

CHRISTUS ET EGO

NO. 781

A SERMON
 DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, NOVEMBER 17, 1867
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 AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON

*“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me:
 and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God,
 who loved me, and gave himself for me.”*
Galatians 2:20

IN great ranges of mountains there are lofty peaks which pierce the clouds, but on the other hand, there are, here and there, lower parts of the range which are crossed by travelers, become national highways, and afford passages for commerce from land to land. My text rises before my contemplation like a lofty range of mountains, a very Andes for elevation.

I shall not attempt, this morning, to climb the summits of its sublimity. We have not the time, and we fear we have not the skill for such work, but I shall, to the best of my ability, conduct you over one or two practical truths, which may be serviceable to us this morning, and introduce us to sunny fields of contemplation.

I. At once to our work. I call upon you to observe very carefully, in the first place, THE PERSONALITY OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION *as it is exhibited in the text before us.*

How many personal pronouns of the first person are there in this verse? Are there not as many as eight? It swarms with *I* and *me*. The text deals not with the plural at all. It does not mention some one else, nor a third party far away, but the apostle treats of himself, his own inner life, his own spiritual death, the love of Christ to *him*, and the great sacrifice which Christ made for *him*.

“Who loved *me*, and gave himself for *me*.” This is instructive, for it is a distinguishing mark of the Christian religion, that it brings out a man’s individuality. It does not make us selfish, on the contrary, it cures us of that evil, but still it does manifest in us a selfhood by which we become conscious of our personal individuality in an eminent degree.

In the nocturnal heavens there had long been observed bright masses of light. The astronomers called them “nebulae.” They supposed them to be stores of shapeless chaotic matter, until the telescope of Herschell resolved them into distinct stars. What the telescope did for stars, the religion of Christ, when received into the heart, does for men.

Men think of themselves as mixed up with the race, or swamped in the community, or absorbed in universal manhood. They have a very indistinct idea of their separate obligations to God, and their personal relations to His government, but the Gospel, like a telescope, brings man out to himself, makes him see himself as a separate existence, and compels him to meditate upon his own sin, his own salvation, and his own personal doom unless saved by grace.

In the broad road there are so many travelers, that as one takes a bird’s eye view of it, it appears to be filled with a vast mob of men moving without order. But in the straight and narrow way which leads unto life eternal, every traveler is distinct. He attracts your notice. he is a marked man. Having to go against the general current of the times, the believer is an individual upon whom observant eyes are fixed.

He is a distinct individual, both to himself and the rest of his kind. You will very readily see how the religion of Jesus Christ brings out a man’s individuality *in its very dawn*. It reveals to him his own personal sin and consequent danger. You know nothing about conversion if you merely believe in

human depravity and human ruin, but have never felt that *you* are depraved and that *you yourself* are ruined.

Over and above all the general woes of the race, there will be one particular woe of your own, if you have been by the Holy Spirit convinced of sin. You will cry, like that shrill-voiced prophet of Jerusalem, in the days of the siege, “Woe unto myself also.” You will feel as if the arrows of God were mainly aimed at you, and as if the curses of the law would surely fall upon you if upon none else.

Certainly, beloved hearer, you know nothing about salvation unless you have *personally looked with your own eye to Jesus Christ*. There must be a personal reception of the Lord Jesus into the arms of your faith, and into the bosom of your love. And if you have not trusted in the Crucified while standing alone in contemplation at the foot of the cross, you have not believed unto life eternal.

Then, in consequence of a separate personal faith, the believer enjoys *a personal peace*. He feels that if the earth were all at arms, he would still find rest in Christ, that rest being peculiarly his own, independently of his fellows. He may talk of that peace to others, but he cannot communicate it. Others cannot give it to him, nor can they take it from him.

