



Restoring my Soul

HE RESTORES MY SOUL, HE LEADS ME IN PATHS

PSA 23:3

JULY 2019

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A FIVE DAY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

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July 2019

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Crucified with Christ

The *death that we are dying* is because of sin. As the apostle Paul reminded us, 'The wages of sin is death'. **Rom 6:23**. Our death is a judgement that cuts us off from life, leaving us only with existence for the whole of eternity.

The *death that Christ died*, He died to sin and lived to God, by resurrection life. **Rom 6:10**. This happened when the Father laid the sin of the whole world on Christ. He died in relation to God, and then, by offering, He came back from the dead by the blood that He shed as an atonement for sin. **Heb 13:20**. Saving, regenerating life was in His blood as the Son of Man. On the cross, He made this life available to all men.

Two thieves died with Christ. **Luk 23:39-43**. Both were dying under judgement because of their sin. They were crucified with Christ. The death of one of the thieves became connected to Christ's death through faith and repentance. And, even though the thief died, nevertheless he lived, because of the life that he had received from Christ. **Joh 11:25**.

The thief would still have 'existed' as a spirit after he died. However, this is not why he 'lived'. He had no capacity for life in himself. Rather, he lived because the Spirit of Christ came into his spirit to become his life. **Gal 2:20**. Christ gave the capacity of life to his spirit, giving his existence expression and meaning. He was made alive, and born of God as a son of God, when the seed of God the Father, who is Christ, came into his heart.

The life that the thief then lived as a son of God, he lived by the faith of the Son of God who lived within him as the capacity and expression of his life. **Gal 2:20**. Christ loved this thief and died with him. Christ gave Himself as an offering for him, and then gave Himself, through offering, to the thief, to become his life.

Saved by His life

The apostle Paul has encouraged us that when we struggle with temptation and sin, we are not being cut off from God and losing His life because of this kind of suffering. **Rom 8:9-10**. Rather, we are to believe, with the faith of Christ who dwells within us, that we are dying to sin and that, as God's sons, we are living to Him. **Rom 6:10-11**. As we approach our sufferings in this way, the resurrecting life that is in Christ Jesus will give life and strength to us, giving us victory over sin. **Rom 8:2**. It is important that we pray in the Holy Spirit in times of difficulty, because it is the Holy Spirit who is our Helper, and who leads us away from temptation. **Joh 15:26. Joh 16:13**.

Paul proclaimed that when we suffer, we are being conformed to Christ's death. **Php 3:10**. Similarly, the apostle Peter said that when we suffer in the flesh, we cease from sin. **1Pe 4:1**. Our sufferings are now a fellowship in Christ's dying. Christ was able to endure the pain of His sufferings, and to overcome sin, as the Holy Spirit gave to Him the power of God as resurrection life. Christ's life within us is resurrection life.

We know that sin causes suffering and death. Our sin against ourselves, and against others, causes us sadness, pain and death. The resurrection life that is in Christ renews our lives as we suffer. It restores us, enabling us to love ourselves and to relate to others, and to love in the same way as God loves us. This is why Paul testified that he had suffered the loss of all things, writing, 'That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.' **Php 3:10-11**.

The spiritual man

What does a spiritual person 'look like'? Jesus said that a spiritual person has been born again by the Spirit of God. **Joh 3:6**. Those who are born of God are sons of God. The apostle John explained that what is born of God within a Christian does not sin. This is true, because the seed from which a Christian is born remains within them; and this seed is the Spirit of Christ. We know that Christ, who dwells within us, does not sin. **1Jn 3:9**.

The apostle Paul told the Christians in Corinth that they had received the Spirit who is from God. As we have just noted, this is the Spirit of the Son. **Rom 8:15. Gal 4:6**. They had received the Spirit of the Son so that they could know, understand and receive all the things that the Father had given to them because they were His sons and daughters. **1Co 2:12**.

Paul called the inheritance that the Father was giving to them, because they were His sons and daughters, 'the deep things of God'. **1Co 2:10**. He then referred to the deep things of God as 'spiritual things'. **1Co 2:13**. The deep things of God are not just theories about religious ideas. They are the knowledge, life and fellowship of God Himself. This knowledge is the knowledge of how the Father, Son and Holy Spirit live together and make offering to each Other. It is important for us to have this knowledge, because it is the model of how we are to live with Him, and together as the body of Christ.

Paul then explained to the Corinthian believers that he, and others who were messengers of Christ, were tasked with the work of teaching them how to relate to, and to use, the spiritual capacities that had been given to them by God.

