

America's Hope Monthly

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Resurrection Life Here and Now

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All born again Christians believe in the resurrection of the body, but there is also resurrection life and power available to us here and now. The question before us is: how do we appropriate this resurrection power in our present lives? In considering this question, let us first turn to Romans 7 beginning with verse 21. Here the apostle Paul testifies,

"I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God (that is, the word and will of God) after the inward man (the new creation, the new spirit): But I see another law in my members (in my very being another principle or power) warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."

Twice the apostle Paul refers to this law or principle of sin that was in his members. This is the testimony of all Christians. After we are born-again, we have two natures, the sinful blood life that we receive from our parents (which came from Adam and Eve), and also a new life and nature, which is the Spirit of God. Paul found that these two natures were constantly warring or struggling against each other, one pulling him down and the other lifting him up.

Then he states in verse 24: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? He was not referring to the physical body, which apart from the blood life is not sinful — it is dust. Paul is speaking here about the nature that we have due to the fall of Adam. So he is asking who shall deliver from this power of the carnal mind, this fallen nature that is within his members.

His question is answered in verse 25: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God (I serve the word and will of God with this new mind of Christ and this new spirit); but with the flesh the law of sin."

Let us next look at Romans 8, beginning with verse 1: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." As Christians we are a new creation in Christ Jesus, and the same power that raised Christ from the dead is available to us; it can be operative and effective in our lives.

We sit in the place of decision over our two minds or natures and determine which mind we will yield to and follow. Paul says there is no condemnation to those who follow the Spirit and the Word of God.

Verse 2 gives us the secret of the resurrection life: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." As we are told in the 6th chapter of Romans, victory, deliverance and release from the carnal mind come not by fighting or struggling nor through our own efforts. The victory is gained by yielding to the Spirit and to the Word. This is very important and critical. There are Christians who live their entire lives in their own strength, trying by their own efforts to subdue, overcome and gain victory over the carnal mind. Victory is not accomplished that way. We must instead yield to the Spirit.

"For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh . . ." The law is not weak or sinful — the law is holy and spiritual, as stated in Romans 7:12-14. It is the flesh that is weak.

"That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Note the emphasis here that we decide whether we will yield to the flesh or the Spirit. As we yield to one or the other, we choose the direction our thought life and actions will go.

"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit." Decisions constantly confront us as Christians. How thankful to God we should be for these marvelous revelations from the apostle Paul!

Verse 11 continues: "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." At first thought we might think this refers to our bodies in the grave, but the body in the grave is not liable to die — the physical body is already dead when it lies in the grave. The word "mortal" here simply means "liable to die" bodies.

Paul brings the further light, revelation and provision that the Spirit that raised Christ from the dead (this resurrection

life of Christ) will not only quicken our minds and our spirits but will also quicken our bodies. Please keep in mind the word "quicken" because the Scripture has much to say about the quickening of the Holy Spirit, bringing strengthening and energizing power to the body, mind and whole being of the believer. That is the secret of victory in the Christian life.

"Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh." Here again it is not the human body that is spoken of; it is the principle of sin. The chief characteristic of the carnal mind is to doubt God and to disobey his Word. The carnal mind goes along with religion and ritual, churchianity and ceremony; but it rebels in believing God for definite, specific things. That is where the carnal mind draws back, and it cannot please God. One must be spiritually minded to believe and lay hold on the Word. The Spirit of God imparts the Word to a spiritually minded person.

"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." What are the deeds of the body? Carnality, selfishness, pride and unbelief. A great deal of emphasis has been placed today on the sins of the flesh, and rightly so, but actually the sins of the flesh are merely a manifestation that there is something wrong in the spirit, the heart and the mind. If we get at the root of this trouble, which is actually spiritual and mental, then the outside (the physical and material man) will be cleaned up.

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Being led by the Spirit is a very definite, real thing; actually it should be the normal, Christian life. The Spirit leads according to the Word; He wants to prompt and direct you.

"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God . . ."

For further light let us turn to II Corinthians 1:8, 9. Remember, we are considering how the Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead can become available to us. How do we appropriate and receive this power? It is not so simple. Do you recall that when Elisha asked Elijah for a double portion of his spirit, the old prophet said he had asked a hard thing. Although it is quite simple to become a Christian, it is more difficult to appropriate the power of the Spirit in our lives for our minds, spirits and bodies.

We read in verse 8 concerning the experience of the apostle Paul: "For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life . . ."