Wherever the Christian religion is truly in the soul, it soon leads to *a personal consecration* to God. The man comes to the altar of Christ, and he cries, “Here I am. O most glorious Lord, I feel it to be my reasonable service to give spirit, soul, and body, unto You. Let others do as they will, as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”

The renewed man feels that the work of others does not exonerate him from service, and the general lukewarmness of the Christian church cannot be an excuse for his own indifference. He stands out against error, if need be, as a lone protestor, like Athanasius, crying, “I, Athanasius, against the whole world,” or he works for God in the building up of Jerusalem, like Nehemiah, being content to work alone if others will not assist him.

He has discovered himself to have been personally lost, and to have been personally saved, and now his prayer is, “Lord, show me what You would have *me* do. Here am *I*, send *me*.” I believe that in proportion as our piety is definitely in the first person singular, it will be strong and vigorous. I believe, moreover, that in proportion as we fully realize our personal responsibility to God, shall we be likely to discharge it.

But if we have not really understood it, we are very likely to dream of work for God by proxy—to pay the priest or the minister to be useful for us, and act as if we could shift our responsibility from our own shoulders to the back of a society or a church. From its dawn up to its noonday glory, the personality of true godliness is most observable. All the teaching of our holy faith bears in this direction. We preach personal election, personal calling, personal regeneration, personal perseverance, personal holiness, and we know nothing of any work of grace which is not personal to the professor of it.

There is no doctrine in Scripture which teaches that one man can be saved by the godliness of another. I cannot discover anything like salvation by sponsorship, except in the one case of the sponsorship of the Lord Jesus Christ. I find no human being placed in the stead of another, so as to be able to take another’s burden of sin or perform another’s duty.

I do find that we are to bear one another’s burdens in respect of sympathy, but not in the sense of substitution. Every man must bear his own burden and give an account for himself before God. Moreover, the ordinances of the Christian religion teach us the same. When a man is typically buried with Christ by the public act of baptism, he cannot be dead for another or buried for another, nor can he rise again instead of another.

There is the personal act of immersion to show forth our personal death to the world, personal burial with Christ, and personal resurrection with Him. So also, in the Supper of the Lord, the distinct act of each man eating and drinking for himself, most manifestly sets forth that we stand as individuals before the Lord our God in our connection with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, I feel earnest that nothing should ever spoil the effect of this truth upon our minds. It is so simple a truth, that when I make the statement, you perhaps wonder that I should repeat it so often. But

simple as it is, it is constantly being forgotten. How many church members shelter themselves behind the vigorous action of the entire community! The church is being increased, the church opens schools, the church builds new houses of prayer, and so the church member flatters himself that he is doing somewhat, whereas that very man may not have, either by his contributions, or his prayers, or his personal teachings, done anything at all.

O idle church member, I beseech you, shake yourself from the dust. Be not so mean as to appropriate other men's labors. Before your own Master, you shall stand or fall upon your own individual service or neglect, and if you bring forth no fruit yourself, all the fruit upon the other boughs shall not help you. "Every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away."

Common enough is it, also, for persons to shelter themselves behind a society. A small annual contribution has often been a cloak for gross indifference to holy effort. Somebody else is paid to be a missionary, and to do your mission-work—is this the Lord's way? Is this the path of obedience? Does not our Lord say to me, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you"?

Now, the Father did not send Christ that He might procure a proxy and be a nominal Redeemer, but Jesus gave Himself for us in personal service and sacrifice—even so does Jesus send us forth to suffer and to serve. It is well to support the minister. It is well to pay the city missionary that he may have his time to give to needful work.

It is well to assist the Bible-woman that she may go from house to house, but remember, when all the societies have done all that is possible, they cannot exonerate you from your own peculiar calling, and however large your contributions to assist others to serve the Master, they cannot discharge on your behalf one single particle of what was due from you personally to your Lord.

Let me pray you, brethren and sisters, if you have ever sheltered behind the work of others, stand forth in your own proper character, and remember that before God you will be estimated by what *you* have felt, what *you* have known, what you have *learned*, and what you have done.

The worst form of the mischief is when persons imagine that family piety and national religion can ever be available in lieu of individual repentance and faith. Absurd as it may seem, yet a very common thing it is for people to say, "Oh, yes! we are all Christians—of course, we are all Christians—every Englishman is a Christian. We do not belong to the Brahmins or Mahometans—we are all Christians."

