



Christian Life Fellowship

Becoming fully devoted followers of Christ



Faith to Pass from Death to Life

May 15, 2005

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Introduction:

What is God doing in your life that lets you know He is at work? Are there changes? Is your life more in tune with Him or less? Can you and others see the evidence that you are truly spiritually alive?

Jesus makes a very important statement of truth in John 5:24. Please consider it with me this morning [John 5:24](#) – **“I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.”**

Each one of us has experienced the death of someone we knew or loved. We have all lost a friend, a relative, someone we worked with or went to school with. When I think of someone who is dead, I feel sad for the loss of life, but I also think of the unresponsiveness of that person to anyone or anything around them.

Have you ever wished even for a moment you could switch places with someone else? You admired them, their job, their place of influence, their family, their parents, and you just wished you could switch places with them?

The word that Jesus uses here, “crossed over” means to switch places.

I. Switching places is a matter of hearing

One of the first things that Jesus indicates here in this verse is that in order to believe, one has to hear the word.

We had a small dog years ago. Her name was Doeshee. She was a cross between a Terrier and a Schnauzer. She had a mind of her own. She was a hyper dog, always wanting to hunt. If we let her off her chain in the back yard, she would climb over the chain link fence, and be gone in a flash to the fields that surrounded our house, to hunt. We could call her and occasionally she would stop and come back, but if didn't bother to call her, there was no way she could hear us and come back from her hunt. My point is that Doeshee had to hear the call of our

voice for there to be any possibility of her obeying or responding.

The same holds true for people moving from spiritual death to spiritual life. If any person is going to switch places and move from death to life, they have to first of all *hear* the voice of the Lord. Then they can respond and cross over from death to life through trusting Christ.

There are multitudes of people outside the four walls of this building who are not alive spiritually. If those individuals don't hear the truth about Christ and what He came to do how can they act in faith? It is our responsibility to at least share with them the good news. After they have heard, it is their responsibility as to what they do with that word.

The apostle Paul asks, in his letter to the **Romans 10:14**, “**How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?**”

Behind that preaching, Paul argues, is the sending. Preaching originates in the initiative of God and is sustained by it. Preaching is designed by God to reach even the people who resist the news they so desperately need. We can all be witnesses and share the good news about Christ with those around us. In fact, if we don't, how will they hear?

II. Switching places is a matter of faith

We cannot switch places unless we understand the condition of our heart, and the condition and love of His heart toward us. If we see no need for the life Christ offers, and the place of death we live without His life, we can not possibly act in faith. We cannot switch places unless we grasp the fact that *God is willing to switch places with us*. He is willing to give us life for our death. He willingly went to the cross paying the penalty for our sin, so we might live.

In our text we read that we have to trust or believe God. We must be confident that we believe something that is true. We must be confident that there is a God and that God will do what His word says He will do. This is the place of faith. In reading and studying scripture through the years, I understand that nothing happens in our spiritual life, or walk, or relationship without belief, or faith. Faith is the key to gaining anything from God.

Hebrews 11:6 - And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

One will never switch places without faith being present and acting on that belief and trust.

III. Switching places releases us from condemnation

Every person is going to stand before God. We are condemned by our own sinful heart. We are condemned because we do our own thing and go our own way, without seeking after God.

When by faith we switch places with God, because of what we have heard, we move from a position of death and guilt and condemnation. We become released from being condemned by the things which separate us from God and keep us spiritually dead.

I've only have to be in a courtroom two times in my life. My palms were sweaty. Both times it was for different reasons. In one situation I was there for a speeding ticket. I did plead guilty and was condemned by my own actions for exceeding the speed limit. What if the judge hearing my case had said you are condemned and the consequence of your speeding and stupidity means you will have to do this, and then turned around and said, *I will take your place? I will pay your fine, I will pay for the consequences of your actions*. Then suppose he lets you switch places with him. I would wonder why he wanted to switch places, but I wouldn't argue. I would be free and he would take my place. That is what happens when by faith we act in response to God's word that we hear and switch places. The debt of guilt and condemnation is lifted and we don't eternally suffer the consequences of our waywardness.

