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Living The Crucified Life
Galatians 2:20

The Bible tells us that we are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.
Eph. 2:10

Jesus also tells us that He came that we may have life, and that we may have it more abundantly. Jn. 10:10d-e

Allow me to propose to you that in view of these two scriptures, God declares that every believer has a new potential of life by virtue of being "in Christ" living by faith.

Listen to a poem entitled "By sight Not Faith".

Sometimes I'm sad, I know not why
 My heart is sore distressed;
 It seems the burdens of this world
 Have settled on my heart.
 And yet I know...I know that God
 Who doeth all things right
 Will lead me thus to understand
 To walk by FAITH....not SIGHT.
 And though I may not see the way
 He's planned for me to go,...

The way seems dark to me just
 But oh, I'm sure He knows!
 Today He guides my feeble step
 Tomorrow's in His right...
 He has asked me to never fear...
 But walk by FAITH...not SIGHT.
 Some day the mists will roll away,
 The sun will shine again.
 I'll see the beauty in the flowers,
 I'll hear the birds refrain,
 And then I'll know my Father's hand
 Has led the way to light
 Because I placed my hand in His
 And walked by FAITH...not
 SIGHT. Ruth A. Morgan
 #1497

The question that we need to ask ourselves is, how can we live up to our potential?

Paul gives us three principles that will allow us to live up to our potential in our life of faith. Gal. 2:20

- I. The principle of death. vs. 20a
- II. The principle of life. vs. 20b-d
- III. The Principle of Love. vs. 20e

I. The principle of death. vs. 20a

* If we are going to live up to our potential, we have to acknowledge that we have been crucified with Christ.

- A.** It implies death to my own direction in life and purposes before coming to Christ, if they are contrary to the written word of God or the revealed will of God for me.
1. The word crucified is in the perfect tense, past completed action having present results.
 2. The disciples were fishermen before and Jesus had called them to be fishers of men.
 3. Paul was a religious Pharisee persecuting Christianity but now called to be a preacher of Christianity.
 4. Dr. Martin Lloyd-James who was a practicing physician, assistant to Lord Horder, entered the Ministry in 1927.
- B.** It implies death to my old man and his bondage to sin.
1. Our old man was crucified. Rom. 6:6
 2. Our old sinful passions have been crucified. Gal. 5:24
 3. Our old man is to be reckoned dead daily. Rom. 6:11
 4. Our thoughts need to be captivated. 2 Cor. 10:4-5
 5. Romans seven describes Paul attempting to do in the ability of the flesh, trusting in his own flesh, to accomplish that which

can only be accomplished by the Spirit.
Rom. 7:13-25

* Remember the context of our text is Law versus Grace as Paul has rebuked Peter before all!

6. Galatians shows us the warfare that will exist as long as we are in this body, due to sin nature and the remedy. Gal. 1:16-17
- C.** It implies a slow, painful death and always certain before all.
1. Crucifixion was practiced by the Phoenicians and Persians then picked up by the Romans.
 2. Romans reserved this form of capital punishment for slaves and foreigners, never for Romans.
 3. Our death to sin is a slow, painful process that will one day be finalized, therefore we glorify in the cross. Gal. 6:14
 4. Our death to sin apart from the cross is impossible. 1 Cor. 2:2-5

Illustration

Jesus illustrated this principle as a grain of wheat falling onto the ground; unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain or fruit. Jn. 12:24

Application (The Principle of Death)

1. Let me give you some ways that we refuse to be crucified with Christ and forfeit living up to our potential.

a. We look back to regrets or enticements of the past! Lk. 9:62

* Jesus said, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God."

1) The word fit "euthetos" means well placed or useful.

2) He or she is hindered and are not up to their best potential to accomplish the business of the Kingdom.

b. We look so far ahead that we lose our joy and trust in God for today. Matt. 5:25-34

* Jesus said, "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I

say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, *will He* not much more *clothe* you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day *is* its own trouble."

2. Let me call to your attention to the words of Jesus about His cross and living up to our potential.

a. The cross is identity with Christ and the gaining of one's life. Matt. 10:38-39

* "And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it."

b. To pick up your cross you must loose sight of yourself. Matt. 16:24

* Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.”

c. The cross may cost you all material goods.
Mk. 10:21

* “Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me.”

d. The cross means love for Christ above all others. Lk. 14:25-27

* Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them, If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.”

The principle of death is foundational for spiritual living!

II. The principle of life. vs. 20b-d

* If we are going to live the life of Christ it is in this world not the next!

A. The life that I live is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. vs. 20b-c

1. This implies that the present reality is a total submission to the person of Christ to the purposes and will of Christ who lives in me and is Lord.

2. No longer do I simply live to please myself, but others and the Lord. Rom. 15:1-2, I Thes. 4:1

3. No longer can I say no and Lord in the same sentence.

* Peter contradicted himself at Joppa, Acts 10:14.

B. The life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God. vs. 20d

1. This implies a mind set, personal commitment of the will to trust God for this new life.

a. I now live in the flesh, meaning this physical body.

b. I do this here and now, today, a day at a time in this physical body where I experience daily warfare and difficulties. Phil. 3:12-16

3. It implies a manner of life, I live by faith in the Son of God.

a. Faith is based on believing and trusting the revelation of God’s word, not some self imposed rituals or

outlandish belief that contradicts God's word.

