



## The Exchanged Life

When you became a Christian a great exchange took place. Jesus Christ took your place, and died for you on the cross. All of your sins were placed upon Jesus Christ, and He died in your stead. In that great transaction Christ got all your sins and guilt, and you received His righteousness as your eternal position in Christ.

The Apostle Paul expressed this great spiritual principle in the following words. "He (God) made Him (Christ) who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (II Corinthians 5:21).

The Apostle Peter made the same emphasis when he wrote the following. "For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit" (II Peter 3:18). Then he goes on to say Christ "bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed" (I Peter 2:24). The sinless one died for the sinner.

### THE PRINCIPLE OF THE EXCHANGED LIFE

#### *Jesus died as our substitute*

Our right relationship with God is based upon what Christ did for us on the cross. Jesus died as our substitute. He took our place on the cross and paid the penalty for our sins. The Bible says, "The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23).

We have been saved by grace through faith. Paul emphatically states, "a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we may be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified." (Galatians 2:16).

Justification is a legal standing with God based upon Christ's death and resurrection and our faith in Him. The word Paul uses (*dikaioo*), comes from Roman legal courts meaning to declare to be righteous, or to pronounce righteous. Therefore, justification is the legal and formal acquittal from guilt by God who is Judge. It is the

pronouncement of the sinner as righteous, who believes on the Lord Jesus Christ.

### ***Acquitted!***

I think Billy Graham was the source of an illustration I used many years ago that helps us understand justification by faith. Let's suppose for a moment that I died tonight and stood before the Lord God who is the Supreme Judge of the Universe. No doubt He would ask me, "Wil Pounds, why should I let you into my heaven? You are a guilty sinner. How do you plead?"

My response would be, "I plead guilty, Your Honor."

My advocate, Jesus Christ, who is standing there beside me speaks up for me. He says, "Your Honor. It is true that Wil Pounds is a grievous sinner. He is guilty. However, Father, I died for him on the cross and rose from the dead. Wil Pounds has put his faith and trust in Me and all that I have done for Him on the Cross. He is a believer. I died for him, and he has accepted Me as his substitute."

The Lord God turns to me and says, "Is that true?"

I will respond to Him, "Yes sir! That is the truth. I am claiming the shed blood of Jesus Christ to cleanse me of all my sins. I have put my faith in Jesus to save me for all eternity. This is what You have promised in Your Word. Jesus said, 'For God so loved the world (and this includes Wil Pounds), that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'"

The Lord God responds: "Acquitted! By order of this court I demand that you be set free. The price has been paid in full by My Son."

Furthermore, I get to go home and live with the Judge!

Justification means that at the moment of salvation God sovereignly declares the believing sinner righteous in His sight. The believing sinner is declared to be righteous in His standing before God. From that moment on throughout life, through death, that sinner who has believed is now and forever right before God. God accepts him, and he stands acquitted of his sins.

### ***Something happened within you***

The moment you believed on Christ as your personal savior something wonderful happened within you. You became a new person with anew motivation, new interests and new principles.

The Apostle Paul tells us what happened. "Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come" (II Corinthians 5:17).

### ***Something happened to you***

Moreover, something also happened to you. You were automatically and instantaneously placed into the family of God. You didn't necessarily feel different. You didn't hear the angels sing, or hear voices, but in that moment you did become a member of God's family.

A new life style follows conversion because Jesus through His Holy Spirit has come and taken up residence within you. He desires to settle down and make Himself at home in your heart (Cf. Eph. 3:14-21).

It is a radically different life. Salvation has occurred. I have a new life in Christ; therefore, my life can not be the same. I can not live the same way. Because I am in Christ, my life style is not the same.

Yes, there will be times when I blow it, but there will be change. Sin comes from my sinful nature. It will remain there until I am glorified when Christ comes. The constant tension will exist between the two natures. (Read Romans chapter 7; I John 1:6-9.)

The Christian hope is a living hope for today and for tomorrow. Now that we are saved by grace through faith Christ wants to live His life in and through us.

### ***We live the Christian life by grace through faith.***

"As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude" (Colossians 2:6, 7). How did you receive Christ? You received Him into your heart by grace through faith.

*The New International Version* reads, "So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness."

The principle of the exchanged life can be simply stated in the words of Paul in Galatians 2:20. Paul says, "... not I, but Christ lives in me." Again he says, "Christ in you ...the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27). The Christian life is the work of God in you. It is your living faith in the adequacy of the One who is in you. He releases His divine activity through you.

