

S.N. May 1, 77 A.M.
bullet outline - review

"NEW LIFE SIMPLY STATED"

John 14:6

When Jesus was about to leave his Disciples, he delivered a farewell address. He encouraged them to believe in him, as they believed in God. That their hearts might not be troubled. He pointed them to the Father's house - where he declared there are many dwelling places. And to which he was going to prepare a place for his Disciples. He was going to the Father. Still, they did not understand, the way by which Jesus was going. For they did not understand yet fully about the cross. Thomas declared, that as one of the Disciples, he had some doubts and did not understand the way.

To which Jesus, who had spent three years trying to make it clear to his Disciples, simply stated what the new life was all about. He used three words and Phillip wanted to be shown the Father so that he might know. And Jesus made it so simple. When men today have tried for many years to point out the narrow way. Men have tried to tell others about the broad way and the narrow way. But Jesus with his ability simply set it forth.

There are three words which he used - he clearly informs them that the way which God gives is Christ. The truth which God gives is also Christ. And the life which God gives is likewise Christ. Here is the heart of God. As related to him in Christ, his son. What he gives to us in Christ, he gives himself.

Often we think about spiritual things and spiritual life - and we'll ask God to open our eyes that we may know his son. That we will have knowledge of God's son.

Now it may matter little about how much we know of methods, or how much we know of doctrines. Or how much power we claim to have. But what really matters is the knowledge of the son of God.

New life simply stated -- is contained in three words -- the way, the truth, the life.

I. THE WAY - CHRIST IS THE WAY

The word of Jesus is - I am the way. Now this way is what he is conveying to us. That he came to God, and having him - we have the way. And the possession of him.

Hence, some method of being saved may be of some help. Or we may learn some lesson that may give some enlightenment. But the Lord Jesus is the way.

If you have been saved, you must have at least had the experience of trusting Jesus as your way of God. For he is the way. Without whom no one can come to God. All truly saved Christians know how to walk in his way.

And you have traveled in his way at least once.

What we need to understand is, that any method outside of Jesus, outside of him, is not correct. There is no other method, no other way by which we come to God for salvation.

A lot of Christians are seeking for spiritual methods. They want to have victory through Jesus Christ. But what we have to note is, that is not through self. We can live defeated lives for years.

It is not because I think I have the way to victory. But thank the Lord, victory is through the Lord - and not by myself.

It is all you find in a way of victory - if you try to do it yourself, you will be defeated over and over again. Now why did Jesus tell us this. Because the Lord Jesus tells us that I am the way. He, alone, is the way. The way is not outside of him.

So don't let anybody fool you - the (way is not) some church. It is not some new fad that comes to town. It is ineffective.

We might listen to the experiences of others. And we might feel that this is the way to go. This sounds very good.

We may believe that a certain formula will actually work for us. We may have a copied formula, a faith, but this does not reach God for us.

Every spiritual thing outside of Christ is dead. Underscore this. That it is not formula or a method of works - but it is only Christ. Not a formula, not

A Man & Wife Hiking in woods - Suddenly realized They had lost Their way -
"I wish Emily Post were here", said the Husband - "I think we took the wrong fork!"
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Little League game in So. Mex. one Boy hit a single & moved runner up to second -
a method.
next batter hit a long ball - Boy on 1st Leading for 3rd, Coach Blod from 200 -
fly caught & Boy on BB - Finally Base Runner got signal return, so
Cut across Pitcher's mound = Base Path is Way!

Is Christ your way and is Christ your method. Thank God if Christ is your
method - then you'll be successful. But it is dead if it does not touch the
Lord.

Rom. 6:8, a servant of the Lord gave a message. Today, he says, I understand
the way of victory. I believe hereafter I will never be defeated as I was before.

Many times we hear things that sound great. But instead of asking the Lord
for revelation that we may see Him, we seem just to catch a glimpse. But thank God
Jesus is the way.

