

Spirituality: Yes in Christ

by Stephen Kaung

The sermon emphasizes that spiritual life is found in Christ and is characterized by the reality of His presence and the fulfillment of His promises.

Duration: 1:19:43

Scripture: Matthew 5:39, 2 Corinthians 1:15, 2 Corinthians 1:18-21

Topics: "Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes that true life is found in Christ and not in our own efforts. He explains that when we read the Word of God, it is the Holy Spirit who opens our eyes and reveals its truth to us. The speaker shares an example of a sister who attended a conference to learn how to live a victorious life, but it was only when she heard a message on Romans 6 to 8 that she truly understood the way to victory. The speaker emphasizes that spiritual life is not just knowing about Christ or his teachings, but it is having Christ in us and experiencing his reality.

Transcript

...given in Richmond, Virginia by Brother Stephen Kong. If you were here last night, you know that our time together, this time is more a sharing and a fellowship of what the Lord may have to say to us through the second letter to the Corinthians. I mentioned last night that it will not be an expounding of that letter of which I am not competent.

What I wish to share with you brothers and sisters is certain things in that letter which touch my heart. And I do look to the Lord that it may touch each of our hearts. We mentioned last night that there is no letter written by the Apostle Paul which reveals himself as the second letter to the Corinthians.

You do not find too much doctrinal approach in that letter. You do not find he is dealing with the details of practical life in that letter. Now, of course, there are deep teachings in that letter, no doubt about that.

And there are many very practical things to be solved in that letter. That is true. But these are just touched upon.

In other words, the motive, the purpose behind this letter is not to inform the Corinthian believers of certain truth. The purpose of his writing that letter is not to really solve their problems of life. The purpose of that letter is to pour out his heart to them.

In other words, a sharing of himself, of that man in Christ that they too may become men and women in Christ. Now, this is probably the motive behind the writing of that letter. I think in that letter, Paul has shown us in a very unique way what is really spiritual life.

We talk about spiritual life. We want to live spiritual life. We want to be spiritual.

But what is really spiritual life? So in the first part of his letter, I think there are a few phrases which will help us to understand what spiritual life really is. The first phrase we mentioned last night, the sentence of death. When we talk about spiritual life, you have to understand what death really is.

Because spiritual life is life out of death. Our natural life exists until death. And that's the end of our natural life.

It begins with birth and it ends with death, with atonement. That's our natural life. But spiritual life begins on the other side of atonement.

In other words, spiritual life begins at death. Because it is resurrection life. It is life out of death.

We know that Christ has died on the cross. Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone. But if it should die, it produces much fruit.

Now this is the result of the death of our Lord Jesus. Because He has died on the cross and through His death, life is liberated. Life is given out.

And today, as we believe in the Lord Jesus, we have received eternal life. We have received His life. We have life in us.

Thank God for that. The life that we have received is a life out of death. It is a life that is released through death.

And it is a life that has overcome death. You remember the Lord Himself tells us that, Behold, He is the one who has died and is now alive. And He lives forevermore.

This is our Lord Jesus. And this is the life that we have received. We have already had life.

We have already received this new life, this eternal life in us. But how can that life be released in us? How can that life be liberated, be increased, be developed, grow in us, manifested in us? You find the same principle. It is through death.

The sentence. Unless one day the Lord has opened our eyes to see that there is not only a sentence of death over us, but we accept that sentence of death within us, then it is futile to talk about spiritual life. Because our spiritual life probably will be just a pseudo-spiritual life.

It is a life in the flesh. It is not a life. Well, we will not go back to that and go over it all over again.

But I just mention this because when we talk about spiritual life, probably the first thing that the Spirit of God will really lead us into is the sentence of death. Is it not true that we are seeking for spiritual life? Is it not true that the more you seek for spiritual life, strange to say, it is not life that you experience, it is death that you experience. We expect life, but God gives us death.

We expect to be very lively, very powerful, and yet the more you seek for life, the more you will find you are being surrounded, squeezed, cornered, until you come to a place you will find that it is death. You wonder why God has answered your prayer. Because it is only out of death that life, and that life is real life.

Now after we have mentioned this, then this morning we will go off and we will see how far we can go. You will find in the first chapter of 2nd Corinthians another very catching phrase. Let us read a portion.

