

Christ Our Life

by Philip Powell

Christ is not just a way to God, but the way, the truth, and the life, offering eternal, abundant, and genuine life to those who follow Him.

Duration: 12:04

Scripture: John 5:39-40, John 14:3, John 14:6, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Colossians 3:4, Titus 2:13

Topics: "Eternal Life", "Christian Identity"

Description

In this sermon on John chapter 10, the preacher discusses Jesus' teachings about his sheep and the sheepfold. He emphasizes that the life Jesus offers is not just an average life, but a life that reaches higher and delves deeper than superficial human experience. The preacher highlights the promise of the blessed hope of the church, which is a sharing in the glory of Jesus Christ. He emphasizes that Christ is our life and that this eternal life is found only in him, not in religion or culture. The preacher also mentions a trend in Western society where people are saying no to the church but yes to Christ.

Transcript

Christ is our life. Colossians 3, 4 says, when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall you also appear with him in glory. People in Western society are increasingly saying no to the church, but yes to Christ.

As I travel to different countries, I am told that this can be seen as a trend, especially in Australia, New Zealand and Britain, and to a lesser extent elsewhere, including America. In all of these countries, church attendance has diminished, notwithstanding the mega churches in some cities, where there is a swinging door syndrome. They swarm through the front door due to the magnetism of advertising and excitement, and out the back when they become disillusioned.

There are various reasons for this disillusionment, including the hypocrisy of the leaders of the established church in the way that they live and the methods they adopt to control and extract money from Christians. It's one of the great shames of our time. Tithing is the big con.

Televangelism has made the church a byword. These have become major causes why the average man or woman of our society says no to the church. When we lived in New Zealand, we were told that at least 40,000 Christians no longer attend church there.

This could well mean that the largest group of Christians in that country are the non-churched. I discovered something similar in UK when I visited on two recent occasions, and undoubtedly a similar situation pertains in Australia. It's happening even in the USA, where historically there has always been a high church attendance.

People remain committed to the Christian faith, but have opted out of church. So we may ask, why are they continuing to say yes to Christ? There are a number of reasons for this. Here are some.

Firstly, Christ is not an institution. The established church is. Mind you, our Lord did not design or intend a church with a hierarchy as a leadership.

His plan was simple. Those who have gathered together in my name. Matthew chapter 18 verse 20.

He did not project an institution with all sorts of do's and don'ts. He promised that he would manifest his divine and glorious presence among those whom he had sovereignly gathered together in his name. His presence and power secures the protection of his people, the true church.

We need to rediscover this in the serious days in which we live. Secondly, Christ is not a hypocrite, as church leaders often tend to be. I have suggested two areas where church leaders are so frequently perceived to be hypocritical.

In morals and in money. Both genuine Christians and honest non-Christians expect preachers of the gospel to be people of integrity in both of these areas. A man who cheats on his wife or who manipulates money falsely from people and who stands in a pulpit to preach is a phony and a con.

The establishment that permits or covers up these things is not worthy of the support of good people and will forfeit it in the end. Christ is unimpeachable in these areas. He is not a hypocrite and never will be.

Thirdly, as our text explains, Christ is the essence of our life. And falsely, as the same text states, Christ is our hope for the future. These are the reasons why people are saying yes to Christ but no to the church.

In the first phrase, Paul refers to Christ as our life. The Lord Jesus Christ himself makes a similar claim. In John chapter 14 verse 6, we read, Jesus said unto him, that is Philip, I am the way, the truth, and the life.

No one comes unto the Father but by me. Christ is unique and exclusive in every aspect of his being and claims. Some years ago, the son of a former colleague of mine in a telephone conversation told me to get a life.

His choice of words was a giveaway. He was following a man, not Christ. I recognized immediately who he was mimicking.

The Lord Jesus Christ does not offer a life. He offers life. There is no indefinite article.

Of course, it must be understood as being spiritual life, but it is more than that. Christ offers himself and he himself becomes our life. His offer is exclusive.

You can't find it in religion or through culture. You find it only in Christ. He didn't claim to be a way to God.

He said that he is the way, that is the only way to God. He didn't claim to be a part of a truth. He said, I am the truth, and he reinforces the matter by warning that no one can come to God, the Father, apart from

Jesus Christ, God's Son.

Jesus warned, no one comes unto the Father but by me. In John chapter 10, verse 10, he further explains, the thief comes not but for to steal and to kill and to destroy. I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly.

In this chapter, John chapter 10, Jesus is talking about his sheep, those who follow him, and his sheepfold where his followers dwell in safety. He gives us an insight into the nature of the life that is himself. He calls it life more abundantly, and in so saying, he presents three ideas.

Firstly, the life he offers reaches higher than the normal average life. Secondly, the life he gives delves deeper than superficial human experience. Thirdly, his life is genuine and real when all around is sham and hypocrisy.

In both his gospel and his epistles, John refers to this a number of times as eternal life, not because it has no beginning, as there is obviously a time when each individual starts his or her Christian life in Christ. Speaking about his sheep, that is those who follow him, Jesus said, I give unto them eternal life. John 10, 28.

He offers it and we receive or reject his offer. If we accept the offer, then he gives and keeps on giving eternal life. That process involves God's will and action, and it involves our human choice.

It doesn't apply to everyone, only to those who accept and follow Christ. This expression, eternal life, doesn't principally define extent, because all living men and women are what the Bible calls souls, and as such, are eternal in the sense of lasting forever. That is an awesome thought in the true sense of awesome.

You are going to last forever, and you can't do anything about that fact. All you can do is choose what sort of a life you live now, and where and with whom you spend that life in eternity. With the devil in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, as we read in Revelation 21, 8 and Revelation 20, verse 10, or in heaven with God, Christ, and all true believers in Christ.

It's your choice, but not entirely. The Bible says that you can come to Christ only when his Father draws you. John chapter 6, verse 44, no man can come to me except the Father who has sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day.

When the Bible talks about eternal life, it is defining the nature of Christ, and of the life that we have when we possess Him. 1 John chapter 1, verse 2 says, for the life was manifested, that is shown or revealed, and we have seen Him and bear witness and show, that is declare, unto you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us. John is not describing life in the abstract.

By reading all of 1 John chapter 1, it will become clear to you that John is talking about Christ when he refers to life and to eternal life. That is why he says in 1 John 5, 11 to 12, and this is the record that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life, and he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

Jesus Himself expressed it similarly in John chapter 5, verses 39 to 40. Search the scriptures, He said, for in them you think you have eternal life, and they testify of me, and you will not come to me that you might have life. In concluding, let me remind you of our principal text of Scripture with which I commence this

talk.

Colossians chapter 3, verse 5, or rather verse 4, when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall you also appear with Him in glory. Paul the Apostle is clearly talking about something that is future as well as something that is present. He tells us that Christ is our life now, and that a time will come when the Lord and Savior will return to this earth.

Jesus confirmed this in the well-known passage where He speaks about going to prepare a place for His people. John chapter 14, verse 3, if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there you may be also. He made a promise, and He's going to keep His word.

This is what the Bible calls the blessed hope of the church. Titus chapter 2, verse 13, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ. Paul describes that future event as a sharing in His glory.

What a fantastic prospect. It all hangs on the fact that Christ is our life, that is our eternal life. Christ dispenses it to those who are in Christ.

2 Corinthians chapter 5, verse 17, therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. All things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new.

Have you come into this life which is Christ Himself? May God bless you.

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