

WORD SPIRIT CONNECTION

THE GIFT:
Sinner, thy sins are FORGIVEN

- **Faith in the Word – A real Experience of The Power of Justification**
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- Repentance, as well as forgiveness, is the gift of God through Christ. It is through the influence of the Holy Spirit that we are convicted of sin, and feel our need of pardon. None but the contrite are forgiven; but it is the grace of God that makes the heart penitent. He is acquainted with all our weaknesses and infirmities, and He will help us. Many think that they must wait for a special impulse in order that they may come to Christ; but it is necessary only to come in sincerity of purpose, deciding to accept the offers of mercy and grace that have been extended to us. We are to say: "Christ died to save me. The Lord's desire is that I should be saved, and I will come to Jesus just as I am without delay. I will venture upon the promise. As Christ draws me, I will respond." The apostle says, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness" (Romans 10:10). No one can believe with the heart unto righteousness, and obtain justification by faith, while continuing the practice of those things which the Word of God forbids, or while neglecting any known duty.
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- Many are confused as to what constitutes the first steps in the work of salvation. Repentance is thought to be a work the sinner must do for himself in order that he may come to Christ. They think that the sinner must procure for himself a fitness in order to obtain the blessing of God's grace. But while it is true that repentance must precede forgiveness, for it is only the broken and contrite heart that is acceptable to God, yet the sinner cannot bring himself to repentance, or prepare himself to come to Christ. Except the sinner repent, he cannot be forgiven; but the question to be decided is as to whether repentance is the work of the sinner or the gift of Christ. Must the sinner wait until he is filled with remorse for his sin before he can come to Christ? The very first step to Christ is taken through the drawing of the Spirit of God; as man responds to this drawing, he advances toward Christ in order that he may repent. The sinner is represented as a lost sheep, and a lost sheep never returns to the fold unless he is sought after and brought back to the fold by the shepherd. No man of himself can repent, and make himself worthy of the blessing of justification. The Lord Jesus is constantly seeking to impress the sinner's mind and attract him to behold Himself, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world. We cannot take a step toward spiritual life save as Jesus draws and strengthens the soul, and leads us to experience that repentance which needeth not to be repented of.

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- When before the high priests and Sadducees, Peter clearly presented the fact that repentance is the gift of God. Speaking of Christ, he said, "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:31). Repentance is no less the gift of God than are pardon and justification, and it cannot be experienced except as it is given to the soul by Christ. If we are drawn to Christ, it is through His power and virtue. The grace of contrition comes through Him, and from Him comes justification.

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- ***True Real Life in the Living Word***

- *“And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed; and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee. And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, this man blasphemeth. And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee, or to say, Arise, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house. And he arose, and departed to his house. But when the multitudes saw it, they marveled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men” (Matt. 9:2-8).*

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- One of the most common expressions to be heard among professed Christians when speaking of religious things, is this, “I can understand and believe that God will forgive sin, but it is hard for me to believe that he can keep me from sin.” Such a person has yet to learn very much of what is meant by God’s forgiving sins. It is true that persons who talk that way do often have a measure of peace in believing that God has forgiven or does forgive their sins, but through failure to grasp the power of forgiveness, they deprive themselves of much blessing that they might enjoy. While the world would like to experience ecstasy to acknowledge something has happened, Christians are called to walk by faith and not sight. You have to simply believe in the word:

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- *John 14:27: Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*

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- *Isaiah 26:2 Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in. 3: Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. 4: Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength:*