"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me" (Gal. 2:20). Literally it reads, "With Christ I have been co-crucified." When I believed on Christ I was so united with Christ, so linked with Him, that I am now so much a part of Him that His crucifixion positionally becomes my crucifixion. A part of me died there at the cross. My old carnal nature was slain there at the cross. Yet, I don't live there in that death. The

life I now live, I live in resurrection power. Christ's resurrection has become my resurrection. The life I now live, I live in faith in the Son of God who gave Himself for me.

Paul admonishes the Roman believers to "consider (be constantly counting upon the fact, reckon) yourselves to be dead to sin." Furthermore in contrast to this co-crucifixion he adds "but alive to God in Christ Jesus" (Romans 6:11).

Our lives are identified with Christ. We are identified with Him in our baptism, which is a beautiful symbol of His death and resurrection. It is also a beautiful spiritual picture of our co-crucifixion, our co-burial and our co-resurrection with Christ.

If I take a 3x5 card and place it between the pages in my Bible that card becomes a part of my Bible. Regardless of where I take my Bible it goes with it. If I lay my Bible down somewhere that 3x5 card goes with it. If I lose my Bible, I lose the 3x5 card. The card is now a part of my Bible. In the same way, I am now so identified with Jesus Christ through His death and resurrection, and the new life the Holy Spirit has imparted to me that I am in Christ. I go with Him wherever He goes. (Please read and compare John 10:27-30 and John 15.)

The Apostle Paul's desire was that he "may be found in Him (Christ), not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death...." (Philippians 3:9-10).

"For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!" (Romans 5:10).  
"For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: 'The righteous will live by faith.'" (Romans 1:17, NIV).

## **THE PERSON OF THE EXCHANGED LIFE**

### ***Christ wants to live His life through us.***

It is only the life of Christ—His activity, clothed with you and displayed through you, that ultimately will find the approval of God. The Lord Jesus alone makes our sacrifices acceptable to God.

Only what Christ does in you and through you merits God's approval. That is probably the hardest truth to learn in the Christian life. Jesus said to His disciples: "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). *Apart from Christ we can do nothing.*

### ***It is not what I do for God***

We want to do it ourselves. We want to do it our way. We want to do it the way we think best. We want to get the credit. Now that we are saved we think we can do it all in our own human

strength. We even try to conduct His work in our fleshly, sinful nature. God will have nothing of it.

God will accept nothing less than His way! A lot that we have done in the name of Jesus is going to burn up because we have done it in the power and motives of the flesh.

The Apostle Paul says:

"According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building upon it. But let each man be careful how he builds upon it. For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built upon it remains, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire" (I Cor. 3:10-15).

There is a form of Christian activity that is all right for immediate consumption. It impresses everybody. It will draw a crowd. It will get the applause. However, it will always leave a stench behind it if it stems from the flesh! It is self-activity! It makes the flesh smell great. It will always produce a kind of fruit that drops, premature and immature, to rot on the ground. It never will reproduce the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

## **THE POWER OF THE EXCHANGED LIFE**

### ***The exchanged life is a life of faith.***

Can any situation possibly arise, in any circumstances, for which Christ is not adequate? Can there arise any pressure, or promise, or any problem, or any responsibility for which the Lord Jesus Himself is not adequate?

When I realize the total adequacy of Christ in me is there any situation for which He is not adequate? If there is any situation in which Christ is inadequate then it is a clear indication that I am not in the will of God.

Christ is limited only by the measure of our availability to all that He makes available to us.

### ***The exchanged life is a Spirit-controlled life.***

Since the exchanged life is a walk of faith, it must be a life that is filled or controlled by the Holy Spirit.

When we are filled with the Holy Spirit, we are allowing the Holy Spirit to occupy the whole of our personality with the all sufficiency of Christ.

Jesus said, "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.' But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified" (John 7:38-39).

When I am under the influence of the Holy Spirit, I draw upon the unlimited resources of Christ. The resurrection life of Jesus is imparted to the true believer by the presence of the Holy Spirit.

"Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me" (Gal. 2:20b). That is what it means to live the Spirit-filled life.

Many years ago I heard the Argentine evangelist, Santiago Garaballe, give an illustration of a man who bought a new car. He had never owned a car in his life. The car came with a powerful engine under the hood. What if the man then spent the rest of his life pushing it around! Come on family let's go for a ride! Can you imagine what a life that would be like? Every time he would get into the car someone would have to guide the steering wheel, and someone else would have to start pushing it! What if someone came to him and said, "Santiago, why are you always pushing that car? Don't you have any gas in it?"

