

New Life Must Spring From Death

Bill Loveless

This is our first spring in San Antonio, and we are really enjoying it. We have driven on some of the country roads and are truly “smelling the roses” (wildflowers, that is!). This time of year for me is always a reminder of our newness in Christ. Trees have new leaves, new grass is sprouting, and everything has a freshness about it. Isn't it interesting that in nature before there can be new growth, there must be death? It is a death of the old growth so that new growth may take place. Isn't this so true of our Christian life?

It initially started with our spiritual death. Death preceded life. However, as a result of trusting Christ we have a new life - His life. At salvation we were buried with Jesus in His death and were raised through His resurrection life in order that we can now walk in newness of life (Romans 6:4). In our new human spirit in union with Christ, we have new life. It is a life of truth, completeness, and abundance. If this has occurred in our lives, then why does Paul say in 2 Corinthians 4:11, “For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus's sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh?” If I am alive in Christ, then what part of me is being delivered over to death? And what kind of death is Paul talking about? And why is it happening constantly?

The problems in our life do not lie in our spirit. The problems are in our soul. Our soul is full of lying beliefs, damaged emotions, and an independent will. To the extent that we live out of those lying beliefs and emotions and function independently of God is the extent to which our soul has not caught up with our spirit. All of these things make up a self-life which in God's eyes is death. God not only brought new life to our spirit, but He also wanted to bring new life to our soul. In order to do this God must reveal to us the death of our lies, our unbelief, and our independence. How does He accomplish that? He constantly delivers us over to death. Another way to define “delivering us over to death” is brokenness. I define brokenness as God turning us away from ourselves as the source and turning us to Christ as our Source.

However, the pull of our self-life is so strong that you and I in our own strength cannot turn ourselves away from it. Therefore, God must be the Deliverer. Through delivering us over to death, the result will be Christ's life in us. What are some of the ways that God delivers us over to death? It is through the “all things” (Romans 8:28) that God allows in our lives to show us the death of self. It may be circumstances or relationships. The “all things” are designed to reveal that apart from His life, there is NO life. Why is it “constantly?” God knows the grip of self on our lives. He knows that it is a constant process of moving you from the death of self to His life. Therefore, that is why Paul says in Philippians 1:6, “He who began a good work in you WILL perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.” In Philippians 2:13 he says that God is willing and is working. It is a constant process of delivering us over to situations where we see the death of self, and we no longer desire to walk in it.

Therefore, there is a constant death/life cycle playing out in our lives. It never stops! The crucifying power of the cross is continually being played out in our lives so that we will experience Christ's life as a reality. Therefore, whatever you are going through today, or will go through tomorrow, know with confidence that God is ready to give you newness of life out of death.

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