We will read from verse 15. First chapter of 2nd Corinthians, verse 15. And with this confidence I purposed to come to you previously, that ye might have a second favor, and to pass through to Macedonia by you, and again from Macedonia to come to you, and to be set forward by you to Judea.

Having therefore this purpose, did I then use likeness? Or what do I purpose according to flesh, that there should be with me yea, yea, and nay, nay? Now God is faithful, and our word to you is not yea and nay. For the Son of God Jesus Christ, He who has been preached by us among you by me, and Silvanus, Silvanus, and Timotheus, did not become yea and nay, but yea is in Him. For whatever promises of God there are, in Him is the yea, and in Him the amen.

For glory to God by us. Now He that establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us is God, who also has sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. First, the sentence of death.

Second, yes, in Christ. The occasion of these words is rather strange. You know, Paul was in Ephesus.

And while he was laboring in Ephesus, his heart embraces all those believers whom he had visited before. And even those whom he had never seen before. That's the heart of Paul.

He was laboring in Ephesus. But his heart embraced the Lord's interest, the Lord's people everywhere. And of course, the church at Corinth was included.

So you find that towards the end of his long stay in Ephesus, he was thinking of visiting Corinth again. He wanted to go to Macedonia. And from Macedonia he will go down to Achaia, where Corinth was.

And then he will go back to Macedonia. So he was thinking of visiting Corinth twice. Go to Corinth, from Corinth to Macedonia, and from Macedonia back to Corinth.

Two visits. He was thinking of them. And he was prepared to visit them.

But before he was able to do that, he heard reports. He heard something about them. So he changed his mind.

Instead of visiting them immediately, he postponed his visit. He wrote a letter to them. The first letter to the Corinthians.

And he sent Titus to bring that letter. Now of course, after he had sent that letter, he stayed in Ephesus for a while. And then he moved.

He moved on. He went to Troas, as we mentioned last night. He hoped that he might meet Titus there.

But he didn't. So he moved on to Macedonia. Now in doing that, some of the people in Corinth, those who opposed him, used this opportunity to attack him.

And so Paul did not walk in the Spirit. Wasn't it that he purposed to visit us first? Why was it that he changed his mind? If he really walked in the Spirit, if he really purposed in the Spirit, he shouldn't be so changeable. Did he make a mistake? In knowing the will of God? If he should make a mistake in knowing the will of God, then he was in the flesh.

He was not in the Spirit. Because God could not make any mistake. His changeableness proved that he was not in the Spirit.

Oh, if he was not in the Spirit, he was nothing. They seized upon this opportunity to attack him. And say Paul was a person.

Nay, nay, and yay, yay, nay, and nay, yay, yay, and nay. He was not trustworthy. By all outward appearances, this was true.

He changed his mind. He purposed to visit us, and yet he changed his mind. He didn't go.

This was fact. How could Paul refute this accusation? If people look at appearance, he had changed his mind. He was not stable.

But the same love that constrained him to visit Colin was the love that restrained him from visiting them. The outward appearance showed changeableness and changed us. But the reality is a love which never changed.

So Paul used this opportunity and said, Now, you see that I have changed my mind. It is true that I have changed my mind. But I want to tell you that the Word of God which we preach to you, Christ whom we preach to you, He is no nay, nay, and yay, yay.

He is yes, always yes. Yes in Christ. For all the promises of God are yes in Christ.

And they are all amen by Him. What does He mean? He means only one thing. And that is, what is spiritual life? Spiritual life is yes in Christ.

Spiritual life is not judged by outward appearance. The outward appearance may change. And in a sense, it ought to change.

You remember in the Old Testament time, often when I was traveling, young Christians would come to me and say, Brother Colin, why is it that God repents? We need to repent because we have done something wrong. We need to repent because we have made a wrong decision. We repent because we are mistaken.

We ought to repent. And if anybody said, I will not repent, that is a very bad thing. If you are wrong, you should repent.

But God, God never does anything wrong. God never makes any mistake. Now why is it in the Old Testament, again and again it says God repents? God is repentant of what He does.

Why? Well, I tried to answer them. I don't know whether that satisfies them or not. I tried to answer them.

I said, the ways of God can be changed. But the will of God remains the same. Yes, God changes ways.

His ways of dealing with people. But that doesn't mean that God changes His will. His will towards Israel is the same.

But His method changes. God is flexible. And yet, God remains the same.