If we had time to go to the Old Testament - Deut. 5:2 Moses said ye shall
not turn aside, the right hand or to the left, ye shall walk in all the ways which
your Lord, your God hath commanded you. "

Isa-30:21 - Thine ears shall hear the word behind thee - this is the way, walk
ye in it. "

Ps. 27:11 - Teach me thy way, O Lord, is the prayer of the Psalmist. (Jesus)
said, I am the way. What did Jesus mean? Say for example, you are in a strange
place and you ask directions. And the man says you take this road to the right
and you go so many blocks. And then you turn left and then you go to this building,
and then you take this road. And before you get started, you are lost.

Now suppose the person said, come, I'll take you there. In that case, the person becomes the way. You won't miss it. And that is what Jesus does for us. He says, not only giving us advice and direction, and counsel - but Jesus comes and takes us by the hand and says - this is the way. I am the way now, you follow me.

We could go on - Jesus is the way of happiness. Jesus is the way to Heaven. He is the way out of darkness. He is the way out of sin. He is the way out of temptation.

II. JESUS IS THE TRUTH

The Lord now introduces himself as the truth. The truth does not refer to the words spoken about Christ. It is Christ himself who is the truth.

How often we Christians take the teachings and the interpretations of Christ, when actually, truth is not the relating of the thing - but it is the person of Christ. John 8:31 ¹⁷ Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free.

Truth makes people free. Now we can talk about doctrines for 30 years. We can listen to them. Be able to speak them. But without power, because there is no life or truth in it.

A brother has sinned against me and I am not clear whether I should forgive him.

I ask you therefore to instruct me. A person wrote one time. If you say I should forgive - I will forgive him. If not, then I will not forgive him.

What is your opinion about such a Christian. Suppose the one dearest to me is dead. And so I write a letter to another person, inquiring thus. He who is dearest to me is dead. Should I therefore mourn. If you say I should cry, I will mourn for him. If not, then I will not shed a tear for him. Now you would smile or laugh at such an inquiry. A person is not to weep because he is told to weep. Or because he lacks the experience of mourning. But whatever is not Christ living in us - or is not Christ our truth, or whatever is done on the basis of doctrine is dead work. It has no life - it is not living. Do you see the difference there. The Lord was not teaching something - he was saying, that he had control of us. There must be a day when God opens our eyes to the reality of Christ. And here is an offended brother of mine. I cannot abide in that offense, he says.

The Psalmist says 86:11 - teach my thy way, I will walk in thy truth.
Thy loving kindness is before mine eyes, and I will walk in thy truth. Ps. 26:3.

If a man proposes to teach moral truth - his character makes all the difference in the world. An ungodly man cannot teach purity. A grasping man cannot teach generosity. A domineering person cannot teach the beauty of humility. There is the matter of example that comes to our lives. Jesus had something unique. Man can only say I have taught you the truth. This morning, I can only say that I have preached unto you the truth. Whereas Jesus can say, I am the truth. Now that is a tremendous, a tremendous thing.

The matter of simply telling the truth is very important.

Up in Brentwood, N. Y., Mrs. Raymond Bates found that her two youngest children, Debra and Andrew were eating tranquillizer pills. Knowing the seriousness of it, she immediately asked her older brother, Timothy if he had eaten any of the pills. He said that he had not. Mrs. Bates rushed the children to the hospital. Debra was two and Andrew was four. They had to have their stomachs pumped out. Timothy, denying that he had eaten any of the pills, did not have his stomach pumped. It was a critical situation for Mrs. Bates, for the pills that the children had eaten could have very easily killed them. It is of utmost importance to be told the truth by the children. To have lied, in a situation like that, could have meant death for any one of them. There are many situations like that. Many times it depends whether or not we tell the truth and face the facts. But deeper than that, we must be willing to tell the truth. But we truth to get by with half-truths and sometimes people get by with lies. We haven't been honest with ourselves at a point like this - we tell ourselves that everything will work out o.k. So we go along. We build up an idea that here is a great big Santa Claus in the sky. And he'll give us everything we need at the right time.

