2 Peter chapter 1 2 Peter chapter 1 here Peter is explaining the amazing transformation that took place at Pentecost whereby he the hopeless failure suddenly became the mighty man of God he says Simon Peter a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ to them that have

obtained like precious faith with us like precious faith in other words have entered into the same faith love relationship with Jesus Christ verse 3 according as his divine power God's divine power have given unto us given all things that pertain unto life and godliness all that it takes in other words by God's divine power he has given to you and to me all that it takes for life and godliness through the knowledge of him Jesus Christ that has called us to glory and virtue and faithful is he that calleth you who will also do it verse 4 whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature having escaped the corruption that is in the world through life so the wonderful promises of God are given to you that you might

experientially in the present tense become a partaker of nothing less than the divine nature of the risen lord Jesus Christ who has taken up residence within you through his spirit what is this teaching it teaches

you that you as a Christian possess two natures the pig nature the flesh and the divine nature Christ through the spirit you have a nature within you which is incorrigibly bad from which God expects nothing but relentless failure hostility and rebellion and nothing but pseudo righteous but you possess also a divine nature which is incorrigibly good a nature which is incorrigibly bad and a nature which is incorrigibly good the flesh that you had before you were regenerate and the spirit whom you have received at your regeneration for the receiving of the holy spirit is your

regeneration now God calls upon you to cease walking after the flesh and to begin to walk after the spirit in other words don't fight a battle already lost by the flesh enjoy a victory already won by the spirit how are you to deal with this old nature the flesh roll up your sleeves and take it on no, God says if you do that you'll be defeated every time it's a battle already lost you are to walk in the spirit you are to come to the risen lord Jesus who indwells you and claim his life in the same way that you came to the lord Jesus who died to redeem you as you thanked him for his death for redemption you thank him now for his life which sets you free from the lower law of your lower nature you walk in the spirit in order not to fulfill the lusts of the flesh in other words when the old

usurper is sitting something away producing discord at the keyboard you turn to the holy spirit and say no but me trying to get him off that piano I'm totally dependent upon you thank you very much the holy spirit then goes and ousts him off the piano and instead of discord produces the perfect harmony of a life once more in tune with God he is your victory this is explained to us in the eighth chapter of the epistle to the Romans where it says this there is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus justified who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit sanctified in Christ justified Christ in you in whose power you walk sanctified justification is the crisis of a moment sanctification is the process of a lifetime by an act of faith you step into Christ are

clothed with his righteousness by an attitude of faith you enjoy that righteousness which now you clothe Christ himself so it goes on to say this in verse two the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death there is a new and a higher law now operating within me which I trust implicitly that sets me free from the lower law of sin and death ever since I was born I have been earthbound by nature a certain law called gravity has kept me to this earth on many occasions I have tried to defy it from my earliest days I have tried to defy it I've jumped and skipped but I've always come back to where I started this is the law of gravity and yet in the last eighteen months I should have travelled about eighty or ninety thousand miles I calculated the

other day that I've spent at least fourteen days and nights this year already off the earth's surface I'm almost a satellite I went from London to Hong Kong to Formosa to Japan back here to California up and down this country and I can go back to England how did I do it?

I've been earthbound since I've been a baby and yet I'm doing these sort of things in a matter of hours from one side of the continent to the other why? because there's a new law that has been introduced it's the law of aerodynamics now when I said goodbye to my wife as I was about to step into the plane what do you think I said to her? in order to fly say the Pacific or the Atlantic well of course I said well goodbye darling that's the correct formula I promise you one thing I promise you with all my heart from the very moment I step into this plane I won't stop trying till I get to America I promise you I'll do all I can to overcome gravity I promise you that and when I've tried and tried and got there I'll send you a telegram do you think that's what I said? well if I had said that she would have looked at me with grave sympathy and would have had grave misgiving now that isn't the way I stepped into that plane I knew that when I was

stepping into that plane I was committing myself to a higher law which itself would set me free from the lower law it wasn't sufficient for me to be academically informed about that higher law I could have studied the law and known all the intricacies of it and how it works but it wouldn't have got me across the Atlantic it was only as I walked up the gangplank stepped into the plane and committed myself in complete and absolute trust and as the mighty jet engine roared into life and we swept along the runway and then took to the air all I was doing was resting resting in a higher law that was setting me free from a lower law I wasn't trying to be dead to gravity the man sitting next to me might have turned round and found my muscles tense he said, what are you doing? he said, I'm trying to be dead to gravity I'm trying to be dead to gravity I'm dead, I'm dead to gravity, stop interfering, I'm busy, I'm trying to be dead no, no, no, I'm resting resting in the joy of what thou art this is the Christian life so long as I'm walking in the spirit moment by moment saying thank you Lord for what you are that sets me free from what I am thank you Lord, thank you Lord, thank you Lord this is the appropriation of faith that enjoys what he is and sets me free from what I am but supposing halfway across the Atlantic I thought, well this is easy I don't know that I need this plane anymore I think I've had sufficient experience to run this thing on my own and so I pull open the emergency window and I step out intending to make the rest of the journey on my own what do I discover?