- b.** Faith has an object, the faith that allows me to live this particular life is the Son of God, Jesus Christ.
- 1) Confidence and trust in what the Bible says about His person, who He is!
 - 2) Confidence and trust in what He accomplished on the cross in my place, what He did!
 - 3) Confidence and trust in union and dependency on Christ, what He is able to do! 2 Cor. 4:7-15

Illustration

Someone asked John Wanamaker: "How do you get time to run a Sunday school with your four thousand scholars in addition to the business of your stores, your work as Postmaster-General, and other obligations?" Instantly Mr. Wanamaker replied: "Why the Sunday school is my business! All other things are just things. Forty-five years ago I decided that God's promise was sure: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." #3099

-King's Business

Application (The Principle of Life)

1. If I am going to live up to my potential in Christ I need to live in obedience as He is Lord. Matt. 7:21-23

* Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name? And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

2. If I am going to live up to my potential I need to be as three people in Scripture:

- a. The athlete who disciplines his body. I Cor. 9:24-27
- b. The soldier who pleases his superior and endures hardness as a good soldier. 2 Tim. 2:3-4
- c. The farmer who trusts God to produce the harvest and first partake to be able to impart to others. 2 Tim. 2:6

3. If I am going to live up to my potential.

- a. Christ is my example, not man. Heb. 12:2-4
 - * Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who endured such hostility

from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.

b. Christ is my source. Jn. 15:4-6

* “Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw *them* into the fire, and they are burned.”

c. Christ does all things and strengthens me to do them, not what I want to do at my own will. Phil. 4:13

* I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

The principle of life is the result of death to self!

III. The Principle of Love. vs. 20e

* If we are going to live up to our potential it will be affect through God's love!

A. God initiated His love to me a sinner.

1. For God so loved... Jn. 3:16

- a. God did not save us by His love, His love could not save us in and of it's self.
 - b. God's love is the motive that prompted God to make a way for our salvation.
 - c. God saved us by His grace which is manifested through Jesus His Son.
 - d. God's righteousness is revealed in the gospel revealing the power of God unto salvation to all. Rom. 1:16-17
2. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us. I Jn. 4:10
 - a. God is the initiator of salvation.
 - b. Man is the responder of salvation.
 3. God's love is distinct from man's love in that it is unconditional and does not disqualify as man due to the following:
 - a. Physical appearance.
 - b. Economic status.
 - c. Cultural difference.
 - d. Past sins.
 - e. Personal weakness.
 - f. Educational accomplishments.
 4. God's love is also conditional.
 - a. It is true and correct that God loves sinners but their sin hinders God from imparting the benefits of His love to them.

- b. It is necessary the sinner repent of his or her sins, trusting Jesus as the sacrifice in their place. Eph. 2:8-9

B. God verified His love in a tangible way, giving Himself for me.

1. For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the Ungodly. Rom. 5:6
2. The Son was sent and became the propitiation for our sins and not for us alone but for the entire world, this is love. I Jn. 2:2, 4:10
3. The Son laid His life down willfully of His own will. Jn. 10:17-18
 * Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father."

Illustration

Jesus illustrated the principle of love as He washed His disciples feet and said, "I have given you an example." Jn. 13:15

* Listen to this poem.

They say the world is round--and yet
 I often think it's square.
 So many little hurts we get

from corners, here and there.
 But there's one truth in life I've found
 While journeying East and West:
 The only folks we really wound
 Are those we love the best.
 We flatter those we scarcely know;
 We please the fleeting guest,
 And deal full many a thoughtless blow
 To those we love the best. #3215

Application

1. If we have not love "agape" we say nothing, are nothing and benefit no one, love for self is a worse death. I Cor. 13:1-3
2. If we yield to God's love we will be walking in the Spirit, a choice of the will, to manifest the Fruit of the Spirit which is "Agape" love. Gal. 5:22
3. Some of the practical ways love is to be imparted are as follows:
 - a. Love doesn't work ill to one's neighbor Rom. 13:10
 - b. Love serves one another. Gal. 5:13
 - c. Love speak the truth in love. Eph. 4:15
 - d. Love is the bond of perfection, able to forbear and forgive as Christ. Col. 3:13-14
 - e. Love for one another is to be with a pure heart. I Pet. 1:22
4. The distinguishing mark of the believer and the church of Jesus Christ is to be "agape" love. Jn.13:35

- * By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."
- a. Knowledge is legitimate.
 - b. Works have their place, after coming to the cross. Ja. 2:24-26
 - * You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only. Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent *them* out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.
 - c. Faith, hope are great virtues but love is the greatest of them all. 1Cor. 13:13
 - * And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

The Principle of Love is the life of Christ in me as I give myself to Him!

Conclusion

If you are going to live up to your potential:

- I.** You must be crucified daily: The principle of death is foundational for spiritual living!
- II.** You must let Christ live through you: The principle of life is the result of death to self!
- III.** You must yield to God's love: The principle of "Agape" love is the life of Christ in me as I give myself to Him!

- * The crucified life described by these three principles will allow us to live up to our potential in our life of faith and are merely principles of sowing and reaping. Gal. 6:7-10