"Why, yes," said Santiago. "It came with a full tank of gas. But I didn't know what to do with it."

"Here, let me show you Santiago. Put your keys in here and turn on the ignition. Man, hear that engine purr ... Now there is real power! Come on let's go for a ride."

In the Christian life you have a powerful engine under the hood—nothing less than the resurrection life of Christ made available to you through the person of God the Holy Spirit who lives within you. Stop pushing! Switch on the power! Expose every temptation, every opportunity, every hill of circumstance, every threatening situation to the divine energy of Christ in you.

How wonderful it is to be in such an intimate, personal love relationship with God that everything you need, for any circumstance, is always yours, by the hand of God upon you!

### ***God has given you unlimited resources.***

"God is able to make all grace abound to you, that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed..." (II Cor. 9:8). Wow! That is a promise God makes to every one of us.

"Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that *His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness*, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, in order that by them you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust" (II Peter 1:2-4, *emphasis mine*).

Let me illustrate. I can say to my glove, "Glove, pick up this Bible." Somehow, that glove cannot do it. It has all the resources. It has a thumb, four fingers, the shape and form of a hand. Yet, it is unable to do what I command it to do. However, I have another glove that has picked up my Bible dozens of times! When my hand comes into that glove, the glove becomes as strong as my hand. Everything possible to my hand becomes possible to that glove. The glove is simply to clothe the activity of my hand.

God can use any old glove that is reconciled to Him, and reserved for His use.

Now, in the Christian life that is what it is to have Christ, by His Holy Spirit, dwelling within your redeemed humanity. You are the glove; Christ is the Hand! Everything that is possible to Him becomes possible to you.

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Christians at Philippi these words of encouragement. "I have strength for all things in Christ who empowers me-I am ready for anything and equal to anything through Him Who infuses inner strength into me [that is, I am self-sufficient in Christ's sufficiency]" (Phil. 4:13, *Amplified Bible*).

The presence of the living Christ, by His Spirit within you, imparts to you all the things that pertain to life and goodness. Christ has provided for you all that you need to live a life of righteousness.

We were in the bondage of sin and Jesus came and set us free. We were overwhelmed by sorrows of sin and Jesus filled our hearts with gladness and songs in the night.

### ***Those who wait upon the Lord***

The ancient Hebrew prophet Isaiah described a situation in which the people of Israel felt powerless to accomplish God's purposes. The prophet sought to remind them of the Everlasting God who never becomes weary or tired. He is never lacking in wisdom or power to accomplish His eternal purposes. Though we become weary and tired and stumble badly, he reminds us "those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint" (Isa. 40:31, *NIV*). The King James and the New American Standard translations read, "Those who wait upon the LORD will renew their strength . . ."

Isaiah uses a beautiful word in the original (*qavah*, kaw-vaw') to describe the unique relationship between the LORD God and His people who walk by faith. The word translated "wait" or "hope" in the original has the idea to bind together (perhaps by twisting), i.e., collect or gather (together).

Isaiah pictures the workers picking up cords of hemp or flax and then pulling and twisting them together, one after another until he has plaited a strong rope or cable. They pulled the hemp and wrapped it around other pieces of hemp to form a strong rope.

For those who patiently *wait* upon the LORD He wraps His strength around our stand of life and gives us inner strength. We can live above the chances, the changes and circumstances of life. We exchange our weakness for His strength. We can only get that strength by waiting upon Him and wrapping ourselves around Him and drawing our strength from Him.

Christ died not only to save you from sins in the past, not only to give you eternal life so you will go to heaven, but also to give you His resurrection life today! He gives you His strength for your weakness! He gives you His wisdom for your foolishness. He gives you His grace for your greed. He gives you His love for your lust. He gives you His peace for your conflicts. He gives His joy for your sorrows. He gives you forgiveness for your guilt. He gives you His plenty for your poverty.

### ***Christ in you***

For a number of years I flew every two months to Bogota, Colombia from Quito, Ecuador. The city of Bogota is very beautiful from the view of a small plane flying its perimeters. My friend Eric lives in this majestic city high in the Andes mountains. His family owns the Cessna factory there. One Sunday while I was ministering at one of the Colombian Baptist Churches he invited me to go flying with him on a beautiful sunny afternoon. We climbed into this brand new Seneca III that had just rolled off the assembly line. It was equipped with the latest color weather radar, and twin turbo jet engines. It is a marvelous piece of equipment. We climbed on board, harnessed up and took off. You could feel the thrust of those powerful engines. As we climbed altitude and circled, we could see the rugged Mt. Tabor peeping through the clouds. That hostile mountain has claimed the lives of hundreds of passengers.