Now is it not true with us today? Now suppose you have a child in your home. How do you deal with your child? Your heart towards your child is the same. But the way you treat your child varies.

Sometimes you try to be very strict with that child. Because you think that will help him. But at one time you find that the stricter you are, the worse he becomes.

You have to be softer. You try another way to deal with him. But the love remains the same.

Oh, if you judge by appearance. Yet your child will say, my mother changes. Oh, he loves me.

She loves me before. But now she hates me. Oh, she hates me before.

But now she is loving me. But you mothers know better. You never change.

You only change your way. But your heart remains the same. In other words, the appearances change.

The reality. That is God. That is our Lord.

He is the same yesterday, today and forever. He never changes. With Him is only yes.

Yes. That's Him. He is not yes and no.

He is yes. Paul may change his plan. By all appearance he has changed.

But has Paul changed? No, he hasn't changed. He is in Christ. And his love towards the Corinthians remains the same.

His going and his not going has the same love behind it. He hasn't changed. Yes.

In Christ. What is spiritual life? Spiritual life is the real life in Christ. You see, God is the God of Amen.

You find that in Isaiah 65 verse 16. There in Isaiah it says, Now, if anyone shall bless in the land, he shall bless in the name of the God of truth. And the word truth is reality.

It's Amen. Anyone who wants to bless, bless by the God of Amen. Anyone who wants to swear, swear by the God of Amen.

Now that's Isaiah 65. And then when you come to the New Testament, you'll find in Revelation chapter 3 verse 14, when the Lord addresses Himself to the church in Laodicea, He Himself says, To the angel of the church in Laodicea, writes the Amen, the true and faithful witness, and the beginning of the creation. Christ calls Himself the Amen.

Now what is the meaning of Amen? We use Amen at the end of our prayer. Amen in Hebrew means, this is true, this is faithful, this is certain. So be it.

So shall it be done. Amen means the truth, the reality, the certainty of it. That's Amen.

You know there is an Amen in Christ. There is an Amen in God, which we ought to know. God is the God of Amen.

Christ is the Amen. Amen. If you want to use modern words, you just say yes.

I listen to people when they are praying. And I discover, when people are praying, some people listening to their prayer, join in with their heart. Some will say Amen, and some say yes.

Actually they are all the same. One is speaking in Hebrew, and the other is speaking in English. Yes.

Yes. Have you ever noticed, when you read the Gospel according to John, that our Lord has a favorite way of expression? You know we all have our way of expression. The Lord has a way of expression.

Very often when He starts to speak, He says, I say unto you. What's verily, verily? Amen. Amen.

I say unto you. Yes. Yes.

I say unto you. You know how many times this expression is used in the Gospel according to John? Twenty-four times. If you have time, you try to count them.

Twenty-four times. The Lord said, Verily, verily, I say unto you. Yes.

Yes. I say unto you. Amen.

Amen. I say unto you. Why? Because He is the great Amen.

Everything in Him is yes. It's real. It's true.

And of course the word verily has been used in the other Gospels many times. Not in repetition, but many times in the other Gospels. The reality is in Christ.

What is spiritual life? Spiritual life is Christ. He is the Amen. He is the reality.

In other words, anything that is not Christ, anything that is not of Christ, is not real. It's not real spiritual life. Anything that is Christ, and that is of Christ, that is real.

That is reality. That is spiritual life. This is a very big statement.

I mean, if you really understand what that means. Yes in Christ. That is to say, anything that is in Christ is yes.

Christ is the yes. Christ is the truth. Christ is the reality.

Anything that is not Christ, is not true. Is not real. Is not of God.

All the promises of God are yes. We do not know how many promises of God there are in the Bible. But all the promises of God are yes in Christ.

Only in Christ. If they are not in Christ, it is not yes. It is not real.

Let us try to illustrate this. To make it easier, you know, to understand. For instance, this matter of salvation.

How are we saved? Because we all have this experience. So we know it. How are we saved? Many of us come from Christian families.

Many of us from our childhood we have heard about Christ, a story about Christ. Many of us probably from our childhood have a mental consent to the way of salvation as given in the Word of God. We believe.

Now let me make it very personal. Go to myself. Not that my experience is typical, but I just want to illustrate it.

I was brought up in a Christian family. Not like my father. My father came from a heathen family.