This is rather strange, is it not? With the calling and commission God had granted the apostle Paul, why did He allow this experience to come also? Paul was doing nothing but good in spreading the gospel, and the Lord had promised to be with him and to prosper him. But in Asia he was so overwhelmed and had trouble to such an extent that he despaired even of life.

Here is the reason "But we have the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead . . ." We may wonder why we as Christians have trouble that depresses and sometimes almost breaks us to despair. It is simply that the Spirit of God, the grace of God and the power of God might become manifest and operative in us. We are so constituted as human beings that we do not appropriate and lay hold upon the power of the Spirit and the provision of the resurrection life that is available until we have come to the end of all of our own resources, strength, wisdom and efforts. God sometimes must put us into a place of despair.

At such a time we do one of two things — we either go down and drown (and become a carnal, bitter, defeated person) or we cry to God, lay hold on His Word, believe and cling to it. And as we do, this newness of life, this Spirit of God becomes operative in us. This is very important — it is actually the essence of a victorious Christian life.

One of our difficulties today is that there is very little emphasis and preaching on the crucifixion and mortification of the carnal mind. There is much preaching on the blessings of the Spirit, but to receive these blessings our old carnal life and ego must be brought to the end of itself, and that is not pleasant. Crucifixion is involved in the in-filling and leading of the Holy Spirit.

In II Corinthians 4:7 Paul writes, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." He is writing about the power and Spirit of God, the resurrection life which we have been considering. If Christ had not died, he would never have been quickened by the spirit, and there must also be a crucifixion in our lives before we can appropriate this same quickening. If this power is not of us we must be brought to the end of ourselves. Incidentally, this is true not only of us as Christian individuals — it is true of our nation.

This nation will have the greatest quickening of the spirit that any nation has every experienced, but first our nation must be brought to the end of itself. We are getting there very rapidly. Problems are coming in like a flood, and in the providence of God we are unable to solve a single one. We are being brought to the place where there is nothing left to do but to lay hold on the Word, pray and trust God. Then the quickening and the greatest revival of all history will come to America.

We continue on from verse 8 in II Corinthians 4: "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed: we are perplexed, but not in despair . . ." In spite of the experiences the apostle Paul had with God and the answers to prayer, visions and revelations that had come to him, he had had nothing but trouble. He did not understand it nor could he account for it, but there it was.

"Persecuted, but not forsaken, cast down, but not destroyed . . ." It should be comforting to us that the apostle Paul was cast down at times, yet he was not destroyed.

"Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. What does this phrase mean? Simply that when Christ

died, He put away the sins of Saul of Tarsus. But something else happened — Paul was put away, too.

He said in Galatians 2:20, "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,"

As already mentioned, Romans tells us to "reckon" ourselves crucified with Christ, that this carnal mind, this law and principle in our members was put away. The purpose for all of this: "That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body." This is wonderful, precious, glorious and beautiful, but it is not so delightful to get to that place. That is where Christian people pull back and fail to go through their crucifixion. They draw back and fail to go through Jordan into death. Paul did not draw back — he went through his crucifixion that the resurrection life of Christ might be manifest in him. Without his crucifixion experiences could he have written the books of Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians?

Instead of becoming bitter, discouraged, antagonistic and sour in all the affliction he went through, Paul gained the victory by trusting in God, believing in His sovereignty and laying hold on the Word. What happened? God quickened him to such an extent that today millions of people are being quickened by his writings, as they have been down through church history.

Did this come from the intellect of the apostle Paul? God forbid. It came out of his crucifixion and death. By recognizing and reckoning himself crucified with Christ and accepting the crucifixion of his self-life, ego, pride and carnality, the Spirit of God moved upon him. Thus we have the basis for the Christian faith and the gospel of grace from this one man.

We read in the next verses (II Corinthians 4:11,12), "For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh." This is in the realm of the spirit of the mind, as well as the physical. "So then death worketh in us but life in you." Paul says, "because I reckon myself dead and am willing to accept crucifixion and trust God, the spirit of life comes to you."

In Ephesians 1:18-20 the apostle prays, "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe (here is the power available to us) according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places. . ."

Stated here as clearly as words can state is the fact that this same resurrection power that raised Christ from the grave is available for us today providing we believe. It simply means we must believe God for specific, definite things. That is faith. Many Christian people have much knowledge and even glory in this knowledge. Certainly one should get all the

knowledge he can, but we must be careful about the carnal mind. Faith believes God for specific, definite needs; faith believes that the same power that raised Christ from the grave is available for the very thing we are praying about.

Christ died believing, and according to Hebrews 11, that is what the saints of old did, too. They died believing, not receiving the promise. What happened? Read history.