What grosser lie can a man invent than that? Is a man a Christian because he lives in England? Is a rat a horse because it lives in a stable? That is just as good reasoning. A man must be born again or he is no child of God. A man must have living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ or else he is no Christian, and he does but mock the name of Christian when he takes it upon himself without having part or lot in the matter.

Others say, "My mother and my father always professed such a religion, therefore I am bound to do the same." Glorious reasoning, fit for idiots most surely! Have you never heard of that old Pagan monarch who professed conversion, and was about to step into the baptismal font, when, turning round to the bishop, he said, "Where did my father go when he died, before your religion came here, and where did his father go, and all the kings that were before me who worshipped Woden and Thor? Where did they go when they died? Tell me at once!"

The bishop shook his head, and looked very sorrowful, and said he was afraid they were gone to a very dark place. "Ah! then," said he, "I will not be separated from them." Back he started, and remained an unwashed heathen still.

You suppose that this folly expired in the dark ages! It survives and flourishes in the present. We have known persons impressed under the Gospel, who have nevertheless clung to the false hopes of superstition or human merit, and have excused themselves by saying, "You see, I have always been brought up to it."

Does a man think because his mother was poor or his father a pauper, that he himself must necessarily remain a beggar? If my parent was blind, am I bound to put out my own eyes to be like him?

Nay, but if I have beheld the light of the truth of Jesus Christ, let me follow it, and not be drawn aside by the idea that hereditary superstition is any the less dangerous or erroneous because a dozen generations have been deluded by it.

You must appear before God, my dear friend, on your own feet, and neither mother nor father can stand in your stead, therefore judge for yourself. Seek for yourself eternal life. Lift up your eyes to Christ's cross for yourself, and let it be your own earnest endeavor that you yourself may be able to say, "He loved *me*, and gave himself for *me*."

We are all born alone—we come as sorrowful pilgrims into this world to traverse a path which only our own feet can tread. To a great extent we go through the world alone, for all our companions are but vessels sailing with us side by side, vessels distinct and each one bearing its own flag. Into the depth of our hearts no man can dive. There are cabinets in the chamber of the soul which no man can open but the individual himself.

We must die alone, friends may surround the bed, but the departing spirit must take its flight by itself. We shall hear no tramp of thousands as we descend into the dark river. We shall be solitary travelers into the unknown land. We expect to stand before the judgment seat in the midst of a great assembly, but still to be judged as if no other man were there.

If all that multitude be condemned, and we are in Christ, we shall be saved, and if they should all be saved, and we are found wanting, we shall be cast away. In the balances we shall each be placed alone. There is a crucible for every ingot of gold, a furnace for every bar of silver. In the resurrection every seed shall receive his own body. There shall be an individuality about the frame that shall be raised in that day of wonders, an individuality most marked and manifest.

If I am condemned at the last, no man can be damned for my spirit. No soul can enter the chambers of fire on my behalf, to endure for me the unutterable anguish. And blessed hope, if I am saved, it will be *I* who shall see the King in His beauty. Mine eyes shall behold Him and not another in my stead. The joys of heaven shall not be proxy joys, but the personal enjoyments of those who have had personal union with Christ.

You all know this, and therefore, I pray you, let the weighty truth abide with you. No man in his senses thinks that another can eat for him, or drink for him, or be clothed for him, or sleep for him, or wake for him. No man is content nowadays with a second person's owning money for him or possessing an estate for him. Men long to have riches themselves. They wish to be personally happy, to be personally honored. They do not care that the good things of this life shall be nominally theirs, while other men grasp the reality. They wish to have a real grasp and grip of all temporal goods.

O let us not play the fool with eternal things, but let us desire to have a personal interest in Christ, and then let us aspire to give to Him, who deserves it so well, our personal service, rendering spirit, soul, and body, unto His cause.

