

The New Life

by W.J. Erdman

The sermon emphasizes the importance of having a personal relationship with Jesus Christ through faith, and the new life that comes from being born from above by the Holy Spirit.

Scripture: Exodus 14:13, Matthew 5:16, John 3:3-4, Romans 6:4, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 2:8

Topics: "Eternal Life", "Holy Spirit"

Description

W.J. Erdman preaches about the importance of knowing and accepting Jesus Christ as our personal Savior to receive eternal life. He emphasizes that true life is found in Christ alone, not in religious duties or good works. Erdman shares how encountering the truth of Christ through Scripture and the preaching of the Gospel can lead to a transformation of heart and the experience of divine life. He urges believers to manifest this new life by being witnesses of Christ's love and light in the world, impacting those around them. Erdman encourages believers to be filled with the Holy Spirit and actively engage in sharing the Gospel to bring others to faith in Christ.

Transcript

If there are any here who are not acquainted with the Lord Jesus,--who are not living His life; let me say to you "Look unto Him, and live." We have no actual, no true life, in the highest sense, until we know Him.

We often hear sinners exhorted by their friends on this wise, "I wish you would become a Christian; begin now to lead a new life; abandon your evil habits; practice religious duties; and you will find happiness."

I well remember the instruction of a distinguished Theological Professor to the students, when I was at college. "Young gentlemen you wish to be Christians, go and read your Bibles: pray, do the duty of a Christian, and my word for it, you are a Christian." The first time I heard this false Gospel, I said to myself: "This is not true, I could do all that, in form, and yet be the same. But hearing the frequent repetition of this advice, its soothing effect on my heart, was to make procrastination easy. For years I rested on the vain hope, without a single uneasy rebuke from conscience, (because it was seared by the falsehood) that whenever I chose to give reasonable attention to the subject of religion, the Spirit of God would come to my aid, and then by some supernatural process I should be saved. I hoped to visit Germany for a course of study, and after that I promised myself I would attend to the great end of life. Thus with many of you, you hope, you intend to be Christians, but first you would accomplish some cherished plans, or object in life. In may case God interposed in great mercy, to overthrow my way and establish His own way.

A beloved minister of France, passing through the city where I lived, preached Christ with such scriptural plainness, as the God-Man and Saviour, that the Spirit of God opened my eyes to see Him as my Saviour, and my heart to receive Him. I believed on the Lord Jesus, and found. life--eternal life.

I want briefly to urge on you to-night, friends, the life as preached in these words of our Lord: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have eternal life." John iii. 14, 15. Many hesitate and doubt, concerning their state, when the word of God most clearly settles the matter for all who will receive it. You have no trouble in deciding whether you love a person, whom you love; you enter on no process of reasoning to prove it to yourself. Many other things which you accept as certain now, you cannot and do not seek to prove. You may know now with absolute certainty--if you are alive in Christ--whether or not you have eternal life.

Our Lord has given us the truth in dealing with inquirers as He met them. The first one, Nicodemus, acknowledging his divine origin having knowledge of all religious duties--and yet uneasy under the pressure of conscience, seeks Him by night. To him our Lord says "Except a man be born from above, he cannot see the Kingdom of God,"--and with renewed emphasis: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God."

In himself man has no capacity to see these things, but in the Spirit he is born, has a new life, and knows the person, and the power of God. And this is absolute. Our Lord in dealing with Nicodemus gives no receipt for prayers, for duties, for reformations, for resolutions. He speaks of life. The word born implies birth, and birth means life. Now this word life expresses the power of religion, it is not a form, nor a dress, nor service. Many hope by duties and endeavors at reform to make themselves in some way worthy or ready for the work of the Spirit. But the Word of God gives no such license. It speaks of life from the dead. It speaks of life in simply believing another, and that other the son of God. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." 2 Cor. v.17. "his new creation must be known to the subject of it, and the whole Gospel declares, that it will be known to all who behold the sinner thus divinely new created. See how the Lord taught another inquirer, at the very opposite extreme of society, He meets the poor outcast woman at Jacob's well. "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." John iv, 14. Here again our Saviour speaks only of life, with the highest and lowest alike, life, divine life--is the only essential. Once be born from above, and life, everlasting life, is yours. Once drink from the life-giving fountain, and eternal thirst is quenched.