Teaching spiritual things

Paul's method of teaching was not by the natural use of human wisdom. He did not explain spiritual realities with words that came from human learning. He taught using the words that the Holy Spirit had given to him to say. The Holy Spirit understands the deep things of God. Therefore, if we are to know God, we must be taught by Him. **1Co 2:11**. Through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, Paul was able to compare spiritual things with spiritual things, and to teach the Corinthians how to live as sons of God. **1Co 2:13**.

Through this form of instruction, the hearts and minds of Paul's hearers were enlightened to understand the nature of their connection, as sons of God, to the Spirit of Christ who dwelt within them. They were learning how to live and to walk through life in the same manner that Christ had lived and walked. More than this, they were learning how to join the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings so that His death and life could be manifest in their mortal bodies. **2Co 4:10**.

Paul demonstrated this way of living, telling the Corinthians that when he came to them, he had determined not to know anything among them except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. **1Co 2:2**. He said that the message of the cross is foolishness to the natural man, but to the spiritual person, it is the wisdom and power of God. **1Co 1:18**. **1Co 2:14**.

Comparing spiritual things with spiritual things, using the words that the Holy Spirit teaches, refers to the use of the Old Testament Scriptures written by Moses, David and the prophets, and the parables spoken by Jesus, to explain how we are to live as those who are born of the Spirit. **2Pe 1:21**. **2Ti 3:15-17**. More specifically, it refers to understanding the realities of the kingdom of heaven, in which we participate as sons of God through fellowship with Christ in His offering journey from the first communion to the cross.

Christ gives Himself to us

The history of the journey of Christ from the first communion until He died on the cross is the most instructive lesson of all. On this journey, Christ established a new covenant, and gave to mankind the roadmap of the journey that we must walk as we follow in the way of Christ. **Heb 2:10. Heb 5:9.** Christ's way, which He pioneered for us through His offering journey, is a fellowship in His offering and sufferings. **1Pe 2:21.** This is the means by which He gives Himself to us.

Christ is also our great High Priest. **Heb 4:14.** His priestly work is to transfer His Spirit and His life to us by sprinkling our hearts with His own blood. **Heb 10:22.** He sprinkles our hearts as His word is ministered to us by the Holy Spirit. Jesus said that the words that He speaks are Spirit and life. **Joh 6:63.** He also said, 'It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing.' **Joh 6:63.** By this, He meant that it is the Spirit who makes Christ's flesh and blood the substance of the spiritual life that God the Father is giving to us to become our life as sons of God. He does this by proclaiming the word of life to us through the ministry of Christ's messengers.

In his Gospel, John recorded Jesus saying to the Jews, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life.' **Joh 6:47.** Jesus then said, 'I am the bread of life ... I am the living bread.' **Joh 6:48,51.** He was explaining that He is the living substance of eternal life. That is, He is bread that is alive! Jesus said that if anyone eats of this bread, they will live forever. **Joh 6:51.** The bread that He gives to us is the substance of His own life.

Feeding on Christ

When Jesus spoke of *eating His flesh* and *drinking His blood*, He was not saying that a person literally needs to eat a bit of His body or to take a sip of His blood. Jesus clearly stated that the flesh profits a person nothing. **Joh 6:63**. Rather, He meant that if anyone maintains a personal relationship with Him, by fellowship in His offering, they will live forever.

Eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ means living according to the way that He lived. He said that those who abide in Him are to live in the same way that He lived. **Joh 15:9. 1Jn 2:6**. We must, therefore, understand how He lived. Jesus said that He lived because of the Father, explaining that the Father had life in Himself and had granted the Son to have life in Himself. **Joh 5:26**. Jesus said this to emphasise that He lived by receiving His life from the Father. Significantly, Jesus taught that we will live forever if we feed on Him in the same way.

Christ's total preoccupation was to reveal the Father. He said, 'He who has seen Me, has seen the Father.' **Joh 14:9**. As the Son of God, Christ was the actual manifestation of the Father's life. He said that He was able to reveal the Father and to minister His life by abiding in Him. This is how He fed on God. Jesus then said that if we abide in Him, and He abides in us, we will live by Him. **Joh 6:56**. This is what He meant when He said, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.' **Joh 6:53-54**.

Communion is a participation

Christians are to fellowship together in the communion meal on a weekly basis. **Heb 10:24-25**. As we eat and drink of the communion meal, we are demonstrating our faith and commitment as members of His corporate body. We personally joined the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings when we were baptised into His death, burial and resurrection. **Rom 6:3-4**. By baptism, we were also joined to the fellowship of Christ's corporate body, the church. **1Co 12:13**.