II. Secondly, our text very plainly TEACHES US THE INTERWEAVING OF OUR OWN PROPER PERSONALITY WITH THAT OF JESUS CHRIST.

Read the text over again. "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

Here is the man, but here is the Son of God quite as conspicuously, and the two personalities are singularly interwoven. I think I see two trees before me. They are distinct plants growing side by side, but as I follow them downward, I observe that the roots are so interlaced and intertwined that no one can trace the separate trees and allot the members of each to its proper whole. Such are Christ and the believer.

Methinks I see before me a vine. Yonder is a branch, distinct and perfect as a branch. It is not to be mistaken for any other, it is a branch, a whole and perfect branch, yet how perfectly is it joined to the stem, and how completely is its individuality merged in the one vine of which it is a member! Now, so is it with the believer in Christ.

There was one parent who threw his shadow across our path and from whose influence we never could escape. From all other men we might have struggled away and claimed to be separate, but this one man was part of ourselves and we part of him—Adam the first, in his fallen state. We are fallen with him and are broken in pieces in his ruin.

And now, glory be to God, as the shadow of the first man has been uplifted from us, there appears a second man, the Lord from heaven. And across our path there falls the light of His glory and His excellence, from which also, blessed be God, we who have believed in Him cannot escape. In the light of that man, the second Adam, the heavenly federal Head of all His people—in His light we do rejoice. Interwoven with our history and personality is the history and personality of the man Christ Jesus, and we are forever one with Him.

Observe the points of contact. First Paul says, *I am “crucified with Christ.”* What does he intend? He means a great many more things than I can tell you this morning. But briefly, he means this—he believed in the representation of Christ on the cross. He held that when Jesus Christ hung upon the tree, He did not hang there as a private person, but as the representative of all His chosen people.

As the burgess in the House of Commons votes not for himself alone, but in the name of the township which has sent him to Parliament, so the Lord Jesus Christ acted in what He did as a great public representative person, and the dying of Jesus Christ upon the tree was the virtual dying of all His people. Then all His saints rendered unto justice what was due and made an expiation to divine vengeance for all their sins. *“I am crucified with Christ.”*

The apostle of the Gentiles delighted to think that as one of Christ’s chosen people, he died upon the tree in Christ. He did more than believe this doctrinally, however, he accepted it confidently, resting his hope upon it. He believed that by virtue of Jesus Christ’s death, he had himself paid the law its due, satisfied divine justice, and found reconciliation with God.

Beloved, what a blessed thing it is when the soul can, as it were, stretch itself upon the cross of Christ and feel “I am dead. The law has killed me, cursed me, slain me, and I am therefore free from its power, because in my Surety I have borne the curse, and in the person of my Substitute the whole that the law could do, by way of condemnation, has been executed upon me, for I am crucified with Christ.”

Oh, how blessed it is when the cross of Christ is laid upon us, how it quickens us! Just as the aged prophet went up and stretched himself upon the dead child, put his mouth upon the child’s mouth, and his hands upon the child’s hands, and his feet upon the child’s feet, and then the child was quickened, so when the cross is laid upon my soul, it puts life, power, warmth, and comfort into me.

Union with the suffering, bleeding Savior, and faith in the merit of the Redeemer, are soul-cheering things. O for more enjoyment of them! Paul meant even more than this. He not only believed in Christ’s death and trusted in it, but he actually felt its power in himself in causing the crucifixion of his old corrupt nature.

If you conceive of yourself as a man executed, you at once perceive that, being executed by the law, the law has no further claim upon you. You resolve, moreover, that having once proven the curse of sin by the sentence passed upon you, you will not fall into that same offense again, but henceforth, being miraculously delivered from the death into which the law brought you, you will live in newness of life. You must feel so if you feel rightly.

Thus did Paul view himself as a criminal upon whom the sentence of the law had been fulfilled. When he saw the pleasures of sin, he said, “I cannot enjoy these. I am dead to them. I once had a life in which these were very sweet to me, but I have been crucified with Christ. Consequently, as a dead man can have no delight in the joys which once were delights to him, so neither can I.”

