

U.H.P.C. WORSHIP: August 04, 2019

SERMON TOPIC: "ARISE TO NEW LIFE!"

We are both spirit and flesh. The flesh without the spirit is dead in sin and transgressions. But people tend to focus on the tangible and visible flesh than on the spiritual aspect of life. We wash and cleanse our flesh, we feed our flesh, and we dress our flesh; but too often we neglect to do the same for our spirit which is eternal and more important. It is God's plan to turn this around and bring us to a balanced way of life in which the spirit is in control of the flesh. This happens when we become born again from above.

Some may say that the concept of a new life from above is only meant for Jesus who died, arose, ascended, and is coming back again. While He is the First Fruit of the Resurrection from the dead, **the new life we speak of is intended for us, human beings.** He purchased it for us. We can have this new life if we choose to receive God's Gift of Salvation and all that comes with that. Our first birth from our parents is inclined toward the habits of the flesh on earth here below. However, **there is another higher life to be attained.** It is the spiritual life from above under which the flesh is subdued, changed, transformed, reformed, and restored to reflect more of the likeness and image of our Creator through Christ Jesus, the Son. It begins with believing and accepting the Son of God, repenting of our sins, asking forgiveness, receiving mercy, being willing to forgive others who have sinned against us and baptizing for the remission of sins as an act of faith manifesting what we say we believe in our heart and speak with our mouth.

It's at this point that we begin a new life-changing journey with Christ Jesus as our Risen Lord and Savior, our Good Shepherd, our Light, our Sacrificial Lamb, our Water of Life, and our Bread of Heaven. Those who remain faithful, learn endurance, build up their most holy faith, abide in Him, build a prayer life, allow Him to build in us a new character, a place for His abiding, making us a NEW CREATION with His image and likeness.

When we are fully converted and have the fullness of His life in us, we can help others to come and to do likewise. Then God can raise us up to do great exploits, tell others our story, and lead them to the NEW LIFE OF THE RESURRECTION. Scripture tells us that Jesus said that **the Father gave Him authority and power to give New Life to those who are dead in sin and trespasses, and that means the whole world.** Everyone who was born of the flesh of a mother and a father was born in sin and needs to be re-born of the Spirit in order to have abundant and eternal life in heaven starting now here on earth. **Only then can one have spiritual eyes, ears, and mind to see, hear, and understand spiritual things.** THIS IS THE MORE COMPLETE AND HIGHER LIFE. **Life lived in the flesh alone is incomplete and cannot please God.** There are many cultures and religions that claim to be spiritual and to have some form of truth. But Jesus declared HIMSELF to be THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE. And all through prophecy and

history, Jehovah God promised only one Messiah. **He is the only One who can give life in its fullness.** The Creator, Jehovah God in Trinity, never gave anyone else the power and authority to raise both the physically dead and the spiritually dead. ONLY JESUS HAS THAT AUTHORITY AND POWER. ONLY JESUS HAS DONE THAT AND CAN DO THAT for He was God in flesh who died, who was raised by the Spirit, and who exists in His glorified form, ascended, and is seated at the right hand of majesty on high. HE IS the visible image of the invisible God.

Without faith in Christ, the world is living only “half-life” according to the worldly kingdom and principles. THIS IS THE LIFE FROM BELOW –of the earthly dimension alone. It is the life enslaved to “Bread alone.” Though some religions have a form of godliness, they lack any power to give life eternal and life abundant. They cannot deal with the sin problem effectively. They cannot change the conscience, and truly transform any human life. They are of the universal, elemental, principalities, and powers of darkness that Paul wrote about in Ephesians 6: 10-20.

In His letter to the Colossians, Paul lists some of the habits, behaviors, and attitudes of the LOW LIFE such as: Fornication, impurity, passions, evil desires, greed, anger, wrath, malice, strife, bitterness, slander, and abusive language plus many more. He urges us to **“strip ourselves of these and to put on Christ.”** We are to clothe ourselves with the new self as we are being renewed in knowledge according to the image of our Creator. In this new life there is to be no division or partiality—no Jew or Greek, no circumcised or uncircumcised, no male or female, but all are to be one in Christ. In the new life, we are to clothe ourselves with compassion, kindness, patience, forgiveness, but **above all clothe ourselves with love.**

WHY? – Because we have been RAISED WITH CHRIST. (say this 7-10 times for several days) Therefore, we are to seek the higher things from above and not the earthly things from below; for **our lives are hidden in God with Christ.** In the Gospel of John Chap. 1, we are told that the Father has given the Son life in Himself and empowered Him to give us new life. He demonstrated that in John Chap. 11: 25...to Martha when He raised Lazarus from the dead. But even more than that life He gave to Lazarus, I believe Martha got an even bigger reward, for because **she declared her faith in Christ that He was the resurrection and the life, she immediately received eternal and abundant life.** I have no doubt that Lazarus received it too. But He was not the only one blessed that day. **Many came to faith because of this miracle.** It came to the point where the Pharisees wanted to kill Lazarus, because so many were coming to faith in Christ that He was truly the Messiah, the Son of God.