As members of Christ's body, we now minister, to one another, the life that we are receiving from Christ. This is called 'body ministry'. As we personally share in the offering of Christ, His life is multiplied and given to us. We are able, then, by offering, to share this life with others. The whole body of Christ is built up by this ministry. It increases and grows as a community in the world. **Eph 2:19-22**.

The church in each locality is the body of Christ, and each believer is, individually, a member of Christ's body. **1Co 12:27**. The communion service is the first expression of body ministry. As we eat and drink of the communion elements, as members of the body of Christ, we are presenting ourselves as living sacrifices in the service of others.

From the communion service, we go back to our homes and into the world. On a daily basis, we face trials and testings. Suffering is part of our lot in life. Christ has made all our sufferings to be His. When we suffer, we are suffering with Him. At the point where we experience pain, His life is being multiplied and given to us. **Rom 8:18**. **2Co 4:17**. By fellowshipping with Christ in His offering and sufferings, we are sanctified as sons of God. This means that we are being delivered from self-centredness and are enabled to love others as Christ loves us.

FURTHER STUDY LUKE 22:1-38

The work of the Holy Spirit

The word of the cross is the beginning of the gospel that we hear and receive. **1Jn 2:24**. Why does the Holy Spirit need to take the word of the cross, which is the fellowship in Christ's sufferings, and apply it to my life so that I can be connected to Christ, who dwells within my heart? If I am born again, then Christ already dwells within me, and His life is my life. Can't He now live His righteous life through me and deliver me from my sin and suffering? The apostle John said, 'Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed [Christ] remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.' **1Jn 3:9**.

The answer to this question is found in the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is connecting our identity to the Spirit of Christ, in whom is our name. This is what Jesus meant when He said, 'When He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.' **Joh 16:13-14**.

The Holy Spirit does this so that the works that belong to our name may replace the works of the flesh, which are the projections that we use as an alternative to our name. Early in his first letter, John wrote, 'If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth [the word] is not in us.' **1Jn 1:8**. The truth is that Christ's offering, through His sufferings, is the only means by which we can be delivered from our sin.

The promise to Abraham

Here is an amazing point – the gospel of our salvation was first preached to Abraham almost 2000 years before Christ was born. The apostle Paul explained that the Lord preached this message to Abraham so that the Gentiles – you and I – would be justified. **Gal 3:8**. To understand the meaning of ‘justification’, and its connection to the message that the Lord preached to Abraham, we must begin by considering the content of the message that Abraham received.

According to Paul, the gospel that was preached ‘beforehand’ to Abraham was, ‘In you [Abraham] all the nations [families] shall be blessed’. **Gal 3:8**. The Lord first preached the gospel to Abraham when He called him to leave Chaldea and the idolatry of his family. **Gen 12:2-3**. We know that Abraham believed God’s word, because he left Ur of the Chaldeans and entered the land that the Lord showed to him. **Gen 11:31. Gen 12:4-7**. Although Abraham believed that what God had said was true, he was unable to believe for what God had promised to him. This is because he did not understand what the promised blessing was.

Abraham had lived in the promised land for four years. During this time, he accumulated great wealth. Moreover, through faith, Abraham had triumphed over all the kings who lived in proximity to the land of Canaan. **Gen 14:17**. These kings had endeavoured to impose their rule on the land of Canaan, which God had promised to Abraham. Abraham had even been blessed by Melchizedek when he received the communion meal from Melchizedek’s hand following Abraham’s return from the slaughter of his enemies. **Gen 14:18-20**. However, two years after this, Abraham became depressed and fearful because he could not see how he could possibly become a great nation, nor how all the families of the earth could be blessed in him, because he had no children. He did not have, in himself, any personal assurance of faith.

The blessing of Abraham

Yahweh the Son came to Abram in a vision, and said to him, 'Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield [of faith], your exceedingly great reward.' **Gen 15:1**. In response, Abraham said to the Lord, 'Lord God, what will You give me, seeing I go childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?' **Gen 15:2**. At this point, Abraham did not understand that God's promised blessing to him was much greater than having a multitude of natural children. Yahweh the Son was offering to become Abraham's son and seed! **Gal 3:16**. This is what the Lord meant when He said, 'I am your exceedingly great reward.' Through Christ, who would be born as Abraham's son, all of the families of the earth would be blessed in Abraham.