When Paul looked upon the carnal things of the world, he said, “I once allowed these things to reign over me. What shall I eat? what shall I drink? and wherewithal shall I be clothed? These were a trinity of questions of the utmost importance—they are of no importance now, because I am dead to these things. I cast my care upon God with regard to them. They are not my life. I am crucified to them.”

If any passion, if any motive, if any design should come into our mind short of the cross of Christ, we should exclaim, “God forbid that I should glory in any of these things. I am a dead man. Come, world, with all your witchery. Come, pleasure, with all your charms. Come, wealth, with all your temptations. Come, all you tempters that have seduced so many. What can you do with a crucified man? How can you tempt one who is dead to you?”

Now, it is a blessed state of mind when a man can feel that through having received Christ, he is, to this world, as one who is utterly dead. Neither does he yield his strength to its purposes, nor his soul to its customs, nor his judgment to its maxims, nor his heart to its affections, for he is a crucified man through Jesus Christ. The world is crucified unto him, and he unto the world. This is what the apostle meant.

Notice next another point of contact. He says, “*Nevertheless I live,*” but then he corrects himself, “*yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.*” You have seen the dead side of a believer—he is deaf, and dumb, and blind, and without feeling to the sinful world, yet he adds, “Nevertheless I live.” He explains what his life is—his life is produced in him by virtue of Christ’s being in him and his being in Christ. Jesus is the source of the Christian’s life.

The sap in the vine lives even in the smallest of the tendrils. No matter how minute may be the nerve, the anatomist will tell you that the brain-life lives in its most distant extremity. So in every Christian. Though the Christian may be insignificant, and possessed of little grace, yet still, if he be truly a believer, Jesus lives in him. The life which keeps his faith, his hope, his love still in existence, comes from Jesus Christ and from Him alone.

We should cease to be living saints if we did not daily receive grace from our covenant Head. As the strength of our life comes from the Son of God, so is He the ruler and moving power within us. How can he be a Christian who is ruled by any but Christ? If you call Christ, “Master and Lord,” you must be His servant. Nor can you yield obedience to any rival power, for no man can serve two masters.

There must be a master-spirit in the heart. And unless Jesus Christ be such a Master-Spirit to us, we are not saved at all. The life of the Christian is a life which springs from Christ, and it is controlled by His will. Beloved, do you know anything about this? I am afraid it is dry talking to you about it unless you feel it.

Has your life been such during the past week? Has the life which you have lived been Christ’s living in you? Have you been like a book printed in plain letters, in which men might read a new edition of the life of Jesus Christ? A Christian ought to be a living photograph of the Lord Jesus, a striking likeness of his Lord.

When men look at him they should see not only what the Christian is, but what the Christian’s Master is, for he should be like his Master. Do you ever see and know that within your soul Christ looks out of your eyes, regarding poor sinners and considering how you may help them? That Christ throbs in your heart, feeling for the perishing, trembling for those who will not tremble for themselves?

Do you ever feel Christ opening your hands in liberal charity to help those who cannot help themselves? Have you ever felt that a something more than yourself was in you, a Spirit which sometimes struggles with yourself, and holds it by the throat and threatens to destroy its sinful selfishness—a noble Spirit which puts its foot upon the neck of covetousness, a brave Spirit that dashes to the ground your pride, an active fervent Spirit that burns up your sloth?

Have you never felt this? Truly, we who live unto God feel the life of God within, and desire to be more and more subdued under the dominant Spirit of Christ, that our manhood may be a palace for the Well-beloved. That is another point of contact.

Further on, the apostle says—and I hope you will keep your Bibles open to follow the text, “*The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God.*” Every moment the life of the Christian is to be a life of faith. We make a mistake when we try to walk by feeling or by sight. I dreamed the other night, while musing upon the life of the believer, that I was passing along a road which a divine call had appointed for me.

The ordained pathway which I was called to traverse was amid thick darkness, unmingled with a ray of light. As I stood in the awful gloom, unable to perceive a single inch before me, I heard a voice which said, "Let thy feet go right on. Fear not, but advance in the name of God." So on I went, putting down foot after foot with trembling.