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- Bearing in mind the statement concerning the matters that “these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name,” [John 20:31] not as simply the miracle before us. The scribes did not believe that Jesus could forgive sin. In order to show that he had power to forgive sins, he healed the palsied man. This miracle was done for the express purpose of illustrating the work of forgiving sin, and demonstrating its power. Jesus said to the palsied man, “Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house,” that they and we might know his power to forgive sin. Therefore the power exhibited in the healing of that man is the power bestowed in the forgiveness of sin. Note particularly that the effect of the words of Jesus continued after they were spoken. They made a change in the man, and that change was permanent. Even so it must be in the forgiveness of sin. The common idea is that when God forgives sin the change is in Himself, and not in the man. It is thought that God finally ceases to hold anything against the one who has sinned. But this is to imply that God had hardness against the man, which is not the case. God is not a man; He does not cherish enmity, nor harbor a feeling of revenge. It is not because He has a hard feeling in his heart against a sinner that He forgives him, but because the sinner has something in *his* heart. God is all right, —the man is all-wrong, therefore God forgave the man that he also may be all right. The forgiveness of sin is a change in man not God. Once carnally minded, when justification and surety in the merits of his is announced, it’s not only a legal transaction but a bestowal of power into doing the right thing. What would justification profit us as a legal transaction only? It will only set the guilty free from jail but leave him with the same propensities and powers to do the very crimes he is freed of, such a transaction is a yoke indeed coz it doesn’t give you the freedom that Christ says in John 8:36: “If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.” Justification that is truly efficacious is the one that comes with the power to overcome the known practicing sins, inherited and cultivated evil tendencies. A renewed conscience that comes by faith and faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.
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- *Isaiah 8:16: Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples.*
- *John 17:17: Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.*
- *2Thessalonians 2:13: But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:*
- *Ephesians 5:26: That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,*
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- The leaven hidden in the flour works invisibly to bring the whole mass under its leavening process; so the leaven of truth works secretly, silently, steadily, to transform the soul. The natural inclinations are softened and subdued. New thoughts, new feelings, new motives, are implanted. A new standard of character is set up--the life of Christ. The mind is changed; the faculties are roused to action in new lines. Man is not endowed with new faculties, but the faculties he has are sanctified. The conscience is awakened. We are endowed with traits of character that enable us to do service for God. Conversion Does Not Create New Faculties. The Spirit of God does not create new faculties in the converted man but works a decided change in the employment of those faculties. When mind and heart and soul are changed, man is not given a new conscience, but his will is submitted to a conscience renewed, a conscience whose dormant sensibilities are aroused by the working of the Holy Spirit. The gospel of Christ becomes personality in those who believe, and makes them living epistles, known and read of all men. In this way the leaven of godliness passes into the multitude. The heavenly intelligences are able to discern the true elements of greatness in character; for only goodness is esteemed as efficiency with God
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- When Jesus, illustrating the forgiveness of sin, said to the man, “Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house,” the man arose obedient to his voice. The power that was in the words of Jesus raised him up and made him well. That power remained in him, and it was in the strength that was given him on removing the palsy that he walked in all the time to come, provided, of course, that he kept the faith. The Psalmist illustrates this when he says: “I waited patiently for the LORD; and He inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings” (Ps. 40:1, 2).
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- *Isaiah 55:10: For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: 11: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. 12: For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. 13: Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.*
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- This is the power in the words of Christ and this is the power of justification. The same power to create, recreates both body, soul and mind. There is life in the words of God. Jesus said, “The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life” (John 6:63). The word received in faith brings the Spirit and the life of God to the soul. So when the penitent soul hears the words, “Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee,” and receives those words as living words of the living God, he is a different man, because a new life has begun in him. It is the power of God’s forgiveness, and that alone, that keeps him from sin. If he continues in sin after receiving pardon, it is because he has not grasped the fullness of the blessing that was given him in the forgiveness of his sins. Not accepting the power to walk in newness of life is same as defeating God, his son, the convicting spirit and the heavenly holy angels. Indeed this is a great feat that we venture into, defeating Calvary.
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- In the case before us, the man received new life. His palsied condition was simply the wasting away of the natural life. He was partially dead. The words of Christ gave him fresh life. But this new life that was given to his body, and which enabled him to walk was but an illustration, both to him and to the scribes, of the unseen life of God, which he had received in the words, “Thy sins be forgiven thee,” and which had made him a new creature in Christ. Did the man just go home and said now am well physically? No. for if it were the body alone that was being worked on, nothing like sin could have been mentioned. The man came into contact with restorer of spiritual life. Faith beaming in him he sprang on his feet and his conscience was set free. There is power in the word, virtue flows through them and imparts newness in the soul. Are we ready to tap into this river!

