

GOSPEL LIFE

REDEEMER INSTITUTE



THE CHRISTIAN LIFE
IS ... WHAT?

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IS...

1. **Overwhelming** – “What’s my part? Is it 50% God and 50% me?”
2. **Confusing** – “So many differing views, interpretations, traditions, theological systems.”
3. **Disappointing** – “God keeps letting me down. The Christian life is not what I thought.”
4. **Exhausting** – “Be better! Do better! Feel more! Activate God more! Here’s how...I’ve tried everything.”
5. **Stressful** – “I must keep the Christian life going!”

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

“So why do real Christians still sin so much, even after they have been saved for decades? Why can’t we just get our act together and keep getting better?”

“If sanctification is all about us sinning less and less, then we would have to conclude that the Holy Spirit isn’t doing His job very well.”





WHAT IS SELF- SANCTIFICATION?

GALATIANS 2.11-14

But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. For before certain men came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles; but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing the circumcision party. And the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically along with him, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. But when I saw that their conduct was **not in step with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas** before them all, “If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?”

What is Peter’s problem?

What is the Bible’s solution?

What is self-sanctification according to Galatians 2.11-14?

GALATIANS 3.1-5

O foolish (stupid) Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified. Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit (i.e. in the sphere of the Spirit), are you now being perfected by the flesh (i.e. are you now trying to perfect yourself in the sphere of the flesh)? Did you suffer so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain? Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith—

How do you receive the Holy Spirit and further supplies of the Holy Spirit?

What does trying to perfect yourself in the flesh mean? Look like?

What is self-sanctification according to Galatians 3?

2CORINTHIANS 3.14-18

But their minds were hardened. For to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away. Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts. But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image ^wfrom one degree of glory to another.⁶ For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

What does reading the Bible with a “veil” over your heart mean?

How is the “veil” removed?

Where is the “Spirit of the Lord”?

What is the Christian life according to 2Corinthians 3?

What is self-sanctification according to 2Corinthians 3?

ROMANS 7

Romans 7:14 For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin. 15 For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. 16 Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. 17 So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. 18 For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. 19 For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. 20 Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me.

Romans 7:21 So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. 22 For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, 23 but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. 24 Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? 25 Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.

“I” is mentioned 26 times.

Who is the “I” in Romans 7?

What are the implications of a “split-self” for the Christian life?

What is self-sanctification according Romans 7?



WHAT IS GRACE- SANCTIFICATION?

STARTS HERE:

- 1. Gospel Instruction** – the gospel becoming more and more clear to the mind and real to the heart.
- 2. The School of Experience** – the law revealing and the gospel evangelizing the unreached areas of your life.

THEREFORE...
BECOME AN INTELLIGENT
MYSTIC.

TWO CAMPS:

- 1. The Intelligent Camp.**
- 2. The Mystical Camp.**

WHAT IS THE TRUTH CAMP?

1. **Truth Experts** – knowing God is about objective truth, theology, doctrine, propositions, information, education.
2. **Getting it right.**
3. **The Life of the mind.**
4. **Truth telling.**

WHAT IS THE MYSTICAL CAMP?

- 1. Experience Experts** – knowing God is about subjective experiences, the inner life, contemplative spirituality, spiritual disciplines, communion with God.
- 2. Getting it felt.**
- 3. The Life of the heart.**
- 4. Feeling deeply.**

STRANGELY, THE TWO CAMPS...

1. Embody church traditions, denominations, and movements throughout church history.
2. Are suspicious of each other.
3. Divide nicely along personality tendencies.

JESUS SAYS:
(JOHN 17.3)

And this is eternal life, that they may know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

- 1. “Know” means both clarity in the mind and realness in the heart.**
- 2. Knowing God is experiencing truth.**
- 3. Knowing God is the Bible passing into your soul.**
- 4. Knowing God is both intelligent and mystical.**

EXPERIENCE GOD WITH
THE BIBLE.

QUESTIONS?



ADVANCED CLASS:
LEARN THE THREE
VIEWS OF LIFE
CHANGE.

WHAT ARE THEY?

- 1. Antinomian Life Change.**
- 2. Moralistic Life Change.**
- 3. Gospel Life Change.**

ANTINOMIAN LIFE CHANGE

- 1. Does not believe in life change formally (beliefs) or functionally (practice).**
- 2. Anti-law or relativistic in its approach to life and ministry.**
- 3. Avoids (suppresses) God and the spiritual fabric of the universe (reality or the law) by creating its own.**
- 4. Plays God by creating its own laws, truth, meaning, righteousness, identity, happiness, salvation, etc...**

MORALISTIC LIFE CHANGE

1. Believes in life change, that is, the self-activating kind.
2. *Pelagianism* – most common form. Self-activation (works) by the human will or some form of law keeping.
3. *Semi-Pelagianism* – most hidden form. Self-activation (works) in causal cooperation with **God** or the **Holy Spirit** (some notion of grace on a spectrum). Jesus or faith plus *something*.