When I break a bone - it needs to be set. And there is no use to fool around thinking that it will work out itself. If I have a disease, I don't go around telling people some fairy land story about it that will cure me. If I have a heart attack, I wouldn't treat myself. This would be not telling myself the truth.

Don't make the mistake here now - Jesus said I am the truth. And if you make a mistake about your spiritual life, that Timothy Bates made with his physical life, Mrs. Bates went to check on the children the next morning. Debra and Andrew were fine.

Timothy, 8 years old, was dead. Honesty is the best policy in all matters.

But Jesus was talking about the truth here - I am the truth. And when he said this, he was telling them that he was the way to Heaven.

A medical doctor once had a keen insight. And his patient says, doctor, "I know I am going to die. I am going to Heaven. But I wish I knew what Heaven was like. Do you know.

The doctor replied, let me demonstrate. Do you hear that scratching at the door. Yes, that is my dog. He does not know about a sick man in this room. Nor does he know about the beautiful flowers over there on the dresser. All he knows is, that I am on this side of that door. I do not know about the streets of gold. Or the tree of life in Heaven. We know that Jesus is there - and I want to be with him.

Therefore, Jesus told about new life in simple terms. He told them that he was the truth. And this was the way to Heaven.

III. CHRIST IS THE LIFE

Life Begins at #04.

Now I come to the Lord's words which we are mindful of. Life seems to issue here forth from him. But we put works - but works cannot substitute for life. We ought to be crystal clear here that works is not life. For life is effortless and life is Christ himself.

How many people toil to be Christians. How many people are weary day by day. They try to meet this demand that somebody places upon them. And they literally wear themselves out. Many people say that this life is a difficult task.

The more they try, the more difficult it becomes. And the longer they try, they still bear no resemblance to a Christian.

Christian friends, if Christ is not life we have to deal with it. But if he is life we do not need to struggle. Let me repeat this. Don't substitute work for life.

This is a grave mistake among Christian people. We feel that something must be done in our own strength. But if there is life - there is not the slightest need for me trying to work my salvation.

Think for a moment - you have eyes to see and ears to hear. And naturally your ears respond. Because there is life in them. Life flows naturally into work. But work is never substituted for life.

Life will issue good morals - and good morals are no stand-in for life. For example, a person may have certain good morals about him. We may praise him. But his life may be bad because he does not have the Lord of life.

Another thing is power. You are powerless without this life. Power is not anything - it is simple in a person.

One time a person asked a Christian why do you want to go to church?
He said because there is life. And what the other man said was true.

You don't go to church just because there is enthusiasm. Or because there is some kind of emotional atmosphere all the time.

Now new life is not where there is noise necessarily. For life does not have to be emotional, exciting, etc.

But once you meet life - how strange that life is. What is life. Jesus declared I am the life.

There are plenty of people who experience this. But they lack knowledge of the Lord. Only Christ is life. It is not the atmosphere or the emotion or the excitement.

Have you - you may ask yourself - do I know the Lord as the way, the truth, and the life.

Ps. 16:11 - Thou will show me the path of life. What men want is that which will make life worth living. And Jesus was telling them that no man could come to the father and find life without coming through him.

What a difference he makes. We have asked this a lots of times - what difference

does a Galilean make in life anyways. I found this true story that happened out in the Mid-West. A Methodist church needed a janitor. The minister called the Board and suggested that they employ a town loafer. By the name of Anderson. There was silence. Someone said, is that the best we can do. He has been a bum for years. So they decided to wait a week and try to find somebody else. And finally in desperation, they employed him. He took pride in his work. He kept the church clean and himself clean. He became agreeable. For a year he sat on the back bench at every service and listened. One day he came to the minister and said I'd like to unite with the church.

After another year, he went to the minister and asked I'd like to teach a class of boys. He was granted this request. He is still teaching. The minister left the church for another church.