- We have redemption through Christ's blood, and this redemption is the forgiveness of sins. But the blood is the life. (See Gen. 9:4; Rev. 17:13, 14). Therefore Col. 1:14 is really telling us that we have redemption through Christ's life. But does not the Scripture say that we are reconciled to God by the death of his Son? It does, and that is just what is here taught. Christ "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity" (Titus 2:14). He "gave Himself for our sins" (Gal. 1:4). In giving Himself, He gives his life. In shedding His blood, He pours out His life. But in giving up His life, He gives it to us. That life is righteousness, even the perfect righteousness of God, so that when we receive it we are "made the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. 5:21). It is the receiving of Christ's life, as we are baptized into His death that reconciles us to God. It is thus that we "put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness," after the image of Him that created him" (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10).
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- "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" The blood of bulls and of goats and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean in the Levitical service and the worldly sanctuary did sanctify to the purifying of the flesh: for so the word concerning it continually declares. And that being so, "how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God," sanctify to the purifying of the spirit and "purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God." The blood of the goats and lambs only seemed a matter of a good standing for a sinner, rejoicing in flesh by presenting a lamb. That is what it only could do if not done by faith. But the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us of dead works. What are dead works? Death itself is the consequence of sin. Dead works therefore are works that have sin in them. Then the purging of the conscience from dead works is the so entirely cleansing of the soul from sin, by the blood of Christ, through the eternal Spirit, that in the life and works of the believer in Jesus sin shall have no place; the works shall be only works of faith, and the life shall be only the life of faith, and so be only the true and pure "service of the living God." Mind and body is made whole again. And why is it so? Goats and lambs had no experience of sin neither were they willing victims and so their blood had not efficacy or life to pass to the sinner, but this is not the case with Christ.

- The sacrifices and the service in the earthly sanctuary could not take away the sins of men and so could not bring them to this perfection. But the sacrifice and the ministry of the true High Priest in the sanctuary and the true tabernacle do accomplish this. This does take away utterly every sin. And the worshiper is so truly purged that he has no more conscience of sins. By the sacrifice, the offering, and the service of Himself, Christ took away the sacrifices and the offerings and the service which could never take away sins, and by His perfect doing of the perfect will of God He established the will of God. "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." Heb. 10:10. The secret of perfection therefore lies in the sacrifice. The goats and lambs are dead sacrifices but Christ is a living sacrifice, death could not hold and there lies the victory of the saints;
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- *1Corinthians 15:17: And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. 22: For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. 45: And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. 46: Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.*
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- And this is the "new and living way" which Christ, through the flesh, "hath consecrated for us"--for all mankind--and by which every soul may enter into the holiest of all--the holiest of all places, the holiest of all experiences, the holiest of all relationships the holiest of all living. This new and living way He "hath consecrated for us through the flesh;" that is, He, coming in the flesh, identifying Himself with mankind in the flesh, has, for us who are in this flesh, consecrated a way from where we are to where He now is, at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens in the holiest of all. His resurrection carries the efficacy and has made us alive, spiritual and no longer carnal at enmity with him. if we continue in sin while professing Christ, then Christ is still in the grave.
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- God hath set forth his son to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. All have sinned. The whole life has been sin. Even the thoughts have been evil. (Mark 7:21). And to be carnally minded is death. Therefore the life of sin is a living death. If the soul is not freed from this, it will end in eternal death. There is no power in man to get righteousness out of the holy law of God; therefore God in his mercy puts His own righteousness upon all that believe. He makes us righteous as a free gift out of the riches of His grace. He does this by His words, for He declares—speaks—His righteousness into and upon all who have faith in the blood of Christ, in Him is God's righteousness, "for in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9). And this declaring or speaking the righteousness of God upon us is the remission or taking away of sin. Thus God takes away the sinful life by putting His own righteous life in its place. And this is the power of the forgiveness of sin. It is "the power of an endless life."
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- This is the beginning of the Christian life. It is receiving the life of God by faith. How is it continued? —Just as it is begun. “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him” (Col. 2:6). For “the just shall live by faith.” The secret of living the Christian life is simply that of holding fast the life which, received at the beginning, forgives the sin. God forgives sin by taking it away. He justifies the ungodly by making him godly. He reconciles the rebel sinner to Himself by taking away his rebellion, and making him a loyal and law-abiding subject.