After a little while the path through the darkness became easy and smooth, from use and experience. Just then I perceived that the path turned. It was of no use my endeavoring to proceed as I had done before. The way was tortuous, and the road was rough and stony, but I remembered what was said, that I was to advance as I could, and so on I went.

Then there came another twist, and yet another, and another, and another, and I wondered why, till I understood that if ever the path remained long the same, I should grow accustomed to it, and so should walk by feeling. And I learned that the whole of the way would constantly be such as to compel me to depend upon the guiding voice, and exercise faith in the unseen One who had called me.

On a sudden it appeared to me as though there was nothing beneath my foot when I put it down, yet I thrust it out into the darkness in confident daring, and lo, a firm step was reached, and another, and another, as I walked down a staircase which descended deep, down, down, down. Onward I passed, not seeing an inch before me, but believing that all was well, although I could hear around me the dash of falling men and women who had walked by the light of their own lanterns, and missed their foothold.

I heard the cries and shrieks of men as they fell from this dreadful staircase, but I was commanded to go right on, and I went straight on, resolved to be obedient even if the way should descend into the nethermost hell. By and by the dreadful ladder was ended, and I found a solid rock beneath my feet, and I walked straight on upon a paved causeway, with a railing on either hand.

I understood this to be the experience which I had gained, which now could guide and help me, and I leaned on this rail, and walked on right confidently till, in a moment, my causeway ended and my feet sank in the mire, and as for my other comforts, I groped for them, but they were gone, for still I was to know that I must go in dependence upon my unseen Friend, and the road would always be such that no experience could serve me instead of dependence upon God.

Forward I plunged through mire and filth and suffocating smoke, and a smell as of death-damp, for it was *the* way, and I had been commanded to walk therein. Again the pathway changed, though all was midnight still—up went the path, and up, and up, and up, with nothing upon which I could lean. I ascended wearily innumerable stairs, not one of which I could see, although the very thought of their height might make my brain reel.

On a sudden my pathway burst into light, as I woke from my reverie, and when I looked down upon it, I saw it all to be safe, but such a road that, if I had seen it, I never could have trodden it. It was only in the darkness that I could have performed my mysterious journey, only in child-like confidence upon the Lord. The Lord will guide us if we are willing to do just as He bids us. Lean upon Him, then.

I have painted a poor picture, but still one which, if you can realize, it will be grand to look upon. To walk straight on, believing in Christ every moment, believing your sins to be forgiven even when you see their blackness, believing that you are safe when you seem in the utmost danger, believing that you are glorified with Christ when you feel as if you were cast out from God's presence—this is the life of faith.

Furthermore, Paul notes other points of unity. "*Who loved me.*" Blessed be God, before the mountains uplifted their snow-crowned heads to the clouds, Christ had set His heart upon us. His "delights were with the sons of men." In His "book all our members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."

Believer, get a hold of the precious truth that Christ loved you eternally—the all-glorious Son of God chose you, and espoused you unto Himself, that you might be His bride throughout eternity. Here is a blessed union indeed.

Observe the next, "*and gave himself for me*". Not only gave all that He had, but gave Himself. Not merely laid aside His glory, and His splendor, and His life, but yielded up His very self. O heir of

heaven, Jesus is yours at this moment. Having given Himself once for you upon the tree, to put your sin away, at this moment He gives Himself to you to be your life, your crown, your joy, your portion, your all in all.

You have found out yourself to be a separate personality and individuality, but that personality is linked with the person of Christ Jesus, so that you are in Christ, and Christ is in you. By a blessed indissoluble union you are knit together forever and ever.

III. Lastly, the text *describes* THE LIFE WHICH RESULTS FROM THIS BLENDED PERSONALITY.

If you will have patience with me, I will be as brief as I can while I go over the text again, word by word. Brethren, when a man finds and knows himself to be linked with Christ, his life is altogether *a new life*. I gather that from the expression, “I am crucified, nevertheless I live.” Crucified, then dead. Crucified, then the old life is put away—whatever life a crucified man has must be new life.