Romans 8:1 - There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

CONDEMNATION - A sentence of judgment which condemns someone to do, to give or to pay something, or which declares that his claim or pretensions are unfounded.

By the general practice of the law of nations, a sentence of condemnation is, at present, generally deemed necessary in order to divest the title of a vessel taken as a prize. Until this has been done, the original owner may regain his property, although the ship may have been in possession of the enemy twenty-four hours, or carried *infra presidia*. A sentence of condemnation is generally binding everywhere.

The term condemnation is also applied to the sentence which declares a ship to be unfit for service; this sentence and the grounds of it may, however, be re-examined and litigated by parties interested in disputing it.

IV. Switching places has to do with loving

1 John 3:14 - We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death.

One of the evidences of spiritual life is love for other believers. Jesus said, this is how all men will know you are my disciples or followers if you have “love one for another.”

Loving our brothers and sisters in Christ is a clear evidence and indication that we have switched places from death to life.

We can know we have passed from death to life because of the love we have within us for other believers. It is very clear here that those who do not love are in that state of spiritual death.

V. Switching places gives a new start

2 Cor. 5:17 - Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

When we move from death to life, we have a new start. We are no longer in a position of lifelessness.

Conclusion:

If you have already been brought to life through hearing the word of God and believing it, then you have switched places. How is your love? How is that life of Christ being seen by others? How is the message that changed you being shared with others so they can be changed as well?

You have heard the word of God today, and realize that you are not alive spiritually. You want to allow Jesus to take your condemnation and switch places with you. You want to make peace with God, but weren't sure how to do so. Now you know. That peace comes through Jesus Christ.

Blessing of the bikes

Individual blessing – There are two formats –

TEMPORAL: Where God blessed things

Exodus 23:25 – God blessed the food and water

Isaiah 30:25 – God blessed rain and seeds

Exodus 4:2-4 – God blessed Moses' staff

Judges 15:15 – God blessed Samson and a jawbone of a donkey

I Kings 8:4 – God blessed Solomon's tabernacle

There are things like our bikes, the weather, places and safety

Things will eventually fade away, but the eternal is forever and ever.

We now respond to those around us. We are aware of our brothers and sisters in Christ. We are aware of God's love that comes to us and is given to others.

God is a master at taking something old and making something new out of it. He takes something that was damaged, something that had been under the curse of sin, and makes it something holy, a vessel that can bring Him glory, a creation that shows the handiwork of God.

Recently Julie and I were invited to go hear the Milwaukee Symphony orchestra. We enjoyed the music. Having studied music, there were certain patterns in two of the symphonies that were characteristic of certain composers. The style was very evident and we could tell who wrote the music.

So it is with God's handiwork in the people who are following Him. There are certain characteristics and traits that speak to the fact of His work and life within.

When we move from death to life spiritually, we can be useful to God. When we are dead to spiritual things, we do not respond to God's word, or God's Spirit, but when we move into that realm of life, then God can use us to share His life with others.

ETERNAL: An inward blessing, taking care of the spirit and soul and making peace within.
Jesus said – seek first the kingdom and His righteousness and all of these things will be added to you

What thing? Everything that is temporal, but much more, like peace of mind, health, happiness, and assurance with God. Jesus also said, Come all that are carrying a heavy load and I will give you rest.

With eternal blessing there are 3 things that you must realize:

1. Matthew 6:33 tells us to search – search for what? God’s kingdom where He has prepared a place for all who seek Him
2. Romans 6:23 says that the wages of sin is death. We all get paid for a day’s work. We will also get a justified pay for how we have spent our lives, and whom we have trusted for our eternity.
3. Romans 10:9 states that we must confess with our mouth that Jesus is Lord of all. It takes faith to believe in a God you can’t see or touch, but yet we know there is air to breathe and that the sun will rise in the morning.