

To Live Is Christ: How to Center Life on Christ

By Bob Young

Text: Phil: 1:21: To Live is Christ...

Life is short, hard to define. Like a vapor. A few days. Full of trouble. Life is difficult.

What shall we make of life? How shall we understand life on planet Earth?

It is popular to say life must be “purpose driven”, but there is something required even before purpose?

>>Paul wrote from prison, “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (Phil. 1:21). What did he mean? How was he able to say this?

>>To the Colossians he wrote about Christ, who is our life. “When Christ, who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory” (Col. 3:1-4). What did he mean? Only spiritual life? Only eternal life? Does this mean anything for physical life?

>>Jesus: John 10:10. Abundant life. Same questions echo. Only spiritual? Does this say anything about our physical life?

>>It would seem so—Matthew 6:19-33. All these things.... Does not this include the physical necessities of life? This is a hard promise to believe. David: never seen the faithful begging bread.

>>God blesses us with every spiritual blessing in Christ. God blesses us with the physical needs of life.

What is the connection between Christ and life?

A study of the texts that connect Christ and life is instructive. Indeed, Christ is the life of a Christian.

RECOGNIZING—Something to Acknowledge

Recognize that Christ is the...

GIVER of life, 2 Tim. 1:8-10. He is the power for a holy life; he is the one who made life possible through the gospel. While he is as Creator the giver of physical life, the sense of this passage is that he gives spiritual life.

- Romans 6:1-6, participation in his life is possible through baptism.
- 2 Cor. 5:17, new life, new creation.

GROUND of life, Col. 3:1-4. I take this to mean he is the source of life. Paul affirms that Christ defines life, Gal. 2:20. Also suggests he is the foundation of our life, Col. 2:6, rooted and grounded in Christ.

REJOICING/RESPONDING—Something to Enjoy

Let Christ be the...

GOVERNOR of life. Christ as Creator is the Lord of life, Col. 1:15-17.

He is the one who <reflects || rules || reconciles/redeems>. What a blessing—to see God, to have a benevolent ruler, invested in our lives. Rom. 6:17ff. We are no longer enslaved.

GUIDE for life. He tells us how to live and provides power for living, 1 Th. 1:7-10. He is light, he is life.

Through his word. Living word, written word. See power of living word, see power of written word: principles for salvation—2 Tim 3:15, purity for salvation—Jas 1:21, preparation for salvation—Acts 20:32. Delight in his word, relish his will.

REACHING—Something to Do

Make Christ the...

GOAL of life, Phil. 1:6. The gospel is ultimately good news about life.

What are your life goals? Unless you included Christ in the mix, your answer is too small, too meager, too limited.

GLORY of life. In the life of a Christian, the glory of God is displayed, 2 Cor. 3:17-18. We too are able to reflect his glory. We are transformed to be more and more like him, glory increasing.

Conclusion

What of your life? Is your life focused on the same things as was Christ's life? What part of your life is yours, what is his? Have you reserved certain sections of your life and kept them from Christ? Are your goals his goals?

May we so live that we can affirm with Paul, “to live is Christ”!