An old negro, on the western coast of Africa, was continually complaining to the English sailors of the burden on his heart. He wanted peace, could find none. Was weary and sad, and often in tears. The wicked men around him, told him he needed the Englishman's God, they could tell him nothing of the way to find Him, because they only could blaspheme. After a time he worked his passage to England. Still burdened with the great weight of his sins, finding no helper, he found his way to London. And one night passing a little Gospel chapel, he entered and listened. The minister was telling, in simple ways the story of the cross. The old man drank in the words, and in his joy kept slowly advancing through the aisle, till he reached the altar, As the sermon ended, he could not restrain his delight, but with streaming tears and clasped hands--broke forth: "Me have found Him! me have found Him! me have found Him!"

So it is the Spirit of God seals His own word upon hearts drawn and prepared by Himself. God does accomplish by the Holy Spirit, in this age, acting through his disciples, greater things than the working of miracles.

Brethren and sisters, believers in the Lord, I appeal to you, are you manifesting this new life? no matter what avocation you pursue, an opportunity is in every man's path for Him to fill. In every place our light can shine, and your works be seen. It may not be the pure and clean flame, that burned in the "Bush!" But it is the same flame, if it calls wandering sinners to turn their faces toward God, and reveals to them the light of the Sun of Righteousness.

There must be some thing seen in us by others, if this Spiritual life have predominance, which declares to them that we testify of Christ, and shine in the light of God.:

God accepts every one coming to Him, in the way He has provided, the youngest, the oldest are alike welcomed. The smallest child may be a worker and witness of this life.

A friend once told me, how he watched a steam tug bringing a long line of vessels to the dock in New York harbour, and it reminded him of a very little girl in his mission school; she had found the Lord Jesus through just learning to read of Him at her home, without any advantages. Her father kept a tavern, and all the influences and surroundings were against her. But this little missionary was alive, she had the Divine life. She first led her mother to the school, and soon she was converted. Then she led in her sister, her father, her grandmother, one after another, till the whole family came to Jesus. This one little girl with the Spirit of Christ in her accomplished her work like the little Steam Tug," she conveyed the whole family into the haven of eternal life. And this the Lord Jesus calls us all to be and to do. We are to be lights in the world, and as witnesses we are to tell the truth of Him.

In one church where I labored, the good people wanted me to preach to sinners for their conversion, after some continued preaching to the church. But said I, He has ordered me to equip you, the saints, for this work. Teaching you all things, which Jesus has left for you to observe, that you may distribute the manna of the Word to the perishing around you. Be ye therefore filled with the Spirit of Holiness, and go out and bring them in. If we preach to you the living Gospel, then you can go and do this work of ministering to the dead around you. You may distribute tracts by the ton, or scatter them as the leaves of Autumn; they will be of little account. God wants the living person, and heart and voice of a believer to do this work, and that is His method all through the New Testament. Let twenty or thirty Christians filled with the holy fire, go out into the streets and lanes of the city, and see how you will bring them in.

Look at the school boy as he bounds forth from the school-room, so full of animal life, running, jumping, frolicking at will. Why this exuberance? He is alive, and life, physical life, expresses itself in this way. If spiritual life and feeling move the heart, we cannot sit still and be indifferent when we know souls are perishing all around us. Pray much dear friends for the love of God to fill your hearts, so that you can do daily work for the Master. But some who hear me are saying, "How can I get this life? Would that I had it!" The Lord speaks plainly to you. Are you wise, well taught, moral, respectable, outwardly religious? Hear His words-- As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have eternal life." John iii. 14, 15.

I cannot tell you how those poor creatures, who were bitten by the fiery, serpent, were made whole by looking at the brazen serpent. But they had complete healing on the instant as they looked. And upon the same divine Word, I assure you, that as you believe that Jesus Christ died on the cross for you a lost sinner, and thus accept Him as your personal Saviour by faith, that instant you believe, you have the new life, you are born from above by the Holy Spirit. The new life begins its powerful current in you. Work and service are no longer forced. This water of life needs no more a "force pump." It will be in you a "well of

water springing up into everlasting life." It will overflow. Blessing and benediction will attend your steps, and life everlasting will be your eternal portion and joy.

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