- ***A Cry for Help and Justification Retained***
- As the sinner looks to the law, his guilt is made plain to him and pressed home to his conscience, and he is condemned. His only comfort and hope is found in looking to the cross of Calvary. As he ventures upon the promises, taking God at His word, relief and peace come to his soul. He cries, "Lord, Thou hast promised to save all who come unto Thee in the name of Thy Son. I am a lost, helpless, hopeless soul. Lord, save, or I perish." His faith lays hold on Christ, and he is justified before God. But while God can be just, and yet justify the sinner through the merits of Christ, no man can cover his soul with the garments of Christ's righteousness while practicing known sins or neglecting known duties. God requires the entire surrender of the heart, before justification can take place; and in order for man to retain justification, there must be continual obedience, through active, living faith that works by love and purifies the soul. God's promise is, "Ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart." Jeremiah 29:13. The whole heart must be yielded to God, or the change can never be wrought in us by which we are to be restored to His likeness. By nature we are alienated from God. The Holy Spirit describes our condition in such words as these: "Dead in trespasses and sins;" "the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint;" "no soundness in it." We are held fast in the snare of Satan, "taken captive by him at his will." Ephesians 2:1; Isaiah 1:5, 6; 2 Timothy 2:26. God desires to heal us, to set us free. But since this requires an entire transformation, a renewing of our whole nature, we must yield ourselves wholly to Him. The warfare against self is the greatest battle that was ever fought. The yielding of self, surrendering all to the will of God, requires a struggle; but the soul must submit to God before it can be renewed in holiness.
- "But it is difficult to understand how we can have the life of God as an actual fact; it can't be real, for it is by faith that we have it." So it was by faith that the poor palsied man received new life and strength; but was his strength any the less real? Was it not an actual fact that he received strength? Can't understand it? Of course not, for it is a manifestation of "the love of God that passes knowledge." But we may believe it, and realize the fact, and then we shall have an eternal life in which to study the wonder of it. Read again and again the story of the healing of the palsied man, and meditate upon it until it is a living reality to you, and then remember that "these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:31).
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- Desires for goodness and holiness are right as far as they go; but if you stop here, they will avail nothing. Many will be lost while hoping and desiring to be Christians. They do not come to the point of yielding the will to God. They do not now choose to be Christians. What if the man with palsy just desired to be well, Christ tells him to arise and go his way for his sins are forgiven yet he just sat there in a mournful manner and continued desiring? This is the dwarfed life we live. We come into contact with that word of life and instead of rising from our sick-laden bed of iniquity, we still desire and hope. I tell you even if Jesus was presently with us right in our face, such faith and working of things won't heal a headache. Once we realize there is life in the word of God John 6:63 and accept it and take hold it by faith, what a wonder-working power will accompany it and we shall do greater exploits than the generations before and enter into the experience of the 144. The word received by faith brings healing and so as in the physical so is in the spiritual bringing the spirit and the life of God into a soul. So when the penitent soul hears the words "son be of good cheer thy sins are forgiven thee" and receives the words as living words of living God, he is a different man, a life has begun in him. It is the power of God in him for forgiveness, and that alone that keeps him from sin. If he continues in sin after forgiveness and receiving pardon, it is because he has not grasped the fullness of the blessing that was given in the forgiveness and do not appreciate the gift and reception of the spirit.
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- The same power that was put forth to create the worlds is put forth for the sanctification of those who yield themselves to the will of God. Surely this thought, when fully grasped, must bring joy and comfort in God to the earnest soul. To put the matter in few words, it may be stated thus: The eternal power and Godhead of the Lord are revealed in creation. Rom. 1:20. It is the ability to create that measures the power of God. But the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation. Rom. 1:16. Therefore the Gospel simply reveals to us the power which was used to bring the worlds into existence, now exerted for the salvation of men. It is the same power in each case. In the light of this great truth, there is no room for the controversy about redemption being greater than creation, because redemption is creation. See 2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 4:24. The power of redemption is the power of creation; the power of God unto salvation is the power which can take human nothingness and make of it that which shall be throughout eternal ages to the praise of the glory of the grace of God.