I discover that far from the lower law having been eradicated it has simply been neutralized and just so soon as I step out of my position in faith that appropriates the higher law I become prey instantly again to the lower law and I'm plunged into the Atlantic now if you're flying the Atlantic and you do that you only do it once now fortunately when you do this in the spiritual realm thank God it is not without remedy but you see the Christian life is a walk reconciliation to God is a crisis the Christian life is a process reconciliation to God is the door sanctification is the walk in the spirit how many steps do you take at a time when you walk? just one how many days at a time do you live? just one and for every step you take into every new situation you simply reaffirm your attitude

of dependence upon the one who in you, Christ, through the spirit sets you free from what you are in the flesh now you can take ten steps in dependence upon the Christ who lives within you and he will vindicate his adequacy and set you free and be all that you need in any circumstance at any time and human nature being what it is that all big nature being what it is you are still capable of taking the eleventh step in something other than dependence upon the spirit and instead of relating the situation to him you relate it again to yourself and what happens you are immediately thrown back upon your own bankruptcy what are you to do? bury your head and weep in despair? no, that's what the devil would like you to do you now know the principles you know what you've done you've stepped out of

your position of faith in the one who not only died for you but rose again to live in you having died for what you've done he rose again to take the place of what you are and you've stepped out of that position of faith so immediately you return to the Lord Jesus and say thank you Lord Jesus the devil hasn't robbed me of what you are he's simply robbed me of the enjoyment of what you are he hasn't robbed me of my victory because you're my victory he can't rob me of you but he has robbed me for the moment of the enjoyment of my victory I'm sorry that I've done this I confess it it was the sin, the awful sin of independence but I claim the cleansing that you have promised through your shed blood instantly and I thank you now for cleansing I don't quite know how to clear up the mess that

I've just made through my stupid independence but dear Lord I thank you that you are gloriously adequate even for that thank you so much now I'm back where I belong I'm now depending upon you and you alone again you are my life, still you are my victory, still you are my strength, still I don't ask you for any of these things you are these things for to me to live is not what Christ gives me to me to live is what Christ is are

you beginning to understand the principle? this is the walk of the Christian life every step taken in an attitude of dependence if you are deceived, cheated, taken off your guard and you take a step other than independence admit it, confess it rebound at once your position of faith and go on in the victory which you cannot win but which has already been won that you

do not receive but you already have Jesus Christ who in you cannot and does not sin you can't have Jesus Christ in you without having a victorious Christian life tell me how long have you been a Christian? is it 10 years? or 9 months? or 7? whatever it may be how long then have you had Jesus Christ living within you? 10 years? 9 months? or 7? or 3 years? just so long as you've been converted you've had Christ how long then have you had his victory? just as long as you've had Christ how long have you had his strength? just as long as you've had Christ how long have you had all his wisdom? just as long as you've had Christ I'm not asking how long you have enjoyed his victory enjoyed his strength I'm merely asking you how long you've had his strength had his victory in other words how long

have you had the gas in the tank? and for how long during that time in which you had gas in the tank have you been pushing the car? that's the question now all I'm asking you to do this week is to begin life if never before on the only principle that makes the Christian life work the principle that Christ who is in you is adequate in the attitude of total dependence upon the one who's being in you is adequate and if you've never done so before I simply ask you tonight before you sleep to get down on your knees and say Lord Jesus how stupid of me I've had all that you are ever since I have been redeemed but how little of what you are have I enjoyed I'm going to thank you now not only for what you have done from this moment on I'm going to thank you for what you are because all that you are

I have you're my strength, my victory, my wisdom my peace, my joy, my future I don't even worry about the will of God now for my life I'm never going to ask you to guide me again because the will of God for me is your life in me and you happen to know where you're going what a wonderful relief thank you Lord for you're going to live your life through me now just one day at a time and for every day you'll have your glorious purpose to fulfill I want you to know that I'm available and when tomorrow comes you'll have a purpose for tomorrow but I'm not worrying about tomorrow because when tomorrow comes it'll be today and when the day after tomorrow comes it'll be today and in six months time I shall be amazed at where I've got and I shall look back and discover I got there one day at a time

living in the present tense not of what Christ was for me not of what Christ will be for me but living in the glorious present tense for every day of my life in what Christ is in me this is the Christian life to me to live is Christ I am the way, the truth and the life now isn't that simple but don't make it more complicated than it is and when you get up tomorrow morning if you've never done so before step out into a day in which you expect and thank Christ for what He is going to accomplish in and through you and remember all that He will accomplish in and through you will be in conformity to what might intelligently be expected of what Christ can and will perform in the humanity of a student whom He's put here at Westminster because He happens to be quite intelligent that's a wonderful

discovery that we make when we begin to commit ourselves wholly only and

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