Several years later, the preacher came back to town. Some of the faithful members met him at the train. One of them spoke to the preacher and said, I'll drive you over to the home where you'll be their guest. The host was tied up with a board of directors meeting at the bank. You are staying at the home of Mr. Anderson. Mr. Scott looked at the gentlemen and he was puzzled. The gentleman explained what had happened. He is one of the popular, respected men of the city. He is president of the bank. A wealthy uncle discovered a transformation. And he left his nephew a fortune in his will. He still teaches a class of boys in Sunday School. He is also still janitor for the church. At times he has said, "God cleaned my life and my soul - and as long as I live, I will personally see that his house is kept clean."

That story is true. A town bum took a job as a janitor. No body else would do it. And yet he became an outstanding Christian citizen. That is what Jesus did for him. He put purpose and meaning into a meaningless night. Think of this story. Think of what that little tentmaker said. If anyone is in Christ - he is

a new creation. The old has passed away - behold, the new has come. 11

Now may I close by saying, that this is not a new story about what Jesus can do for one. It is an old story. It is a story of what he can do for anyone who is listening to my voice just now. He is the way, and has the way. He is the truth. He is the life.

EXPLANATION EXPOSITION

John 20:19-24

This is an incident when Jesus appears to the ten in Jerusalem. It tells of his appearance coming while the door was closed and showing them his hands and his side and speaking peace unto them. One of the keys to understanding this is the 22nd Verse - it says that when he had thus said, he breathed on them and said receive the Holy Spirit. And this was followed by the statement if you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven. If you retain the sins of any, they are retained.

You will note that the next verse says that Thomas, one of the twelve, was not with them, when Jesus came. So this means that there were only ten of the disciples, followers of Jesus present at that time. And of course it goes on to say that Thomas declared he would not believe that Jesus was alive even until he were permitted to see the prints in his hands. And this privilege was given him later on during 8 days later. And of course this Chapter concludes with the 31st verse which says - it tells us the reason why John wrote this book, that you may believe that Jesus ~~is~~ Christ, ^{1/2} the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name.

Of course the immediate problem of this Scripture text has been misinterpreted and of course many many claims have been made for it. One is by the church of Rome, that this is the function of forgiving or retaining sin as reserved for the priesthood alone - whether this is in respect to venial or mortal sins. This is used in connection with the passage in Matthew 16:19 in which he speaks of whatever you bind on earth, shall be bound in Heaven. And whatever you lose on earth shall be lose in Heaven. This is taken out of ~~its~~ context, however, because it has direct reference to the confession of faith which Peter made on that day when men were expressing their opinions of Jesus. And Jesus then immediately foretells his death, his resurrection, and his second coming again. This ~~idea of~~ ^{idea of} binding is understood by James, who was not even one of the twelve disciples. And also Paul, who repeatedly in the book of Acts and in the Epistles declared that by dévine inspiration he had certain duties and privileges. The idea was that he had full confidence that he was a minister and a mouth piece of Jesus Christ. Now this is not hard to understand because as he accepted this privilege that was conferred upon him.

We must understand this meaning of forgiveness of sins for in Matthew 18:15 we read if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you - that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. " If he refuses to listen to them - tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen to even the church - let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector." Then of course, he goes on to say, that truly I say whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven. And whatever you lose on earth, shall be lose in Heaven. " Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in Heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst of them." Now this is the way Jesus was dealing with church discipline. He was telling them how to treat offenders. That is personal offenders. And at this very point, Peter came up to him and said Lord how often should I forgive my brother who sins against me. As many as seven times? And Jesus said, 70 times 7. And then he goes on to give an illustration of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Now there is no evidence in the New Testament that the Apostles as an order of men, or as a group of minister of the church, assumed the power of personally forgiving a man's sin, instead of God. We cannot here trace the matter into the controversies that have arisen over the power which men have claimed. This then, should not be taken as a literal sense for power which never seems to have been exercised by one of the Apostles. It seems that the power here is to introduce the relationship between men and God, which couldn't have been given by Christ to his ministers, in any sense of the word. But as an authority to interpret his words, acting as his minister, he may confer such exercise in the matter of church discipline. And of course this was followed eight days later with his re-appearance in meeting with the disciples again.