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- The life of the word is the life of God, for it is God breathed, and the breath of God is life. Its life and power are thus attested: "For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart." Heb. 4:12, Revised Version. The Saviour, also said of the words of God, "The words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life." John 6:63. Let us see what gives the word its life. Moses writes:
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 - "For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it." Compare "But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above); Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead), But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." The careful reader will readily see that this latter passage is a quotation of the former, with additions in parentheses. These additions are comments made by the Holy Spirit. They tell us just what Moses meant by the word "commandment." Or, rather, since the Holy Spirit itself dictated the language in each case, it, the latter passage it has made more clear what it meant in the first instance. Notice that bringing the commandment down from heaven is shown to be the same as bringing Christ down from above, and that to bring the commandment from the deep is the same as to bring Christ up from the dead.
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- What is shown by this?-Nothing more nor less than that the commandment, the law, or the entire word of the Lord, is identical with Christ. Do not misunderstand. It is not meant that Christ is nothing more than the letters and words and sentences that we read in the Bible. Some have gone to accuse others that by saying the words of Christ are one of the mechanism by which his spirit works for efficacy, then we are saying the spirit is words. Far from it. The fact is that whoever reads the Bible, and finds nothing but mere words, such as he may find in any other book, does not find the real word at all. What is meant is that the real word is not a dead letter, but is identical with Christ. Whoever finds the word indeed, finds Christ, and he who does not find Christ in the word, has not found the word of God.

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- *John 1:1: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2: The same was in the beginning with God. 3: All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4: In him was life; and the life was the light of men. 5: And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.*

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- Christ is the word, the Bible is his revelation and the words of the Bible Christ says are spirit and the spirit is life. The word itself is a seed.. Every seed has in itself a germinating principle. In it the life of the plant is enfolded. So there is life in God's word. Christ says, "The words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life." John 6:63. "He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life." John 5:24. In every command and in every promise of the word of God is the power, the very life of God, by which the command may be fulfilled and the promise realized. He who by faith receives the word is receiving the very life and character of God. Sinner, would you accept this by faith?! The apostle Paul says that "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Rom. 10:17. But he says also that Christ dwells in the heart by faith. Eph. 3:17. So faith in the living word of God brings Christ into the heart. He is the life of the word. "Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life. I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. Whoso eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day." Here we find the plainest declarations that the word of God, received in faith, conveys Christ actually to the soul of man.
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- The only way that any man in the world can eat the flesh of Christ is to read and believe His word with all His heart. In that way he will receive Christ indeed, and thus it is that "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness," for Christ is righteousness. And in this, the only way, any man in the world may eat the flesh of Christ, without the services of a priest or bishop. No one can do more than take the simple statements of the Scriptures and meditate on them until the force of the fact begins to dawn on his mind. The fact that Christ is in the real word, that the life of the word is the life of Christ, is a most stupendous one. It is the mystery of the Gospel. When we receive it as a fact, and appropriate it, then we shall know for ourselves the meaning of the words that man shall live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Herein the soul is nourished and his laws are written on our heart and we receive spiritual life.