GOSPEL LIFE CHANGE

- 1. Believes in life change by the power of the gospel alone.**
- 2. Sanctification by the power of Jesus and His salvation alone or faith alone.**
- 3. Life change by the gospel's energies & activations alone, not some form of self-activation.**
- 4. If swimming is sanctification, then the pool is the gospel (Phil 2.12-13).**
- 5. This is the Spirit-filled life.**

PHIL 2.12-13

Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

- 1. What are we to “work out”?**
- 2. What is the reason given to do this?**
- 3. What exactly happens as you “work out your salvation”?**
- 4. Everyone wants God to work in their life – right?**

ROMANS 1.16-17

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is (present tense) the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed (present tense) from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”

- 1. What is the infinite power of God for salvation?**
- 2. What does “salvation” include?**
- 3. Does “salvation” exclude anything?**
- 4. Is the work of Christ enough to take you to glory? Or is another work needed?**

COLOSSIANS 1.5-7

Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel, which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and increasing—as it also does among you, since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth, just as you learned it from Epaphras our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf...

- 1. How does Paul portray the gospel?**
- 2. What does “as it also does among you” mean?**
- 3. Notice how gospel-growth takes gospel instruction – i.e. “hear”, “understand”, “learn”.**
- 4. The gospel has its own agenda.**

COLOSSIANS 2.6-7

Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk (present imperative) in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

- 1. What is the Christian life?**
- 2. What are we commanded to do as Christians?**
- 3. Notice the need for gospel instruction again – i.e. “just as you were taught”.**
- 4. Notice what gospel instruction produces – “abounding in thanksgiving”.**

QUESTIONS?



OBJECTIONS:

IS GOSPEL LIFE CHANGE ANTINOMIAN?

1. **Of course not!**
2. **Antinomian life change does not believe in life change.**
3. **Gospel life change does – *by* the power of the gospel.**
4. **“The gospel does not have one ounce of Antinomianism in it” – Marshall.**
5. **Moralistic life change always slanders gospel life change as antinomian.**
6. **Why? It simply cannot fathom a world where grace alone actually changes everything.**

IS GOSPEL LIFE CHANGE INACTIVITY?

1. **No.**
2. **The gospel reaches and renews people not rocks.**
3. **Gospel-growth in people is real.**
4. **Gospel-growth is personally active and relationally dynamic.**
5. **The gospel has its own agenda because it carries divine life & divine energies with it.**

BIBLICAL LIFE CHANGE IS
SWIMMING IN THE RIGHT
PLACE...
THE POOL OF THE GOSPEL.



WHAT DOES
SWIMMING IN THE
POOL OF THE
GOSPEL LOOK LIKE?

ANSWER #1: ENGAGE
(SWIM) IN THE MEANS OF
GRACE.

WHAT ARE “MEANS (INSTRUMENTS) OF GRACE”?

- 1 **Where** God works.
- 2 **Where** Jesus & His salvation shows up.
- 3 **Where** the Holy Spirit applies the work (spiritual blessings or graces) of Christ to you.

WHAT ARE MEANS OF GRACE?

WSC 88:

“The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption, are His ordinances, especially the Word, sacraments, and prayer; all of which are made effectual to the elect for salvation.”



ARE THEY MAGIC?

WSC 91:

“They become an effectual means of salvation, not from any virtue in them, or in him that does administer them; but only by the blessing of Christ, and the working of His Spirit in them that by faith receive them.”



ARE THEY EQUALLY THE SAME?

WSC 89:

“The Spirit makes the reading, but especially the preaching, of the Word, an effectual (powerful) means of convincing and converting sinners, and of building them up in holiness and comfort, through faith, unto salvation.”



THINK OF IT THIS WAY (VOS):

“If necessary, we can think of Word as a means of grace without sacrament, but it is impossible to think of sacrament as a means of grace without Word. The sacraments depend upon Scripture, and the truth of Scripture speaks in and through them (i.e. the sacraments).”