Therefore, we see that this ~~some~~ ordinary text - when taken out of the context, can be misleading. But the true meaning is that the spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, which is given here, of course is a discerning spirit. And all of these first preachers of the Gospel had this ability to distinguish and discern between certain things. For example

many of them seemed to have power to work miracles. And today as we survey the ministry, we see not this power available. Even until this time, people who have been filled with the spirit of God have a certain ability to distinguish between that which is evil and that which is good in individuals. It seems that Peter had special power when he ~~caused~~ ^{caused} Ananias to drop dead. It seems that Paul had a certain power when Elymas was struck with blindness. Yet it must be understood as a general charter to the church and her ministers, that ^{it was} ~~not~~ to secure infallibility of judgment to any man, or to any company in the world. But I think here is an encouragement to faithful stewards of the mysteries of God as they stand in the Gospel. They were sent to preach. For that God will stand beside it. Now the Apostles in preaching remission must begin at Jerusalem, though she had lately brought upon herself the guilt of Christ's blood. Yet they must declare as it were sins remitted upon Gospel terms. As Peter did so in Acts 2:38-3:19. That Christ being raised for our justification sends his Gospel Herald to proclaim this wonderful thing that happened on the cross. Man is judged of course by Romans 2:16, James 2:12. God will never alter this rule of judgment, nor vary from it. Those whom the Gospel acquitts shall be acquitted and those whom the Gospel condemns shall be condemned.

While he puts immense honor upon the ministry, we find that the Apostles or the ministers of Christ remit and retain sin, in two ways.

First, by sound doctrine. ~~They~~ are ~~they~~ commissioned to tell the world that salvation is to be had upon Gospel terms and no other.

Second, by a strict discipline applying the general rule of the Gospel to particular persons. As people are invited into the fellowship of the church, they must be invited on the basis that they have experienced a new birth, a change of life, a faith in Jesus Christ, and have received the forgiveness of sins.

I think it would be well for us to remember that Rev. 3:7 declares about the keys to the Kingdom of Glory. That they belong only to Jesus Christ - for it is written, he that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth. Therefore it would seem that the final authority in the matter of remission of sins are binding and would be in Jesus Christ.

Hence, all that a minister or a priest, or any preacher can possibly do is solemnly declare the conditions of pardon. And the certainly of judgment, if those conditions are not fulfilled.

Hence, the work of the disciples is here qualified by the Holy Spirit to declare the conditions of forgiveness or the condemnation under the reign of Christ. Men were to learn from their lips the Heaven appointed terms of life and death. What our Lord here commits to his disciples, to his church, is the right authority to declare in his name that there is forgiveness for man's sins. And on that condition he will be forgiven. He was sending these men into the world. They are not sent to condemn the world but that the world through him might be saved. But in their work, as in his, men are condemned because of light. The light has come into the world. And men love darkness rather than light. The ultimate principles upon which this power rests are those stated that they are being sent of Christ having the reception of the Holy Ghost and God has promised forgiveness wherever there is proper repentance. He has not promised repentance wherever there is sin. It results from every declaration of forgiveness made in the name of the Father, through Jesus Christ. The heart's which in penitence accepted and received religion and remission of their sins. And those who harden their hearts and willfully reject it increase their judgement and of course their sins will not be remitted in the world to come.

There is one other thing we might keep in mind, that John in telling this story perhaps had in mind that there were other disciples present, other than the ¹²disciples. We know that all of the disciples were not there, when Jesus spoke these words. Therefore, it could well have been that this message was given to the disciples concerning the Gospel. The idea of inspiring his teachers and inspiring the ordinary Christians to go out and to witness in his name for in Verse 20, he says, "as my Father has sent me, even so, send I you." He is sending them on a mission. And it implies that the Divine authority rests in Jesus Christ. He is to be obeyed as head over all the church.