He was the first one in our family who believed in the Lord. And he was greatly persecuted because of that. But when I came to this world, thank God, I was in a Christian family.

So from my childhood I was brought up in a sense. And I was educated in a sense to be a Christian. We had family devotion every night and we read the Word and we prayed.

Of course we didn't pray. My father prayed. And went to Sunday school and studied in mission schools.

So I was educated. And I can tell you one thing and I thank God for that. Many youngsters had doubts about God and about Christ, about salvation.

I never had these things. It was really strange. I mean, I was brought up there and I just took everything.

I believed everything. There was no problem with me. I knew about the salvation and I believed in the salvation and it was no problem.

I never questioned the Bible. I never questioned God. I never questioned everything.

I just swallowed them all in. But was I saved? If anyone should come to me and say, now do you believe in Jesus Christ? Of course. Do you believe in the Bible? Sure.

Do you believe Christ died on the cross for the salvation of the world? Of course I believe. What else can you believe? Are you saved? I don't know what being saved means. I don't even know that I want to be saved.

Because when I was in high school that was before I was saved. I thought myself much better than many other people. Just like one famous Chinese Christian.

Later on when he was dying he was really saved. But he was a very famous so-called Chinese Christian. And he said, well Christ died on the cross for the wicked.

All those sinful wicked people they need Christ but I don't. I'm too good. That was my attitude.

The promises of God? The promise of God? Yes. God promised to save the world. But it is no reality to me.

It is a teaching. It is a doctrine. It is a history.

And I don't question these things. But it is not real. It is not life.

I still live in sins and transgressions and I didn't even know it. I was in total darkness. Until one day the Lord opened my eyes.

He opened my eyes to see Him. And as I saw Him it's different. It's no longer a history to me.

It's no longer a story to me. He is real. His salvation is real.

His cross is real. He delivers me. I am forgiven.

He has transformed me. Thank God for that. Why? Because all the promises of God are yes in faith.

It is not in the doctrine nor in the teaching nor in the history. Yes, you have to have the history. You have to have the teaching.

But it is deeper than history. It is deeper than teaching. Behind the history there is a yes.

Behind the teaching there is a reality. But you don't touch the reality until you touch it. You may know the history about the Lord Jesus but if you don't touch Christ there is no salvation.

You may understand the teaching of salvation but if you don't touch Christ there is no salvation. It's unreal. There is no life.

Life is only What is spiritual life? Spiritual life is not knowing something about Christ. Spiritual life is not knowing the teachings and the histories. These are important.

But spiritual life is Christ in us. It is Christ. It is only Christ that you find the reality.

The Lord said, I am the way, the truth and the life. What is the way? One day a brother he was preaching. And he preached on Romans 6 to 8. Of course, that is very attractive portion of scripture.

So he was preaching on Romans 6 to 8. And he was telling people of the way of victory. How can we live a victorious life? Oh, of course. If you love the Lord and if you want to go on with the Lord that's one thing you cannot miss.

You have to. You have to know it. And I remember a dear sister whom I know.

She went to Kazakh conference every year. She never missed it. She lived in India.

But every year she went to England to attend that Kazakh conference because in that conference it tells you of how to live a victorious life. Now that's important. Very important.

So when that brother was preaching on Romans 6 to 8 after he finished the preaching one brother came up to him and said, Dear brother, I thank God. Now I have found the way to victory. In the past I was always defeated.

But you told me the way to victory. Now I got the trick. I have the formula now.

I know how to be victorious. Is Romans 6 a formula? Oh yes, yes. One plus one plus one equal to three.

Knowing our old man was crucified. Plus, reckon yourself as dead. Plus, yield your members to righteousness.

Now if you go from one to two to three and add them together that's victorious life. That's the formula. Have you tried that formula before? I did.

First, I know that my old man was crucified. Second, then I reckon and reckon and reckon. And third, I yield my members.

Does it work? It works a little. It works a little. But it doesn't last.

Therefore you have to go back every year. Is that the experience of deliverance? Our experience of deliverance? Yes, we have found the way. You cannot say this is not the way because this is the Bible.

We have found the way. We have found the method. We have found the formula.

And we try to use that formula. Now it should come out right. But the strange thing is sometimes it comes out right.

Not always wrong. But sometimes it comes out right. But often times it doesn't come out right.