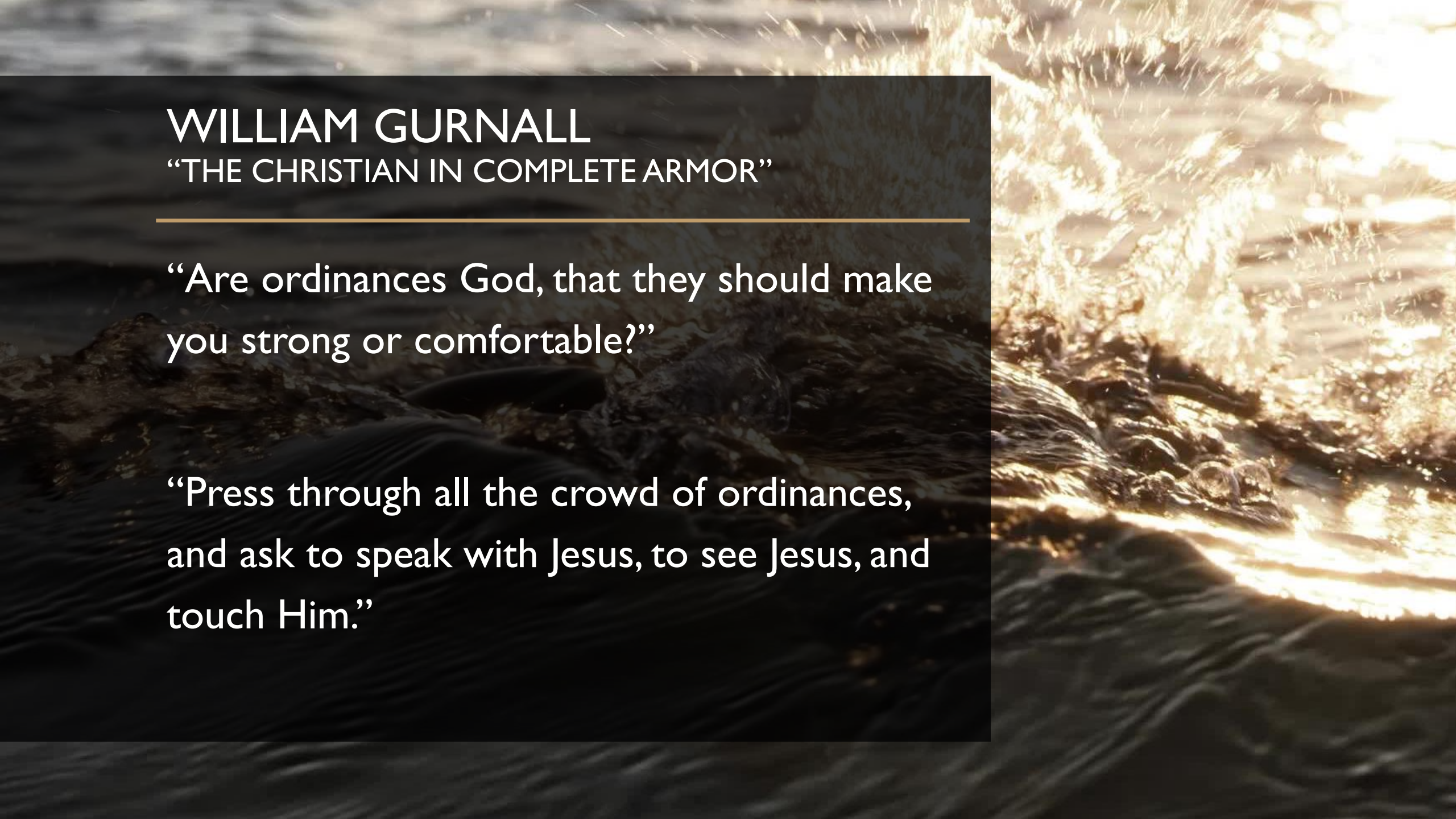
SO, WHAT
(SPECIFICALLY)
ARE THE “MEANS
OF GRACE”?

1. **The Word of God.**
2. **Especially the Preached Word of God.**
3. **The Sacraments: Baptism & Lord's Supper.**
4. **Therefore, Sunday (the Sabbath) becomes a means of grace as the day God appointed to show up in a**
5. **Therefore, Prayer. That is answering Speech.**
6. **Therefore, the Church generally speaking. That is as the outpost of the Kingdom of God that Jesus builds in the world.**

HOW SHOULD YOU
APPROACH THE MEANS OF
GRACE?

AS THE MEANS TO
SOMEONE ELSE.

NOT AS MAGIC.

