

THE LIFE OF A CHILD OF GOD

By Pastor James Phiri

THE TWO PRINCIPLES FOR LIFE

After God had created man and gave him the gift of life, He had to provide means for man to sustain this gift of life. He gave man food to eat.

In the Garden of Eden, man had everything he needed to sustain his life. According to the Bible, everything God created was good, therefore, everything God gave to man was good. However, in order to ensure that man exercised the gift of choice, God also put certain things in the Garden that man was not supposed to eat or do.

Genesis 2:9

And out of the ground the Lord God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Notice that there are two trees that determine the outcome of man's life. These are the two standards... principles for life. God uses these two trees to teach us that He has set a standard for life. He speaks to us in a parable of trees.

Lets me also explain that these standards were placed in the garden of Eden, which, in a sense, represents the Kingdom of God on Earth. With that in mind, one must realize that there is another standard for life outside the Kingdom of God, namely the 'Principle of sin.' Those who are living according to this standard follow the desires of their flesh. They live only to gratify their human nature. But the 'Principle of life' and the 'Principle of good and evil' are given as a choice to those who have been taken out of the kingdom of darkness and transferred into the kingdom of light.

THE CHOICE

Genesis 2:16-17

And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

Man, here, is given a choice. Eat everything except one thing, the decision I leave with you. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil can also be called the tree of right and wrong. Notice that God told man not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, because if he does, he will die on the same day he eats of it. Did he obey God? No. Instead he chose to eat the same thing that was going to kill him.

We still have the same choice today. There are two different principles for life for Christians even today. The Principle of Life and the Principle of good and evil. It is sad to say that a majority of Christians still choose to live by the Principle of the knowledge of good and evil.

THE PRINCIPLE THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL

Remember that everything God created, everything tree and animal He created was good. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil is not evil, it is good. But it is not good enough for the child of God.

A Christian who lives by this principle is always trying to do good. He wants to find out whether what he is doing is right or wrong, if it is good or evil. And if he does not know, he will choose not to do it. This Christian brother or sister lives by externalities. He depends on performance. He believes that when he does good, God will notice him and love him more; If he does good, God will give him what he wants. His relationship with God is performance based. He just wants to keep the Law. Yet in **Genesis 2:17 the Lord God said if you live by this standard you will surely die.**

A person living by the knowledge of right and wrong always asks: 'Is this right?', 'Should I do this?', 'What if I am wrong?', 'Would people understand?'

This is not the way for a child of God. In the Transfiguration experience we learn the most valuable lesson:

Mathew 17:3,5

And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him... While he was still speaking, behold, a bright light cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!"

Moses and Elijah represented the outward moral standards (Law) and the outward human standards (Prophets): The standards of right and wrong, and living regulations. Remember that everything God created is good. But He still gives us a choice. Here God Himself silenced the Law and the Prophets. He said we must only hear the Son.

Christians today are not guided by right and wrong or by Prophets. We must listen to Christ in us the hope of glory.

THE PRINCIPLE OF LIFE

Romans 8:10

And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

Verse 14 says:

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

Christianity is a matter of life, not right and wrong. The life of Christ in me is what determines my actions. It is no longer I who lives but Christ lives in me. I do not go by what is right and wrong, I go by what the Spirit says.

If the life of Christ in me is quickened by what I am doing or about to do, then I know it is what God wants me to do. If the life dies, or I lose the joy and peace, then I know God does not approve of what I am doing. It has nothing to do with outward morals and standards. It is an inner knowing that guides a child of God.

I know that what is good to man, does not necessarily mean that it is right with God. If it is not of faith, it is sin.

This does not mean that wrong can be good. Wrong is still wrong. But for a child of God, good is not enough. It must be life. It must be Christ. Nothing more, nothing less.

As I conclude, let me also say that this life of God in us is always ready for us, always waiting on us. There is no way that you can do something without Him approving or disapproving your decisions. It is just a matter of listening inside.

I want to encourage you to start listening to Him. The truth is that not every good thing is right before God.

A good example would be that of the Apostle Paul. In Acts 16 from verse 6 to 10, the Apostle wanted to go and preach the gospel in Bithynia, but the Spirit did not allow it. Instead He sent them to Macedonia.

Now, Jesus Himself commanded us to preach the gospel to every nation. Therefore, for Apostle Paul to preach the gospel in Bithynia was good. But it was not right with the Lord at that time. That is what I mean by saying not every good thing is right with God.

May the life of Christ in you lead you in all things.