To further reveal the promised blessing to Abraham, the Lord then took him outside, and said to him, 'Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them ... so shall your descendants be.' **Gen 15:5**. The Lord was saying to Abraham that his sons and daughters would be the citizens of heaven. By likening the sons and daughters of Abraham to the stars, the Lord was also revealing that they would be numerous and would be born of the light of God's life. **Joh 1:4**. More specifically, they would be born of God's life by receiving the Spirit of the Son. **Gal 4:6**. Paul called this 'the blessing of Abraham.' **Gal 3:14**. He explained that this blessing only belongs to those Jews and Gentiles who, by faith, become children of Abraham in Christ. **Gal 3:7**. **Gal 3:29**.

The Scriptures record that Abraham, having received the faith of the Son, believed in the Lord, and that the Lord accounted it to him for righteousness. **Gen 15:6**. Paul noted that this was the moment when Abraham was justified. **Rom 4:2-3**.

Strengthened in faith

In the first instance, faith was the blessing with which God blessed Abraham. Through this blessing, the faith of the Son of God was imparted to Abraham as a gift. **Eph 2:8**. Having received this faith, the Lord accounted it to him for righteousness. **Gen 15:16. Rom 4:3**. Having been justified, or accounted as righteous, Abraham still desired to know how he would personally inherit what God had promised to him and what he was now believing for. He recognised that justification is not a position; that there is a blessing to be obtained! In response, God called Abraham to make offering. **Gen 15:9-10**. Through this offering, Abraham was joined, in type, to the offering of Christ on the cross.

Speaking about Abraham's participation in this offering, Paul said that Abraham 'did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform'. **Rom 4:20-21**. Abraham was strengthened in faith by the grace of God. We know this because Paul said that faith gives a person access into grace, in which they stand. They then rejoice, because they are assured of becoming the son of God whom the Father predestined them to be. **Rom 5:1-2**.

Abraham demonstrated that he had been strengthened by grace when he made offering in obedience to the instruction of the Lord. He did not waver in unbelief as the vultures sought to steal his offering; nor did he draw back in fear as horror and great darkness fell upon him. **Gen 15:10-12**. As he stood in grace, in the midst of the offering that the Lord called him to join, the Lord made a personal covenant of peace with Abraham so that he was fully convinced of his salvation as a son of God. **Gen 15:15**.

Faith in His blood

We are blessed with believing Abraham when we receive the faith of the Son of God by hearing the word that He preaches to us through His messengers. **Gal 3:9. Rom 10:17.** That is, blessing imparts faith to us as a gift. **Eph 2:8.** Faith gives to us the capacity to believe the word that God speaks to us. Paul made this point when he wrote, 'Since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I believed and therefore I spoke," we also believe and therefore speak'. **2Co 4:13.** Importantly, Paul explained that we believe and speak by faith, knowing that God, who raised up Jesus from the dead, will raise us up with Him. **2Co 4:14.** In other words, faith enables us to believe to receive Christ's life in the fellowship of His offering.

This brings us to a key point. Although faith certainly enables us to believe that we can be sons of God, this is not the first thing that we believe. The first word that we are to believe is the word of the New Covenant. This is the word that is ministered to us at communion. At the first communion, Jesus said, 'This cup is the New Covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.' **Luk 22:20.** To believe the word of the New Covenant is to have faith in Christ's blood. **Rom 3:24-25.** What does this mean? Having faith in Christ's blood simply means that, like Abraham, we believe that we can receive the life of the Son, and that this life is in His blood. **Lev 17:11.** The question is, how do we receive this life? The life in Christ's blood was given to become our life when it was shed and sprinkled on His body as He was wounded seven times along His journey from Gethsemane to the cross. Paul was explaining this point when he said that Christ was set forth as a propitiation, or mercy seat. **Rom 3:25.**

Christ set forth as a propitiation

In the tabernacle of Moses, the mercy seat was the top piece, or lid, of the ark of the covenant. This was the piece of furniture in the most holy place of the tabernacle. On either end of the mercy seat were two cherubim, facing each other. **Exo 25:17**. The wings of the cherubim were outstretched above the mercy seat, and their faces were bowed toward the mercy seat. **Exo 25:20**.

On the Day of Atonement, Yahweh would appear above the mercy seat, and between the cherubim, in a cloud. **Lev 16:2**. This cloud was the Shekinah, or glory, of God's presence. The high priest approached the ark of the covenant by first placing incense on the coals of the golden altar which, on that day, was brought into the most holy place. When the incense was placed on the coals, it formed a cloud of incense that mingled with the Shekinah of Yahweh's presence. **Lev 16:13**. The high priest then sprinkled the mercy seat seven times with the blood of a bull, and then with the blood of a goat, to make atonement for himself, his family, and for the nation of Israel. **Lev 16:14-15**.