Why? Because you are taking away of victory. Instead of seeing Christ is the way. He said, I am the way.

Often times we take away a method, a formula. But we do not know that Christ is the way. It is not the method.

It is not the formula. But if you meet Christ then you have a way. He is the way and the truth.

Same thing. All we hear about the truth. There are many truths in the Bible.

You hear about this truth and that truth and this truth and that truth. Now if you try to take these truths you have the truth here. But it is not true here.

In your mind it is all truth. But in your life it is not true. It doesn't work.

It does not operate. And sometimes you wonder if this is all truth. This is truth.

But remember, Christ said, I am. I am. What is life? He said, I am the life.

Very often we do not know the difference between real life and false life. Very often we think activity is life. Of course life is active.

Of course. But very often when we find in much activity we say, well there is much life in it. Or sometimes we think that good behavior is life.

Or as one brother points to another brother and says, that brother has life. Why? Because he is very gentle. Well of course one of the fruit of the Spirit is gentleness.

That's true. But whether that gentleness is natural or it is spiritual there is a difference here. What is life? Christ is the life.

He is. He said, I am the resurrection and life. We have all read John chapter 11.

It's a great chapter. Lazarus was dead. And Christ went after Lazarus was in the tomb.

Four days already. And you hear Martha say, Lord if you should be here earlier he doesn't need to die. You are able.

The Lord said, I am the resurrection and the life. On the basis of his being the resurrection and the life he raised up Lazarus. You know our attention is directed to the raising up of Lazarus.

All we think now here is a man who is dead. And now he is raised from the dead. My, what power.

We think of resurrection as an act. As a great manifestation of power. Here is Lazarus raised from the dead.

Glory to God. Isn't that marvelous? But do you know this is not the spirit of that chapter. The spirit of that chapter does not direct us to see a miraculous act of resurrection.

The spirit of that letter is to show us Christ is the resurrection. He is the resurrection. Therefore he raises the dead.

Now if our attention is directed to this being raised from the dead and forget the one who is the resurrection we miss the point. We miss the point. Oh, how people today look to all these miraculous acts.

But remember all the promises of God are yes in him. If these things become things by themselves instead of through all these things you see that Christ is the resurrection then sooner or later you will find there will be a separation. You will be occupied with things instead of with Christ.

And of course we know God is jealous. All the promises of God are yes in Christ. If it is not in Christ remember one thing it is not real.

If it is not Christ who is our righteousness this righteousness is not real. If it is not Christ our sanctification this sanctification is not real. You know I was saved among holiness people.

I was God of a Methodist but I was saved among the holiness people. I was attending their conference and it was there I was saved. And among them they preached eradication of sin.

Second blessing. They are very strong on that. Oh, you have to get the second blessing have your sin eradicated root it out and then you are sanctified.

You are holy. I am not criticizing. I am not opposing anybody.

But I just tell you my experience. In that conference the founder of that group a lady very forceful lady and when we were in that conference something irritated her and he lost his temper. In that conference I am wondering if this is holiness sin is eradicated now what is that? Oh, they said that is just a weakness.

What is sanctification? Christ is our sanctification. It is not something called eradication of sin. Sin is removed.

It is not something called sanctification that is given to you apart from Christ. You got a sanctification and now you are sanctified forever. You cannot sin anymore.

If you are not in union with Christ there is no sanctification. You may have an experience of holiness but it does not guarantee you to live a holy life because it is Christ. Christ is our sanctification.

What is spiritual life? Paul is trying. Do not judge by appearance. In appearance if you judge by appearance you can never be right.

What you look at and think that this is right it may turn out to be wrong. What appears to be wrong it may turn out to be right. I mean, you are never sure.

And if you look by appearance you can never discern between the right and the wrong because things are so alike. So alike. You will be all confused.

All confused. But spiritual life is yes. It is not outward appearance.

It is Is Christ behind your experience? Is Christ behind your understanding? Is Christ your experience? Is Christ your understanding? If it is, that is right. That is spiritual life. If it is not this is not spiritual.

All the promises of God are yes. Never try to take any promise of God and go into it because you will come out a counterfeit. It is not real.

Therefore all the promises of God are amen by Him. He is the only one who makes the promises of God real. Be not occupied with many things.

Be occupied. And this is You know, it is very strange. I often like to watch the children.