So is it with you. Upon your old life, believer, sentence of death has been pronounced. The carnal mind, which is enmity against God, is doomed to die. You can say, “I die daily.” Would to God the old nature were completely dead. But whatever you have of life was not given you till you came into union with Christ.

It is a new thing, as new as though you had been actually dead and rotted in the tomb, and then had started up at the sound of the trumpet to live again. You have received a life from above, a life which the Holy Spirit wrought in you in regeneration. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, but your grace-life did not come from yourself—you have been born again from above.

Your life is *a very strange one*—“I am crucified, nevertheless I live.” What a contradiction! The Christian’s life is a matchless riddle. No worldling can comprehend it. Even the believer himself cannot understand it. He knows it, but as to solving all its enigmas, he feels that to be an impossible task. Dead, yet alive. Crucified with Christ, and yet at the same time risen with Christ in newness of life!

Do not expect the world to understand you, Christian, it did not understand your Master. When your actions are misrepresented, and your motives are ridiculed, do not be surprised. “If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.”

If you belonged to the village, the dogs would not bark at you. If men could read you, they would not wonder. It is because you are written in a celestial language that men cannot comprehend you and think you worthless. Your life is new. Your life is strange.

This wonderful life, resulting in the blended personality of the believer and the Son of God, is *a true life*. This is expressed in the text, “Nevertheless I live”—yes, live as I never lived before. When the apostle declares himself to be dead to the world, he would not have us imagine that he was dead in the highest and best sense. Nay, he lived with a new force and vigor of life.

It seemed to me, brethren, when I woke up to know Christ, that I was just like the fly newly burst from the chrysalis—I then began really to live. When a soul is startled by the thunder claps of conviction, and afterwards receives pardon in Christ, it begins to live. The worldling says he wants to see life and therefore plunges into sin! Fool that he is, he peers into the sepulchre to discover immortality.

The man who truly lives is the believer. Shall I become less active because I am a Christian? God forbid! Become less industrious, find less opportunities for the manifestation of my natural and spiritual energies? God forbid! If ever a man should be as a sword too sharp for the scabbard, with an edge which cannot be turned, it should be the Christian. He should be like flames of fire burning his way.

Live while you live. Let there be no driveling and frittering away of time. Live so as to demonstrate that you possess the noblest form of life.

Clear is it, also, that the new life which Christ brings to us is a life of *self-abnegation*, for he adds, “I live, yet not I.” Lowliness of mind is part and parcel of godliness. He who can take any credit to himself knows not the spirit of our holy faith. The believer when he prays best says, “Yet not I, but the Spirit of

God interceded in me.” If he has won any souls to Christ, he says, “Yet not I. It was the Gospel. The Lord Jesus wrought in me mightily.” “Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the praise.” Self-humiliation is the native spirit of the true-born child of God.

Further, the life which Christ works in us is a life of *one idea*. Is the believer’s soul ruled by two things? No, he knows but one. Christ liveth in me. Two tenants in the chamber of my soul? Nay, one Lord and Master I serve. “Christ liveth in me.”

An old divine desired that he might eat and drink and sleep eternal life. Do you thus live! Alas! I mourn that I live too much in the old life, and too little does Jesus live in me. But the Christian, if he should ever come to perfection, and God grant we each may come as near to it as possible even now, will find that the old, “*I live*,” is kept under, and the new Christ-life reigns supreme.

Christ must be the one thought, the one idea, the one master-thought in the believer’s soul. When he wakes in the morning the healthy believer inquires, “What can I do for Christ?” When he goes about his business he asks, “How shall I serve my Lord in all my actions?” When he makes money he questions himself, “How can I use my talents for Christ?” If he acquires education, the inquiry is, “How can I spend my knowledge for Christ?”

To sum up much in little, the child of God has within him *the Christ-life*. but how shall I describe that? Christ’s life on earth was the divine mingled with the human—such is the life of the Christian. There is something divine about it. It is a living, incorruptible seed, which abides forever. We are made partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world through lust, yet our life is a thoroughly human life.