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FINAL ADMONITIONS

- "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom." This text, rightly understood, solves the problem of Christian living. That there is a power in the word of God, far above that of any other book, cannot be doubted. The Bible is not another novel to be read as a set-piece for an earthly exam. Prayerfully it must be approached and every pre-conceived ideas relinquished in order to work upon the heart. The Lord through the prophet Jeremiah rebukes the false prophets, who speak their own words instead of the words of God, and says: "What is the chaff to the wheat?" "Is not my word like as a fire? Saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" Jer. 23:28, 29. And the same prophet thus relates his experience when he was reproached because of the word of the Lord: "Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay." Jer. 20:9. The word hidden in the heart protects against sin. "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." Ps. 119:11. And of the righteous we read that the reason why none of his steps slide, is that "the law of his God is in his heart." Ps. 37:31. David also says: "Concerning the works of men, by the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer." Ps. 17:4. Jesus, also, in his memorable prayer for his disciples, said, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." John 17:17.
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- *1John 2:13: I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father. 14: I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.*

- The word of the Lord is the seed by which the sinner is born again. We read of the "Father of lights" that "of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures." James 1:18. And the Apostle Peter says: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently; being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." 1 Peter 1:22, 23. So we learn that, while those who are Christ's are born of the Spirit, the word of God is the seed from which they are developed into new creatures in Christ. The word, then, has power to give life. It is itself "quick," that is, alive, and powerful; and the psalmist prays to be quickened, made alive, according to the word, and then says: "This is my comfort in my affliction; for thy word hath quickened me." Ps. 119:25, 50. Further:
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- *Ephesians 1:12: That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. 13: In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, 14: Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory. 15: Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints,*

- With the knowledge that the word of God is the seed by which men are begotten unto a new life, and that the hiding of the word in the heart keeps one from sin, we may easily understand 1 John 3:9: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." How simple! There is in the word that divine energy which can transform the mind, and make a new man, "which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Of course the word can do this only for those who receive it in simple faith. But the word does not lose any of its power. If the soul thus born again retains that sacred, powerful word by which he was begotten, it will keep him still a new creature. It is as powerful to preserve as it is to create. Jesus, our great Example, gave us an illustration of this. When tempted on every point by the devil, his sole reply was, "It is written," followed by a text of Scripture that met the case exactly. The Christian who would stand fast must do the same thing. There is no other way. This is an illustration of David's words, "By the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer." How shall we fair in the endtimes? "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony." This is the word of the testimony in which the psalmist found so great delight. They overcame Satan by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of God.
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- This cannot be done except by those who have the word of God abiding in them. The Spirit is given to bring truth to remembrance, in time of trial; but that which one has not learned he cannot remember. But if he has hidden the word in his heart, the Spirit will, in the hour of temptation, bring to his remembrance just that portion which will foil the tempter. Every Christian can testify as to the power of the word at such times. When inclined to congratulate himself on some real or fancied superior attainment, what a powerful check are the words, "Who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" 1 Cor. 4:7. Or when harsh and bitter thoughts are struggling within him for control, what power to quell those turbulent emotions lies in the words, "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil." 1 Cor. 13:4, 5. When provoked almost beyond endurance, how the gentle rebuke, "The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men," helps one to be calm. Add to this the many "exceeding great and precious promises" which bring victory to every soul that grasps them by faith. Thousands of aged Christians can testify to the miraculous power resting in a few simple words of the Scriptures.