I love children. You see you try to teach the children to say words, you know. You try to teach.

Of course, aside from mama, papa and these things. Well, the first word that shows that expresses a will of course is yes and no. When a child says yes when a child says no that is an expression of his will.

But very strange you find almost all the children learn the word no first. It is very difficult for them to learn yes. Oh, I have tried it on children.

I have purposely tried it, you know. Whatever you say, his answer is no, no, no. I say yes, he says no.

I say no, he says no. Always no. Always no.

Why? I learned a lesson. I don't know whether this is applicable or not. I don't know.

But I learned a lesson. Our natural life is characterized by no. What is natural life? Natural life is a fallen life.

Since the day of Adam when he rebelled against God he said no to God. This no is in our blood. No marks the natural life.

Our life is negative. Our life is rebellious. There is no yes in us.

There is no positiveness towards God in us. No. We know how to say no, but we don't know how to say yes.

But look at our Lord Jesus. When our Lord Jesus came to this world you'll find His life is yes. No matter where you put Him.

No matter what confronts Him. No matter what problem surrounds Him. No matter what people He meets.

You'll find within Him always a yes to the promise. A yes to the promise. Because His life is such.

He is the amen. The amen to God. The amen to God.

Dear brothers and sisters, we who have believed in the Lord Jesus, we who have accepted Him, this life is today with us. So far as our natural life is concerned you'll find it always is no to God. Do not try to change your natural life and ask your natural life to say yes to God.

Never. When you try to get your natural life to say yes to God, it is yes and no. It never comes out a real yes.

That's the reason why the sentence of death must be upon that life. But thank God, we have received a yes life. There is in us a life that answers and responds.

No matter how difficult it is, very often when we try to reason it out, we will say no. But somehow deep down within us there is a yes. And you know which life to follow.

If we follow this yes deep down in our heart, you'll find there is life. If you follow your reasoning and say no, there is death. There is death.

Now this is spiritual life. What is spiritual life? Spiritual life is not judged by appearance. You never judge spiritual life by appearance.

Spiritual life is judged by one thing. Is it Christ? You may enter into an experience.

Ask yourself. Is it Christ? If this experience is Christ, it is the true experience. If this experience is not Christ, but something, remember, it can be a contact.

It is Christ. Are you forgiving people? Oh yes. The Bible says if you do not forgive, God will not forgive you.

Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive others. You have read that verse. You know that.

Now somebody has offended you. What will you do? Oh, you say, of course. I should forgive.

Do you forgive? Oh yes, you do. There is one brother. Someone offended him.

And of course he knew the word of God. He should forgive. So he started to write a letter.

He said, I forgive you. But when he wrote that letter, he said, this man was awful. He shouldn't do such a thing to me.

But he wrote that. But after he wrote one sentence, he couldn't write on it again. So he left it.

But after a day, he felt, well, as a Christian, I ought to forgive. So he took his pen out and continued to write, I'll forgive you. But he was so angry.

So angry. Finally he sent a letter. But after he sent the letter, he was still angry.

Is this life? Is it spiritual life? It appears like spiritual life. Oh, how spiritual. But is it life? It is not Christ.

If Christ really is your forgiving people, you forgive from the heart. You not only forgive, you forget. And you can laugh.

That's Christ. You cannot do that. For one brother, he forgave another brother.

And for two nights, he couldn't sleep. Because he forgave the other brother. I'm telling a fact.

I mean, this is not a story. It's a fact. Why is it? Why is it? Because our whole concept of spiritual life is a matter of appearance.

Our whole concept is a matter of conduct. Our whole concept is a matter of how do we appear to people. Remember, this is not spiritual life.

Spiritual life is Christ. The Christ in you. In the measure of His taking over you is the measure.

If Christ is your forgiveness, this forgiveness. If Christ is your gentleness, this gentleness is life. You remember the righteousnesses of the saints.

It symbolized by shiny, bright, white garments. There are garments that are white, but not shiny. Pale.

You see, when we are very pale, there is not much life, you know. But the righteousness of the saints is shiny white. It's not pale.

Because there is life in it. It is our righteousness. There is life in it.

Do not measure spiritual life by awkward appearance. Measure spiritual life. How much Christ.

What is the measure of Christ in you? That measure of Christ. Not about Christ. But that measure of Christ in you is the measure.

