

The Exchanged Life

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[0 : 00] The exchanged life.

Galatians 2 verse 20 it says, 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.

Please be seated. Just some thoughts around the exchanged life. The exchanged life. The grace life.

It's no longer I, but Christ that lives in me. It's living in grace, it's living in Christ, it's Christ living in us. It's walking in the Spirit.

[0 : 58] It's the Spirit alive in us. It's being united with Christ in that union. It's Christ in you, the hope of glory. It's being found in Christ as we read in Philippians 3.

Being found in Christ, not having my own righteousness, but His righteousness. It's a reality that every believer can know today. That Christ is your life.

Christ is your life. And that union with Christ, that uniting with Him, our Lord and God, can be a day by day reality for every believer.

It's not some enforced thing, some legalized thing, but it's a very liberating thing. Living by the Spirit and not by the flesh. And Galatians 4.19, Paul prays, my little children of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you.

Paul prayed for these ones as if he'd given that spiritual childbirth to, to those he'd saw come to that born-again experience. He prayed for them, that Christ would be formed in them.

[2 : 06] You know, that's a prayer that we can pray, isn't it? I trust that Christ will be formed in you, that Christ will be formed in us. And Christ is our source of righteousness as we grow in that Christ-likeness, as we grow closer to Him, we grow in humility, we grow in righteousness, in integrity, in good works, in love.

And the exchanged life means that we exchange, really, our rags for His riches. We exchange our sin for His salvation. We exchange our life for His life, for new life.

And Christ comes and lives within. And Christ is that very source of our every need. The power by which we live a life that pleases God. And I was reading of Hudson Taylor, that missionary great of old, who laboured for Christ in fields, very challenging.

And Hudson Taylor wrote some words to explain the exchanged life that he experienced. Hudson Taylor wrote this, and I'm paraphrasing somewhat, of how the Lord came to his soul, and did for his soul, such wonders, when this truth became a reality for him.

The wonder, the reality, the truth of an exchanged life. He writes that he was feeling the sense of a great need, personally and for his mission, for more holiness, more life, and more power.

[3 : 36] And he was struggling, he was grappling with this. He was convicted of the danger, the sin of not living nearer to God. And it was something that impressed his heart.

And he was feeling oppressed by a consciousness of his sin, of his great land. And he writes how his faith could be strengthened, not by striving after faith, but by resting in the faithful one.

Not by striving after faith, but by resting in the faithful one. He recognised that if we believe not, he abideth faithful.

He wrote, And as he said,

He believes the flowers, the fruit, and Jesus is not only that. He is soil and sunshine, air and showers, and ten thousand more.

[5 : 25] Ten thousand times more than we have ever dreamed, wished for, or needed. Oh, the joy of seeing this truth. It's a wonderful thing to be really one with a risen and exalted saviour, to be a member of Christ.

And Hudson goes on, he says, He wrote of the rest, which full identification with Christ brings. Friends, you know, sometimes we can struggle and strive, and in our own endeavours and efforts after holiness, there's need for striving, but there's need for surrender. Need for surrender to his grace, to his finished work. And that's what the cross is all about. He goes on to say, I'm no longer anxious about anything, as I realise this. For he, I know, is able to carry out his will, and his will is mine. It makes no matter where he places me, or how. That is rather for him to consider than for me. For in the easiest position he must give me his grace, and in the most difficult, his grace is sufficient. His resources are mine, for he is mine, and is with me and dwells in me. [6 : 43] All this springs from the believer's oneness with Christ. And since Christ has thus dwelt in my heart by faith, how happy I have been. He writes, I'm no better than before, but I am dead, and buried with Christ.

Yes, and risen too, and ascended. And now Christ lives in me. And the life that I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I now believe I am dead to sin. God reckons me so, and tells me to reckon myself so. The only power for deliverance from sin, or for true service, is Christ. The only power for deliverance from sin, or for true service, is Christ. It's when we cease from our own striving. It's when we find that rest that is in him. That rest that is in Christ. You know, religions and philosophies of man is often built on man striving through their own works, their own contriving, their own effort, their own doing. [7 : 59] And really that's what Paul left behind. As we read, of his own righteousness, or his own credentials, it's just dross, it's just dung, it's just rubbish. It's garbage. You know, we've got nothing to lay claim to other than his wonderful grace.

And we read in Colossians 3, If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above. Where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God, set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. It's a wonderful truth, that identity with Christ, that identification with Christ, the exchanged life, that you exchange your rags for his riches, you exchange your unrighteousness for his pure and perfect righteousness. It's a wonderful truth. And Mr. Taylor was asked some years later, after he wrote that, he was asked this question, But are you always conscious of this abiding in Christ? [9 : 13] Are you always conscious of it? He said, While sleeping last night, did I cease to abide in your home because I was unconscious of the fact? We should never be conscious of not abiding in Christ. It's a day by day, it's a moment by moment, it's 24 by 7, whether we feel like it or not. Christ in you, the hope of glory. You are in Christ, and your life is hid with Christ in God. Let's pray.