The Christian is a man among men. In all that is manly he labors to excel, yet he is not as other men are, but wears a hidden nature which no mere worldling understands. Picture the life of Christ on earth, beloved, and that is what the life of God in us ought to be, and will be in proportion as we are subject to the power of the Holy Spirit.

Notice again, keeping close to the text, that the life which God works in us is still *the life of a man*. “The life that I now live in the flesh,” says the apostle. Those monks and nuns who run away from the world for fear its temptations should overcome them, and seclude themselves for the sake of greater holiness, are as excellent soldiers as those who retire to the camp for fear of being defeated. Of what service are such soldiers in the battle, or such persons in the warfare of life?

Christ did not come to make monks of us. He came to make *men* of us. He meant that we should learn how to live *in the flesh*. We are neither to give up business nor society, nor in any right sense to give up life. “The life I live in the flesh,” says the apostle. Look at him busy at his tent-making. What! An apostle making tents? What say you, brethren, to the Archbishop of Canterbury stitching away for his living? It is too low for a state bishop certainly, but not too low for Paul.

I do not think the apostle was ever more apostolic than when he picked up sticks. When Paul and his companions were shipwrecked at Melita, the apostle was of more service than all the Pan-Anglican Synod with their silk aprons, for he set to work like other people to gather fuel for the fire. He wanted to warm himself as other men, and therefore he took his share at the toil.

Even so you and I must take our turn at the wheel. We must not think of keeping ourselves aloof from our fellow men, as though we would be degraded by mingling with them. The salt of the earth should be well-rubbed into the meat, and so the Christian should mingle with his fellow men, seeking their good for edification.

We are men, and whatever men may lawfully do, we do. Wherever they may go, we may go. Our religion makes us neither more nor less than human, though it brings us into the family of God. Yet the Christian life is a *life of faith*. “The life which I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God.”

Faith is not a piece of confectionery to be put upon drawing room tables or a garment to be worn on Sundays. It is a working principle to be used in the barn and in the field, in the shop and on the exchange. It is a grace for the housewife and the servant. It is for the House of Commons and for the poorest workshop.

“The life which I live in the flesh, I live by faith.” I would have the believing cobbler mend shoes religiously, and the tailor make garments by faith, and I would have every Christian buy and sell by faith. Whatever your trades may be, faith is to be taken into your daily callings, and that is alone the truly living faith which will bear the practical test.

You are not to stop at the shop door and take off your coat and say, “Farewell to Christianity till I put up the shutters again.” That is hypocrisy, but the genuine life of the Christian is the life which we live *in the flesh by faith of the Son of God*.

To conclude—the life which comes out of the blended personality of the believer and Christ is a life of *perfect love*. “He gave himself for me.” My question is, therefore, What can I do for Him? The new life is a life of *holy security*, for if Christ loved me, who can destroy me? It is a life of *holy wealth*, for if Christ gave His infinite self to me, what can I want?

It is a life of *holy joy*, for if Christ be mine, I have a well of holy joy within my soul. It is *the life of heaven*, for if I have Christ, I have that which is the essence and soul of heaven.

I have talked mysteries, of which some of you have not understood so much as a sentence. God give you understanding that you may know the truth. But if you have not understood it, let this fact convince you—you know not the truth because you have not the Spirit of God. For the spiritual mind alone understands spiritual things.

When we talk about the inner life, we seem like those who dote and dream to those who understand us not. But if you have understood me, believer, go home and live out the truth, practice that which is practicable, feed upon that which is full of savor, rejoice in Christ Jesus that you are one with Him, and then, in your own proper person, go out and serve your Master with might and main, and the Lord send you His abundant blessing. Amen and Amen.

Taken from The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit C. H. Spurgeon Collection. Only necessary changes have been made, such as correcting spelling errors, some punctuation usage, capitalization of deity pronouns, and minimal updating of a few archaic words. The content is unabridged. Additional Bible-based resources are available at www.spurgeongems.org.