And when you come to this, there is a very important thing you have to remember. We have life in us. Christ is our life.

But very often, this life is not incorporated. It is not organized. It is not constructed.

I do not have the word in us. What I mean is this. We have the life of Christ in us.

But that life is not formed. It is not organized. It is not instituted.

Incorporated. Incorporated. Rotten.

Rotten. That life hasn't been brought in to every area of our being. And because of that, the result is we are trying to live.

So-called spiritual life actually is ourselves. It is not Christ who lives. And do you know, this incorporation of Christ is the work of the Holy Spirit.

Nobody can do that. Nobody can do that. The Holy Spirit is the spirit of reality.

The letter kills. The spirit quickens. How often we live in the letter.

We are correct. We are orthodox. We are scriptural.

We are accurate. But it kills. There is no life.

It is the spirit who quickens. The spirit brings us to life. Because it is the Holy Spirit who makes Christ real to us.

It is the Holy Spirit who incorporates Christ into us. Now that's the work of the Holy Spirit. You know, the greatest work of the Holy Spirit is this work.

Is this work. The Holy Spirit who dwells in us is to make Christ real to us. How do we know that Christ is the way? The Holy Spirit points that out.

How do we know that Christ is the truth? The Holy Spirit makes Him real. How do we know that Christ is the life? The Holy Spirit makes Him life to us. All our experiences of Christ comes from the Holy Spirit.

Comes from the Holy Spirit. Now this is the work of the Holy Spirit. He incorporates Christ into us.

How does He incorporate that? In two ways. All the work of the Holy Spirit of incorporating Christ into us can be grouped into two aspects. First, the revelation of the Holy Spirit.

That's why Paul prayed for the church in Ephesus. That God will give them the spirit of wisdom and revelation. Remember, dear brothers and sisters, everything spiritual begins with revelation.

If there is no revelation, there is no beginning of spiritual life. How do we become Christian? When Peter said, You are Christ, the Son of the Living God. Christ said, This is not taught to you by flesh and blood, but it is my heavenly Father who reveals to you.

Revelation. Revelation. How do we know Christ today? How do we know Christ to be our life? To be our way? To be our truth? To be the bread of life? To be the light of man? How do we know Christ in a real way? That He really becomes life to us.

Incorporated into us. It is Christ growing in us. Forming us.

Now, how does it come about? It is the Holy Spirit who opens our eyes and unveils Christ to us. That's the work of the Holy Spirit. One of the greatest works of the Holy Spirit.

We may read the Bible. Thank God for the Bible. It is God-breathed.

But just by reading it without revelation, it does not give life. You read the Bible. For instance, Surma on the mountain.

Surma on the mountain. You read the Surma on the mountain and it says, if a person strikes your right cheek, turn the left cheek. That's the rule.

Do you believe it? You do. But do you know, it kills you. It kills you.

It makes you live in constant fear. Lest anybody should come and strike your right cheek, then what would happen? If you do not turn your left cheek, you are not like a Christian. But it is not too easy to be a Christian.

If you don't strike back, that's good enough. But turn your right left cheek, that's difficult. You may try.

You may try. Somebody strikes your right cheek, you remember the word? It may take a few minutes before you turn your left cheek, you know. Well, you turn.

Yeah, you turn. You succeed. You turn.

Is this life? You cannot sleep for two nights afterwards. That's not life. Life is only natural.

Supernaturally natural. It is Christ who is reacting. Not you.

If He demands us to react, it's difficult. But if it is Christ who reacts, He always reacts that way. That is His way of living.

He reacts that way. The letter kills, but the spirit... Dear brothers and sisters, you read the word of God, you read it many times, and one day the spirit opens your eyes. When you see it, it's yours.

It's yours. Use a very simple illustration, the way we are saved. You may hear the gospel hundreds of times.

Now, some people have never heard the gospel. You cannot blame him because he has never heard the real gospel. But suppose you have heard the gospel, the truth of the gospel for hundreds of times, and nothing happens.

But one day when you are listening, the Holy Spirit begins to open your eyes. It's a revelation. Either He reveals the cross to you, or He reveals yourself, or both.

And when that comes... So you remember that the incorporation of Christ is done by revelation. The revelation of the Holy Spirit. Now, do not think of revelation in big terms, in big sense.