In the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus was set forth as the Mercy Seat of the true tabernacle. **Rom 3:25**. Beginning in Gethsemane, Christ's blood was sprinkled through the seven wounding events that He experienced as He journeyed to Mt Calvary, where He was lifted up on the cross. Christ suffered these wounds because He offered Himself to the Father, who made Him an offering for the sin of the whole world. **2Co 5:21**.

Christ is our High Priest. He belongs to the heavenly order of priesthood by which offering is made to God. This order is called 'the order of Melchizedek'. **Heb 7:17**. This priestly order is an eternal order. **Heb 7:15-16**. As High Priest of this eternal order, Christ 'priested' Himself in the heavenly temple as the sin offering.

FURTHER STUDY LEVITICUS 16

Christ offered Himself by Eternal Spirit

It is important that we recognise the distinction between the Father making Christ an offering for sin, and Christ priesting Himself as this offering. Jesus was made the sin offering by the Father. However, the Father did not offer Jesus as a sin offering. Rather, as the High Priest after the order of Melchizedek, Jesus offered Himself as this offering. He did this by the capacity of Eternal Spirit from the Holy Spirit. **Heb 9:13-14.**

Through His eternal priesthood, Christ connected Himself, as the offering of the Father, to our sinful and cursed condition, with its sufferings, death and judgement. He did this for all people, in one offering, on one day. **Heb 9:11-12.** He joined every day of our lives to His dying, which was an offering on our behalf. Through His offering, Christ substituted our judgement, which was because of sin, with mercy. By doing this, He changed our judgement from a punishment into a discipline, which transforms us, if we will join the fellowship of His offering. **1Co 11:32.**

The first sprinkling of blood in Gethsemane is particularly important for us to understand and to join. This was the only wounding event in which Christ's blood was not shed by the hands of wicked men. As Christ prayed to the Father, He cried out, 'Not My will, but Yours, be done.' **Luk 22:42.** When He did this, the New Covenant was established. **Heb 10:9.** Having been strengthened with Eternal Spirit, from the Holy Spirit, Jesus drank the cup of God's judgement on the sin of the whole world. **Heb 9:14.** By this means, Jesus joined us in our death and separation from God, which had resulted from our sin. Being in agony, Jesus, by Eternal Spirit, began to pray more earnestly, and His sweat became like great clots of blood that fell to the ground. **Luk 22:43-44.**

The Firstborn from the dead

The Bible teaches us that, as Christ's blood was shed, He came back from the death of our sin by the life of God that was in His blood. **Heb 13:20**. This is why Paul called Jesus 'the Firstborn from the dead'. **Col 1:18**. As He was born again from the death of sin, Jesus brought all of us back from the death of sin with Him. He was not only the Firstborn from the dead; He was also the Firstborn among many brethren! **Rom 8:29**. The point to note is that we are being begotten from the death of sin with Christ when we join Him in the fellowship of His prayer in Gethsemane.

The apostle John was referring to this first wound when he testified that he, and his fellow disciples, 'beheld [Christ's] glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth'. **Joh 1:14**. John bore witness to the Shekinah glory of God that was mixed with the incense of Christ's prayer. Grace and truth were revealed in this first event of Christ's offering. This is important to recognise, because the gift of faith introduces us to this grace in which we are to stand and participate. **Rom 5:1-2**.

What does this all mean for us? The word of God that is ministered to us by Christ's messengers delivers us from fear, and blesses us with the faith of the Son of God. By this faith, we are able to believe and to cry out for sonship. Making this point, Paul wrote, 'For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the spirit of adoption [which is the spirit of faith] by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father"'. **Rom 8:15**. This indicates our personal desire to continue in the fellowship of Christ's offering, through which we are growing and maturing as sons of God.

Rejoicing in hope

To believe for sonship means that we first have faith in Christ's blood. This is the blood that He shed on His own body, as the Mercy Seat. **Rom 3:24-26**. Paul explained that we are freely justified, or made righteous, by the grace of God. Remembering the example of Abraham, and the testimony of John concerning the grace and truth that was revealed by Jesus in Gethsemane, we recognise that to be justified by faith means that we are to become the righteousness of God as we are joined to the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings. **2Co 5:21**.

