

Zoe – The life of God (A Tale of 2 Lives)

John 3:1-5 There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.² This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, “Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.”³ Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”⁴ Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?”⁵ Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

- Nicodemus recognized that the life of Jesus was different than the life of other men.
 - What marked that difference was that he could tell that God was with Him.
- Jesus tells him he must be born again to see the kingdom of God.
- Nicodemus questions this
- Jesus here makes a distinction. Natural life, from water. Spiritual life from Spirit.

John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

- There is flesh, or the natural life.
- There is Spirit. This is the Christ life.

There are 2 types of life we can have – the natural life, or the Christ life.

- **Matthew 10:39** He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it. (*natural life*)
 - Life = Psuche – The rational soul. Vitality.
- **Matthew 7:14** Because narrow *is* the gate and difficult *is* the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.
 - Life = Zoe – the absolute fullness of life which belongs to God. Life real and genuine, devoted to God, blessed.

The Natural Life

Matthew 6:25 “Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?”

- Here we see that living in the natural life results in worry. Anxiety.
- We have to take care of ourselves. We are our own provider.

Luke 12:15 And He said to them, “Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.” (Christ Life)

- Here, we see that in the absence of Zoe, life is boiled down to materialism.

Luke 21:34 “But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. (*natural life – biotikos – present existence*)”

- Within the natural life all that matters is having a good time.

- If it feels good do it.
- But we are promised that judgement will come for this life.

The natural life can be summed up:

- Live for yourself
- This is the only life we have so make the most of it (YOLO)
- We must look out for ourselves. Self is most important.
- Happiness is the most important thing you can have

But with the natural life comes 2 things:

- Judgement
- Death

The Christ Life

John 10:10 The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly.

- Jesus is the way to Zoe Life.
- We have an enemy that does not want us to experience zoe.
- But Jesus brings zoe.

John 5:24 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.

2 Things that come with the Christ life:

1. Freedom from judgement
2. Eternal Life

How do we get this zoe?

- Jesus' answer to Nicodemus – By being born again!
- **John 3:15–16** that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Romans 5:17–21 For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.)¹⁸ Therefore, as through one man's offense *judgment* came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act *the free gift came* to all men, resulting in justification of life.¹⁹ For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.²⁰ Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more,²¹ so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

- Through one man's offense – we are born into the line of Adam – the natural man. This results in judgement and death.

- through one Man's righteous act *the free gift came* to all men, resulting in justification of life. – When we receive the grace of Jesus – and take His Zoe life, it results in justification.
- as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.
 - **There are 2 states of being on the earth right now. The natural life leading to sin and death, and Zoe life leading to righteousness and eternal life.**

We must choose which to live by

And this is the key part. We can choose to live by either. But we must choose Zoe life.

- **Luke 14:26** "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. (*natural life*)
 - We should hate the natural life
 - We should also hate the natural life of others so much that we want them to experience zoe.
- **Luke 9:23** Then He said to *them* all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.
 - We push the natural life away.
 - We do not deny our zoe life. Just our Biotikos or psuche life.

- **Galatians 5:24-25** And those *who are* Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.²⁵ If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.
 - If we are born again, live according to that life.
 - **Romans 8:6** For to be carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace.

False living

In 1 Corinthians, at least seven times Paul assaults "wisdom."

- 1 Cor 1:17—"Christ did not send me to preach with eloquent wisdom."
- 1:20—"Where is the wise man?"
- 1:21—"The world did not know God through wisdom."
- 1:22—"Jews demand signs, Greeks seek wisdom, but . . ."
- 1:26—"Not many of you were wise . . . (v. 27) God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise."
- 2:1—"I did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God in lofty words or wisdom."
- 2:4—"My words were not in plausible words of wisdom."

But then he praises the use of wisdom:

- **1 Corinthians 2:6-7** However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing.⁷ But we speak the wisdom of God

in a mystery, the hidden *wisdom* which God ordained before the ages for our glory,

What is happening? Paul explains:

- **1 Corinthians 2:12–16** Now we have received, **not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God**, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. ¹³ These things we also speak, **not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches**, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. ¹⁴ But **the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him**; nor can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned. ¹⁵ But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is *rightly* judged by no one. ¹⁶ For "*who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?*" But we have the mind of Christ.

(comment on parts in bold)

Paul is saying that the wisdom of the world is useless. It has no real power. It will not make you truly wise.

But the wisdom of God is what we truly need.

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

Stop living according to the natural life. Live the Christ life.