America is a nation today because Abraham died believing God — and this same power is available today if we will believe. As Christians grow older, they either grow in grace and faith in God (causing blessings to flow from their lives) or they develop carnality, unbelief, bitterness, resentment and persecution complexes. Certainly the blessings of God do not flow from such lives.

May each one of us lay hold on the Word and rejoice in the glorious provision of the resurrection life available to us here and now. May we experience in our own lives the "greatness of his power to us-ward who believe."

Twenty-Four Prophecies Fulfilled During the Last 24 Hours of Christ's Life on Earth

1. On the evening of the Passover Christ said to His disciples: It is written, I will smite the Shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered.
Zechariah 13:7 – Mark 14:50
2. They weighed My price for thirty pieces of silver.
Zechariah 11:12 – Matthew 26:14,15
3. And I cast the thirty pieces of silver in the house of the Lord.
Zechariah 11:13 – Matthew 27:5, 7
4. False witnesses shall rise against me.
Psalm 35:11 – Mark 14:56
5. If ye were called gods, why do ye say it is blasphemy if I say I am the Son of God?
Psalm 82:6, 7 – John 10:34, 36
6. Thy blood be upon thy head for slaying the Lord's Anointed.
II Samuel 1:6 – Matthew 27:25
7. They shall smite the Judge of Israel.
Micah 5:1 – Mark 15:19
8. I hid not My face from spitting.
Isaiah 50:6 – Matthew 27:30
9. When oppressed He opened not His mouth.
Isaiah 53:7 – Matthew 27:12, 14
10. They pierced my hands and feet.
Psalm 22:16 – Luke 23:33
11. He made intercession for the transgressors.
Isaiah 53:12 – Luke 23:34
12. He was numbered among the transgressors.

- Isaiah 53:12 – Matthew 27:38
13. Cursed is He that hangs on a tree.
Deuteronomy 21:23 – Mark 15:25, 26
 14. They looked on Him and shook their heads.
Psalm 109:25 – Matthew 27:39
 15. They laughed me to scorn, saying He trusted in the Lord to deliver Him.
Psalm 22:7, 8 – Matthew 27:41, 43
 16. They cast lots for His garments.
Psalm 22:18 – John 19:23
 17. My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?
Psalm 22:1 – Matthew 27:46
 18. They gave Me vinegar and gall to drink.
Psalm 69:21 – John 19:28
 19. Into Thy hands, Father, I commit My spirit.
Psalm 31:5 – Luke 23:46
 20. He shall be cut off without a successor to follow Him.
Daniel 9:26 – Mark 15:37
 21. His friends and kinsmen stood afar off.
Psalm 38:11 – Luke 23:49
 22. Not a bone of His shall be broken.
Psalm 34:20 – John 19:33
 23. There was darkness over the land
Amos 8:9 – Matthew 27:45
 24. He was buried with the rich.
Isaiah 53:9 – Matthew 27:57, 60

Fellowship With Him

It is in fellowship with the Lord Jesus Himself that faith can be exercised and strengthened. It is a matter too little understood, that God bestows salvation upon us, in no other way, than in—not just through, but in—the Saviour.

The living Jesus is salvation. He Who gave and now imparts His blood, he Himself it is, in Whom we must daily

find our life and our salvation. Further, it is only in living direct fellowship with Him that our faith can increase and triumph.

Many Christians take great pains in endeavoring to reach a life of full faith by earnest association with the Word, or by straining all their powers to believe, and yet they see but little fruit as the result of their efforts. The reason often is that, in studying the Word, and in trying to believe, they have not first of all found rest themselves in the love of the Saviour.

Faith in God is an act of the spiritual life. It is Christ Who is our life, and Who imparts faith to us. He does this, however, not as an act or gift separate from Himself; but in fellowship with Him faith is active.

He is “the author and finisher of faith.” : those who walk with Him learn from Him to exercise faith, they know not how. In the face of Jesus, the light which leads to “the full assurance of faith” is always found: to gaze upon His face, to sit still at His feet that the light of His love may shine upon the soul, is a sure way of obtaining a strong faith. He who longs for such a faith in order to come to the knowledge of the full power of the blood, needs only to practice the fellowship.

The shedding of His blood was the proof of His unspeakable love towards us. “He gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a people for His own possession” (Titus 2:14).

His blood is the power by which He takes possession of us for Himself, to sanctify us. All that is necessary for the more powerful operation of the blood in us, is that faith in it should become wider, brighter, and stronger. He who longs for such a full faith will find it only, but find it certainly, in fellowship with Jesus.

“God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord” (I Cor.1:9).

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