Paul taught that faith in Christ's blood gives us access into grace, in which we stand. He then said that, as we stand in grace, we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. **Rom 5:1-2**. That is, we rejoice that we are becoming sons of God. What does this 'rejoicing' look like? Does it mean that we are always happy? The answer is to consider how Jesus exulted in His sonship. The expression of Christ's sonship to the Father was, 'Not My will, but Yours, be done'. **Luk 22:42**. This was His prayer as a New Covenant Son of God.

The Holy Spirit joins us to the fellowship of Christ's prayer. **Rom 8:26**. As we are joined to this fellowship, the blood that was shed on Christ's body as He prayed by Eternal Spirit is sprinkled upon us. It is given to be our life by the ministry of the Holy Spirit. When this happens, we rejoice as a son of God, and we, also, pray, 'Not my will, but Yours, be done.' Importantly, Jesus said that this is how we are meant to pray to the Father in the secret place. **Mat 6:6,10**. Praying in this manner is the evidence of the Spirit of the Son crying within us, 'Abba! Father!' **Gal 4:6**. We are rejoicing that the hope of becoming a son of God is being realised.

Glory in tribulations

Paul taught that as we continue to stand in grace throughout the course of each day, we glory, or express sonship, in the midst of tribulations. **Rom 5:3.** These tribulations are Christ's sufferings that He gives to us as a participation in the fellowship of His offering. **Php 3:10.** We are able to accept that this is true, because the Holy Spirit pours the love of God into our hearts, and bears witness within us that we are sons of God. **Rom 5:5. Rom 8:16.** We are, therefore, those who love God and are called by name as His sons. For this reason, we know, and accept, that everything that happens in our life is from God, and is given to us for the purpose of bringing us to maturity as a son of God. **Rom 8:28.**

When we suffer, and when we react poorly to other people, or to our difficult situations in life, we do not lose our justification. Remember, we are neither righteous nor unrighteous on the basis of our works. We are justified by Christ through faith in His blood. **Rom 3:24-26.** Righteousness is revealed in the fellowship of Christ's offering, which was a messy and traumatic event!

In these times of difficulty, frustration and poor responses, the Holy Spirit reminds us that we have a participation in Christ's sufferings, and that the difficulties that we face are an opportunity for participation in these sufferings. As we accept this, our participation in Christ's sufferings becomes the means by which the Father removes our fallen and self-centred motivations, and by which we receive and live by Christ's life. Through these works of faith, in the fellowship of Christ's offering, we are justified. So, works are important, but they are the works of faith that we do according to the will of God in Christ Jesus, as we are led by the Holy Spirit. **Joh 16:13.**

The just live by faith

Paul testified, 'I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes ... for in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith!"'
Rom 1:16-17.

Paul said this because there are many other 'gospels' that deny that a Christian is justified by faith in the fellowship of Christ's offering. These gospels insist that a person is justified because of their own belief in what Jesus achieved on their behalf when He died on the cross for their sins. However, when they live by these gospels, they find that they have no power for change. They are unable to testify to the resurrection life of God that He supplies in the fellowship of Christ's offering. For this reason, many Christians remain weak in faith, and are bound by sin. They are unable to live by Christ's life. **1Co 11:30.**

This does not need to be our experience. We can have the same testimony as the apostle Paul had! We can rejoice that the Holy Spirit is leading us in the way of truth so that we can stand in grace and grow as sons of God. When we live this way, our faith will be spoken of in all the world. **Rom 1:8.** This is because it will be seen by others, and proclaimed to them through our testimony. **Gal 3:1.** This is how we show forth the dying and living of the Lord Jesus Christ, until He returns. Paul said that this is a fundamental implication of our participation in the communion. **1Co 11:26.**

For this reason, Paul exhorted all believers, writing, 'Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.'
Heb 10:22-23.

The Son and Seed of the Father

We know that, before the beginning of creation, God the Son was begotten by the word of the Father and became the Son and Seed of the Father. As the *Son of the Father*, He received the Father's life. As *the Seed of the Father*, the names of every son of God were written in Him. **Joh 1:1-5. Luk 10:20. 1Jn 3:9.**

The name of every son of God was discussed in the Everlasting Covenant dialogue of Yahweh Elohim. **Psa 139:13-18.** Every 'living soul', with a 'name', was foreknown by Yahweh Elohim, and was given as a personal possession to the Son of God, who is the Seed of the Father.