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- Whence comes this power? The answer is found in the words of Christ: "The words which I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." What spirit are they? The apostle Peter, speaking of the prophets, says that it was the Spirit of Christ that was in them. So, as we said before, the power of the Spirit dwells in the word. Yea, Christ himself dwells in the word, for he is the Word. We can begin to appreciate more the power residing in the word. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." Ps. 33:6. Christ, by whom the worlds were made, upholds them "by the word of his power." Heb. 1:3. The power that resides in the words of revelation, is the power that could speak the worlds into existence, and can keep them in their appointed places. Surely, then, it is worth our while to take time to study and meditate upon the word. Abide in him, and to allow him to abide in us; and then a few verses later he speaks of our abiding in him, and his word abiding in us. John 15:4, 7. It is by his word that Christ does abide in the heart; for Paul says that Christ will dwell in the heart by faith (Eph. 3:17). Many people earnestly long for Christ to come and dwell in their hearts, and they imagine that the reason why he does not do so is because they are not good enough, and they vainly set about trying to get so good that he can condescend to come in. They forget that Christ comes into the heart, not because it is free from sin, but in order to free it from sin; and they possibly never realized that Christ is in the word, and that he who will make it a constant companion, and will yield himself to its influence, will have Christ dwelling within. He who has hidden the word in his heart, who meditates in it day and night, and who believes it with the simple faith of childhood,-such a one has Christ dwelling in his heart by faith, and will experience his mighty, creative power.
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- When we come to God in secret prayer, and the Spirit brings to our remembrance some precious promise or needed reproof, is it not encouraging to know that as we accept them, Christ is coming into the heart with the same power that brought the worlds from nothing? Does it not clothe the word with new dignity? No wonder David could never tire of sounding its praises. May the thought that God is in the word be a fresh incentive to all to gain time and strength for their work by taking from it more time to feed upon the source of divine strength. Many persons entertain very erroneous views as to the manner in which the Spirit operates. They imagine that it will teach them something which the Bible does not contain. When certain Bible truths are presented to them for their observance, they excuse themselves from all responsibility in the matter by saying that they are led by the Spirit of God, and do not feel it their duty to do that particular thing. They say the Spirit was given to guide into all truth; and, consequently, if it was necessary to obey that portion of the Scripture, it would have been brought to their notice. The fact that they do not feel impressed to obey is proof to their minds that there is no necessity for obedience. To such persons the Bible is of no account; they make its truth depend entirely upon their own feelings. And they actually charge God with the inconsistency of authorizing his Spirit to speak in contradiction of his revealed word. The fact that God cannot lie should convince anyone that his Spirit and his word must always be in harmony.
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- Christ prayed for his disciples, "Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy word is truth." The psalmist David said, "Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Thy law is the truth." From these passages we learn that when Christ said, "When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth," He meant that the Spirit would lead them into a proper understanding of that which had already been revealed. He plainly stated this when he said, "He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." Many things that Christ said were not understood at the time; but they were made plain by the Spirit, after Christ had ascended to heaven. And it is thus that the Spirit teaches us now; it leads those who are humble and teachable into a proper understanding of the written word of God.
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- Paul gives testimony on this point which is not uncertain. In Eph. 6:13-17, he describes the Christian's armor. The following is the concluding portion: "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." Christ said that when the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, should come, He would "reprove [convince] the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." Paul says that "by the law is the knowledge of sin." Both these passages are harmonized by the one quoted from Paul to the Ephesians. The Spirit does indeed convince of sin, but it is by impressing on the minds and hearts of men the claims of God's word. The Bible is the sword, the instrument by which the Spirit pierces the heart and lays bare its wickedness. The Spirit is the active agent, but the word of God is that through which it works. The two always act in unison.
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- We should look with suspicion upon any spirit that counsels opposition to the word of God. John tells us that there are many spirits, and that we are to try them. In Isaiah we are told by what we are to try them: "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isa. 8:20. It is the spirit of darkness that leads men to act contrary to the word of God. My appeal is that we may start a new journey and look afresh to the promises contained in the word of God. As he has declared them, so has he put the power therein. Its not a legal transaction just to be told your sins have been forgiven. The same word that declares that is the same word that gives the power to a renewal of life. This is not an evolution theory where its declared and it takes centuries to happen. As it instantly healed the paralytic, the man with palsy the lame, so it heals the soul instantly and brings new life in the soul. Would you accept this and make a step of faith through this assured victory. Sinner, Christ says, arise take thy bed, thy sins are forgiven, why still linger and tarry in doubt that it is so?



BLESSINGS