Let's suppose that after we fly around for a while Eric turns to me and says, "Don Wilfredo, you take the controls and fly this beautiful new plane."

I respond, "Eric, I can't fly. I don't have a pilot's license for Colombia. Why, I've never had a lesson in my life."

"Don Wil, I have been blessed with this remarkable gift that enables me to fly this plane through you. I have this secret power to come inside your mind, and my spirit will fly this plane through you. All you have to do is rely on me. Wil, just consciously put your faith in me."

My thoughts would probably run like this: "Eric you are nuts! Now, Eric I have known you for some time, but you seem to have lost it."

"No, Don Wil, just *trust* me. All you have to do is *trust* me and I will fly this plane through you. Here, you take the stick!"

I say to him, "Well, I don't know about this, but I'll try."

I take the controls of the Seneca III. Man you talk about a smooth flying plane. It handles beautifully. I pan to the left, then to the right. I stay away from Mt. Tabor. It is a dream to fly. The controls respond just as if I had been flying for years.



Later, I turn to Eric excitedly and say, "Man, isn't this great. Look at *me!* Look how great *I* am doing!"

Immediately the plane goes out of control. I suddenly move in my strength and not in the strength of Eric. I am out of control. If Eric hadn't taken over the controls, we would have been in terrible danger.

The Christian life is Christ's life in you. "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me" (Gal. 2:20). Paul experienced that kind of life. While writing from a hostile imprisonment in the city of Rome he said, "To me to live is Christ" (Phil. 1:21).

That is the outcome of the Christian life. Jesus came into my life to abide from the very moment I confessed my sins and unbelief to Him. I turned from my unbelief to put my faith and trust in Him as my personal Savior. At the moment I was born again, spiritual birth took place, and Christ came in to live in me.

Jesus says to us, I will exchange lives with you. All I ask of you is that by faith you *trust Me*. The moment you run into a temptation, trust Me. The moment your faith fails you, trust Me. The moment you sin trust Me. The moment you are weak trust Me. We will fly together. You do not go in your strength. You go in My strength. You go relying on Me.

Are you living? Are you living in Christ? Christ is all you can ever need at any time, in any situation, under any circumstance. For "in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and you are complete in Him" (Col. 2:9, 10).

Jesus said He would never leave us nor forsake us. That is a truth. Are you resting in it?

The Lord Jesus gives grace as we need it, not before hand. We don't get grace for the hour of death until that hour arrives. But He does not fail us when it comes! His grace is available for us to draw as our burdens in life increase. He gives His strength as our work demands it. When I am weak, He is strong. When I am weak I draw from His infinite strength. He gives more grace as our labors increase. That is His nature.

The power we need to serve Him comes in abundant supply from Him. When we are afflicted, He gives us more grace to endure. When we feel crushed, He sustains us by giving more grace.

When the fires of persecution burn hot against us He gives more grace. When we are struck down from every side His grace has no limit. His grace endures and we receive more grace to deliver us.

God does not measure out must a little bit of love to us and refuse to give more. He gives love and keeps on giving it in our time of need.

His infinite power is unlimited. His power is perfected in your weakness. The grace of Jesus Christ is all sufficient for you regardless of your need. He is an all sufficient Savior. His

compassions fail not. When you feel like your inner person is drying up He gives more grace and your inner person is renewed day by day.

Have you experienced this kind of grace? Have you come to a place in your spiritual life where you can say I am walking in that grace by faith? It is a daily walk. It is not something magical. It is a moment by moment trusting Christ to live His life through you. If you are already a Christian will you commit your life once and for all to Christ as Lord of your life? Just pray, "Lord I do know you as my Savior. I want you to be the Lord and Master of my life. Here is my life. I give it to you. You live it through me."

This kind of life begins by asking Christ to come into your heart by faith. If you have never done so pray with me this simple prayer, "Lord Jesus I now believe that I am a sinner, and that you died for me on the cross and rose from the dead to save me. I want you to be my personal Savior. I ask you to save me right now. Amen."

If you need help in becoming a Christian here is [A Free Gift for You](#).

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