The apostle Paul declared that everything that was created in heaven and on earth was created through the Son of God. **Col 1:15-18.** With Paul's exhortation in mind, we understand that mankind was created through the Son of God. On the sixth day of creation, the Lord God created man from the dust of the ground. The Son of God then breathed 'the breath of lives' into the nostrils of the first man, Adam, who had been created from the dust of the earth. In that moment, he became a living soul. **Gen 2:7.**

The capacity to procreate was also breathed into Adam's nostrils by the Son of God. From Adam's rib, 'woman' was made, and, from both man and woman, the way of procreation was established. God blessed them both to be fruitful and to multiply. **Gen 1:28.** Through this blessing, the Son of God laid down all of the identities of mankind to Adam so that he might bring them forth through procreation. Through the process of procreation, every living soul would come into being.

The fatherhood of Adam

It is important to understand that even though the Son of God breathed all of the identities of mankind into the nostrils of Adam, their names as sons of God were not breathed into him. We remember that the names of the sons of God were given to the Seed of the Father as His personal possession. As the Seed of the Father, the Son of God has all the names of every son of God written in Him.

The apostle Paul wrote that the first man, Adam, was 'of the earth' and 'made of dust'. **1Co 15:47**. This means that Adam belonged to the natural realm. Every identity, born after him through the process of procreation, also belongs to the natural realm. Every living soul, born through the process of procreation, is from the fatherhood of Adam and is a 'son of man', or a 'natural man'. As a son of man, a person is first born as a living soul, or an identity, in Adam.

The Lord always intended that every living soul would first be born as a son of man, into the natural realm. **1Co 15:44,46**. They would then be born again as a 'son of God', and a 'spiritual' person. This would be made possible by Jesus Christ, who is the 'second' Man, the 'Lord from heaven'. **1Co 15:47-49**. By being born again in Him, the sons of men could become the sons of God.

We know well the story of the fall of man and how mankind became lost to the fatherhood of God when Adam sinned by disobeying God's word. Adam was tempted to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil when he was drawn away from the word of God by his own desire. He desired to become the source of his own life and destiny, and this desire was fathered in him by Satan.

Lost to God

The apostle James used the example of procreation to explain how sin and death work in our lives when we are enticed away from God by our own desires. James said that 'when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death'. **Jas 1:15**.

Through Adam's disobedience, sin entered the world, and death resulted because of sin. **Rom 5:12**. Death then spread to all mankind, because every living soul who would ever be born through the process of procreation, from then on, would be born disconnected from the life and fellowship of God. They were all dead in sin and lost to God. **Rom 5:12-15**. Further, Adam's disobedience established lawlessness within the heart of mankind. Man was now also 'carnal'. Every person now lived by their own law, rather than by the Law of God. We note that the Law of God is 'every word that proceeds from the mouth of God'. **Mat 4:4**.

This is the terrible consequence of Adam's disobedience. He didn't only lose his own house to the curse of sin and death; the identities of the whole 'corporate house' of mankind were also lost! More specifically, all of the names that were written in the Seed of the Father were now also lost to God, because they, too, are the offspring of Adam. In this lost place of disconnection, they would not be able to become the sons of God whom the Father had named them to be before the beginning of creation. They needed a Saviour.

The apostle John testified that the Father has sent His Son as the Saviour of the world. **1Jn 4:14**. Speaking of Himself, Jesus said that the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost. **Luk 19:10**.

Found in the Son of Man

The way by which Christ came into the world is most significant. He was not born through procreation, by which all of mankind were lost to God because of Adam's disobedience. He was born through incarnation. The Gospel of Luke recorded that it was the archangel Gabriel who explained the incarnation to Mary. He said that the incarnation of Christ would be by the work of the Holy Spirit, who would bring the power of the Highest, or the power of Eternal Spirit, to overshadow Mary. **Luk 1:35-36.**

We remember that Eternal Spirit is 'one Spirit'. **Eph 4:4.** Yahweh is one Spirit and one life. In this fellowship of one Spirit and life, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit lay down Their lives by offering to reveal One Another. By this means, Their one life is multiplied and given to be our life.

Through the power of the Highest, the Son and Seed of the Father was born from the womb of the Virgin Mary. He was born as 'the Son of Man'. As the Son of Man, the life of God was in His physical body, or in His 'flesh'. More specifically, the life of God was in His blood. This is because the Lord God declared that 'the life of the flesh is in the blood'. **Lev 17:11.**

Even though He was born through incarnation, with a physical body that could feel pain and experience death, the Son of Man also had the life of the Father, and the names of every son of God written in Him, because He was the incarnate Seed of the Father. **Php 2:5-8.** All the names that had been 'lost' to the Father through the disobedience of Adam would now be 'found' through the offering of the Son of Man, who is Jesus Christ. They would be brought forth through offering, by the seed-life of the incarnate Seed of the Father.