As an example of the earthly **man of the lower life and carnal mind,** Jesus told a parable of the Rich Fool (Luke 12:15-21) whose harvest was rich and bountiful. He did not see fit to thank God, to tithe, or to give anything to charity. This is how the carnal mind works. He thought to himself that he would build bigger barns and fill them to overflowing. He decided, he would eat, drink and be merry. **So that night, the keeper of his soul who provided bountifully for**

him, stopped by with a message: “Tonight thy soul is required of thee.” Right there and then all his possessions were left behind and someone else... he knew not who, would inherit them. THAT IS WHAT THE EARTHLY AND CARNAL MIND DOES. It is selfish, greedy, deceptive, impure, and unable to please God. For Scripture tells us that without faith, it is impossible to please God. So, Christ Himself as well as Paul, are urging believers and even non-believers to think on things above and try to practice them, so that we might inherit eternal and abundant life in God through Christ who alone can raise us up to the standards of the new life in the Heavenly Kingdom.

If we are not there yet, don't be discouraged. Let us be persistent in asking, seeking, and knocking for God to give us the Gift of the Holy Spirit to empower and to enable us to arise to that place of confidence and rest. We also have the gift of the mercy and compassion of God who is willing to show His love and to take us back when we stumble. Christ Himself is persistent in His love and transforming grace. He is not willing to give up on us. He is patient and long-suffering toward us and will do whatever it takes to turn us around and to bring us back to Himself. The life He gives cannot be depleted. There is always more than enough to give.

So, if anyone has settled too long in a certain place, and you are feeling like you are stagnating spiritually, I want you to know that God is calling you to **ARISE NOW AND ENTER INTO THE NEW LIFE PROMISED YOU IN CHRIST JESUS. ARISE AND TAKE HOLD OF IT NOW AND BEGIN TO MEDITATE ON IT AND TO ACTIVATE IT DAY BY DAY.** Begin to tell yourself: **“Christ in me is my hope of glory! ...The same life that raised Jesus Christ from the dead is in me... My life is hidden in God with Christ. Jesus is the resurrection and the life, and I believe this. ...I eat His flesh and drink His blood therefore I am not condemned, but I have His Life in me.”** Therefore, I arise above the lower life in the earthly dimension to the higher life in the heavenly realm. I ENCOURAGE US TO SAY THESE AFFIRMATIONS DAILY SO THAT THIS NEW LIFE IN CHRIST WILL BE MADE MANIFEST IN OUR LIVES.

Around here lately it has been really challenging to exist in the heavenly realm in life from above. Sometimes it looks like the attack is coming from everywhere. At times one just wants to scream and ask: “God are you really there?” But then I remember that Jesus said from the Cross: “My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?” He also said: “Into Thy hand I commit my Spirit.” --OR, in a manner of speaking... “Abba, I give it all up to You.” If you are feeling like you cannot rise to the new life, tell it to Jesus and ask for the help of the Holy Spirit. Tell Him you want to arise to the new life He has promised you. Tell Him you are not there yet, but you desire to get there with His help. SO, I ASK THE LORD TO LET THE CHURCH ARISE! LET GOD ARISE AND ALL GOD'S ENEMIES AND OUR ENEMIES BE SCATTERED! LET NOT THE ENEMY EXULT OVER US! MAY JESUS, PRAY FOR US THAT OUR FAITH FAIL NOT AND THAT THE GATES OF HELL DO NOT PREVAIL AGAINST US...

May Jehovah God in Christ Jesus and the Holy Spirit pray for us as we pray one for another.
May every oppressive and destructive spiritual activity be dissolved and cast back to its sender.
And may our God raise us up from the lower level of life and of the carnal thinking to the higher
and heavenly spiritual realm of faith in God, now, always, and forever. I encourage us to arise
to new life. Rise up, take up your bed and walk. Go forward. Move upward in the new life.
Shake off the old self. Gird on Christ and absorb His fullness of life. And above all, put on love.

Amen.

Brenda R. Berry/ Pastor-Moderator

Univ. Hts. Presby. Chr.