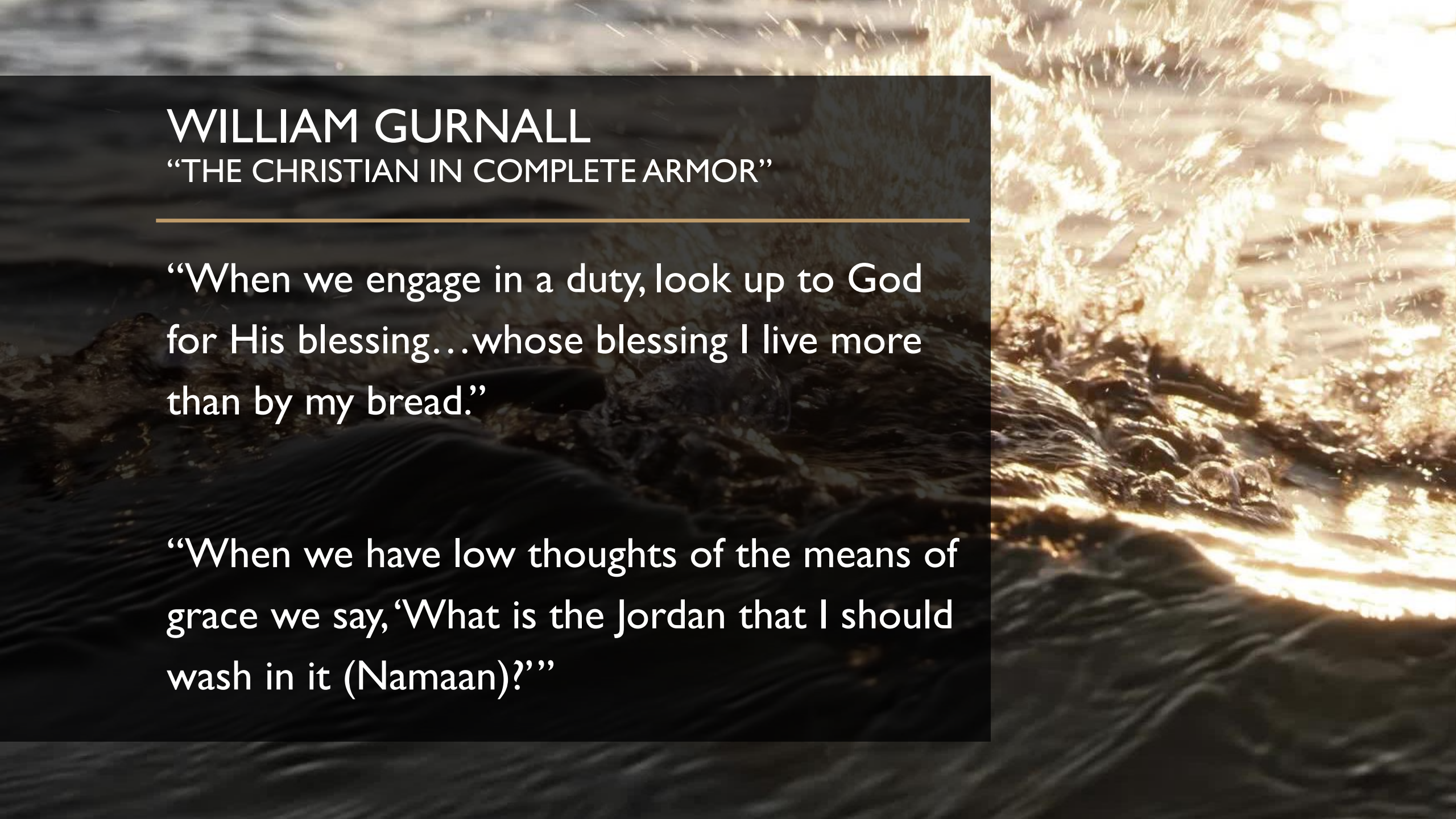


WILLIAM GURNALL

“THE CHRISTIAN IN COMPLETE ARMOR”

“Are ordinances God, that they should make you strong or comfortable?”

“Press through all the crowd of ordinances, and ask to speak with Jesus, to see Jesus, and touch Him.”



WILLIAM GURNALL

“THE CHRISTIAN IN COMPLETE ARMOR”

“When we engage in a duty, look up to God for His blessing...whose blessing I live more than by my bread.”

“When we have low thoughts of the means of grace we say, ‘What is the Jordan that I should wash in it (Namaan)?’”

ANSWER #2: ENGAGE
(SWIM) IN A LOCAL
GOSPEL-DRIVEN CHURCH.

CONNECT WITH GOD

- 1. Go to Church.**
- 2. Teach the Bible.**

CONNECT WITH
EACH OTHER

- 1. Make friends.**
- 2. Build community.**

CONNECT WITH MISSION

- 1. Make friends and have gospel conversations.**
- 2. Do good.**
- 3. Plant Churches.**

CONNECT WITH SERVING

- 1. Serve the gospel mission.**
- 2. Serve one another.**

**ANSWER #3: READ YOUR
BIBLE & PRAY.**



Next Topic:



The Church