You know, the word revelation is a long word. And when we use the word revelation, we think of something tremendous, something spectacular. Like Paul on the way of Damascus, a light shines from heaven.

Now, that's a revelation. That is a revelation. And I remember I have a friend in high school.

I tried to win him to Christ, you know. And she told me one thing. She said, Now, if Christ reveals to me like He revealed to Paul, I'll believe Him.

I want to see that light. Revelation is not necessary of this immense measure. Revelation ought to be our daily portion.

It simply means an opening, an unveiling. God, by His Holy Spirit, unveils Christ to me. And as He unveils Christ, I may not be able to explain Him, but I have seen.

Many people who can explain so well, probably, but some people who have really seen, they cannot explain. You know, I often think of one thing. You remember the story of Paul in the way of Damascus.

When the light shone upon him, what is the effect? He becomes blind. He cannot see. Inwardly he has seen, but outwardly he becomes blind.

Now, that's very often our experience. So the Holy Spirit, in incorporating Christ to us, is first, revelation. And second, discipline.

Discipline. The two greatest works of the Holy Spirit is on the one hand, revelation, on the other hand, discipline. Revelation alone is not enough.

You may see visions, but that may make you a visionary, a dreamer. Unless vision is supported by discipline, it is not a vocation. It is not a vocation.

Do not think because you have seen it in your spirit, therefore it is real. Not yet. It is real, but it may not be amen to you yet.

The Holy Spirit will rise, will raise up environments. The Holy Spirit will arrange and order your happenings. Seemingly contradictory to the revelation.

But actually, these will bring you into the revelation. It is the discipline of the Holy Spirit. One day the Lord opens your eyes to see His love.

Oh, His love. Unselfish love. Unchoosing love.

Love towards the unlovely. The Lord opens your eyes to see that. And you pray, Oh Lord, I do confess there is no love in me.

Now, before you see that, you think you are full of love. I have no love in me. I cannot love the unlovely.

I have to choose in my love. If you want me to love, you have to do it. You have to love it through me.

I cannot do it. That's revelation. But do you love? Can you love? Not that simple.

Strange. In the morning, you see the revelation. In the afternoon, the most unlovely person comes to visit you.

The one that you are afraid most will come and rob something again on you. What is that? The discipline of the Holy Spirit. It is not by chance.

It is the discipline of the Holy Spirit. Because the Holy Spirit uses and borrows to incorporate Christ. And dear brothers and sisters, only after the Holy Spirit has so worked, the end result is spiritual life.

That is spiritual life. So you see, in the first place, spiritual life begins with the sentence of death. In the second place, spiritual life is just in Him.

It is Christ. That's spiritual life. It is not something that is given to you.

Yes, it is. But it is more than that. You have to see that the gift and the giver are one.

You have to see that. It is not that He gives you a life and then now it's yours. You go and live.

No. He gives Himself to you as life. To live.

And the way to it, as we have just said, is by the Holy Spirit. Because the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of life. He alone can make all the promises of God yes and amen to us.

Are we willing to accept the revelation and the discipline of the Holy Spirit? Now this becomes a very real issue. Remember one thing. Spiritual life is never cheap.

If you want to get somewhere spiritually cheap, it is not real. Spiritual life demands the losing so that Christ may take that place. And this is the will of God.

So I think probably this morning we are just fellowship sharing this much. Spiritual life. Yes.

Shall we pray? Our Father, we try to share Thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ as the only reality. We do confess that we are often attracted and occupied by that which appears to us. O Lord, do deliver us from that which is awkward.

And open our eyes to see that the real issue is that which is unseen. Christ is the reality. We pray that Thou will strip us of all that which is not Christ.

Lord, we do not want to live in an unreal world and try to deceive ourselves. Lord, we are willing to be enlightened, to be reduced, to come to the end of ourselves, to see that there is nothing good in us, to be stripped of all that is not real. We only desire that Christ may be our reality in all things.

O how we praise and thank Thee because Thy Holy Spirit is given to us just to do this work. Thou does know that we cannot enter into it, but we praise and thank Thee because Thy Spirit is with us. And He is doing the work.

O Lord, only give us this openness, readiness, willingness to be exposed, to receive revelation, light from Thee, and make us willing to be disciplined, to be trained, to be broken, to be shattered, that Christ may be our experience, Christ may be our expression. All we do.

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