Seed-life

Jesus explained 'seed-life' as being the principle of multiplication. He said, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.' **Joh 12:24**. The seed-life of God is the principle by which the life of God multiplies into a multitude of sons who are born of God. His life is multiplied through the offering of the incarnate Seed of the Father, Jesus Christ. In the Bible, seed-life is also referred to as 'life out of death', or 'resurrection life'. It is even called 'the weakness of God'. **Joh 12:24. Heb 11:35. 1Co 1:20-25. Php 3:10-11.**

The apostle Paul taught that the message of the cross is 'the weakness of God'. The message of the cross is the offering journey of Jesus Christ. He said that this message is foolishness to those who are perishing but, to those of us who are being saved, it is the power of God. **1Co 1:18-25**. It is the power of God, because it is the way by which we find 'life out of death', or 'resurrection life'.

Through the offering journey of the cross, the life of the New Covenant was made available to us by the shedding of Christ's blood. At the last supper, Jesus took the cup of the first communion meal, and said, 'This cup is the New Covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.' **Luk 22:20**. Throughout His journey to the cross, Christ experienced seven wounding events that caused His blood to be sprinkled on His physical body. We remember that the life of the flesh is in the blood. **Lev 17:11**. Christ's shed blood has the life of God in it, because He is the incarnate Son of God.

The transfer of life by offering

By Eternal Spirit, the life of God in the blood of Jesus was bringing Him back from the death of sin, and it brought us back with Him. This life is called 'resurrection life', because it is bringing us back from the death of sin, to live as sons of the Father. **Rom 6:4-5. Rom 6:8-9.** We are born again as sons of God through the sin offering of Christ.

The miracle of seed-life is that the Son's life is transferred to us when we are born again from the death of sin. Because He is the Seed of the Father, our names are written in Him. This means that we will have His likeness, because Christ is the expression of our new creation life. **Psa 17:15.** The expression of our name is written in His face, because our names are written in Him. As we daily turn to see His face, it is like recognising ourselves in a mirror! **2Co 3:18.** We know our name, as well as the priestly works that belong to our name. Christ has become our very life! This is the miracle of the Seed.

Whether or not Adam fell in the beginning, the Lord God always intended that living souls would be born again as His spiritual sons by the power of resurrection life, through the offering of Christ, who is the incarnate Seed of the Father. As the children of God, we must daily turn to Christ and seek His face. Turning to Christ is the exercise of acknowledging Him as our Lord and Saviour. As His disciples, we daily exercise ourselves to join His offering journey. As spiritual people, we understand that we are 'found' in Christ. **Php 3:8-9.** We now live each day by the same life that He lived. As we are found in Him, we, too, live by the power of resurrection life in our mortal bodies.

Living by resurrection life

John the Baptist said of Jesus, 'Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!' **Joh 1:29**. He identified Jesus as being the Lamb for the sin offering. The Passover Lamb is both a sin offering and a burnt offering. Jesus was strengthened by Eternal Spirit to be the Passover Lamb of God the Father.

As the burnt offering and sin offering, He has set us free from the bondage of sin and death. Everyone who abides in Christ Jesus has been set free from the law of sin and death by the resurrection life that is in Christ's blood. **Rom 8:1-2**. When we abide in Christ, it means that we are no longer walking according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit, because His Spirit dwells in us. We are strengthened by Eternal Spirit, and we live by resurrection life. **Rom 8:11**.

This life comes as a seed. It is multiplied to us, and in us, through offering. The seed-life of God is the principle by which the life of God multiplies into a multitude of sons who are born of God. His life is multiplied through the offering of the incarnate Seed of the Father, Jesus Christ. Jesus invited the disciples, and all of us, to join the fellowship of His offering when He shared the first communion meal with them.

As we partake of the communion meal each week, we receive provision to walk according to the Spirit each day. We are strengthened by Eternal Spirit to remain connected to the fellowship of Christ's body and blood, to endure suffering, and to overcome sin. **2Ti 4:17-18**. We live each day by the same life that He lived. As we are found in Him, we, too, live by the power of resurrection life in our mortal bodies. **Rom 8:11**. Through Christ, the Passover Lamb, we are sons of God and heirs of the promise of blessing given to Abraham. **Gal 3:7**.



Restoring
my Soul