

THE WORLD NEEDS TO SEE PROOF OF LIFE

Anyone in the world who is seriously looking for the truth about life is looking for proof of that true Life God has instilled into the heart of every man.

When people are kidnapped for ransom, the first thing that is required is proof of life before negotiations can even begin to take place. There must be undeniable proof that the person is alive, and will remain alive. Jesus came to release the many captives that the Father has given to Him. The many are those who will believe. *"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."*

Mark 10:45

Jesus came as the Life of God to impart the life we need. *"In Him was life, and the life was the Light of mankind."*

John 1:4

Those who are in Christ are to provide real proof of life to the world and each other. Jesus said: *"you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and Samaria, and as far as the remotest part of the earth."*

Acts 1:7-8

And we are to witness to His light, *"You are the light of the world."* True Christians are what the world needs to see in their darkness. *"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."*

Matt 5:14, 16

The 'you' in this passage is plural. Together His sheep are the light that is needed. Together the light is a viable witness to the truth in Christ. Each spark dependent on the others to be the true revelation of Christ.

"Arise, shine; for your light has come, And the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For behold, darkness will cover the earth and deep darkness the peoples; But the Lord will rise upon you And His glory will appear upon you. Nations will come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising."

Isa 60:1-3

This is the opposite to the world view of life where everyone does what's right in their own eyes. This individual life is contrary to the light of God.

Often, we behave as if we don't need our brother or sister to teach us anything about life in Christ; but we don't know what we don't know, and we regularly insist on standing by ourselves and deny our unity in the body of Christ.

'Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth each one of you with his neighbour, for we are members of one another.' (Eph 4:25) Those who are in Christ have a responsibility to look out for each other.

We are dependent on each other for light and life to serve Christ

'Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing.' 1 Thess 5:11

'So then we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another.' Rom 14:19

'But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.' Heb 3:13

'But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit.' Jude 1:20

'The equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ.' Eph 4:12

'Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.' 2 Cor 13:11

'from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.' Eph 4:16

'And let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds.' Heb 10:24

‘So also you, since you are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek to abound for the edification of the church.’

1 Cor 14:12

We are in danger of separating our relationship with Christ in each other, from the things we do as individuals, so that our works are divorced from our unity in Christ and each other as we do our bit as individuals.

This individualistic way of living is contrary to the word of God that says we are to be of the same mind as one another. The mind of Christ. *‘But we have the mind of Christ.’*

1 Cor 2:16

No believer is meant to stand alone. Our identity is bound up in ‘us,’ ‘we,’ ‘our,’ ‘one another.’

Forgot what the world needs to see, we who are in Christ need to see the proof of His life so that we can be encouraged to persevere in our witness to Christ in a troubled world. As we are nurtured by the family members of the household of God, we will know that we are not alone, we will be encouraged that Christ has indeed come to live with us.

Jesus is the Vine; He is the church His body in earth. Our fruitfulness is only possible when we are joined to one another and dependant on each other to maintain our life in Christ.

As individuals we are not the light of the world, as individuals we don't have the mind of Christ. The greatest battle we face in putting off that which is fleshly in us is our sense of individualism. And individualism is driven by pride.

I can, I know, I will, I have, I can stand in my own two feet, I can manage by myself. Sounds like my grandson. In our relationship with the body of Christ this attitude is childish.

Jesus is our life together with Him

Jesus is not only the true life, He is also the way to God, the truth of God and the life of God needed to gain a life in the presence of the Father, then the proof of the truth is the fruit of is His life manifesting through those who live for Him as His witnesses because they love Him more than life in the world. His witnesses will show the fruit of His life.

“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit. 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. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned.” (John 15:1-2, 5-6) Jesus said, *“by their fruits you will know them.”* Matt 7:16

The world is watching the Church for the proof of its claims, and what it sees doesn't give many the confidence they can believe what is claimed. In fact, much of what the world sees in the church is attractive to the life of the flesh, which is the exact opposite to His life that gives life.

This is because not everyone who claims to believe does not necessarily believes the whole truth. *“The one who believes in the Son has eternal life; but the one who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.”* (John 3:36) *“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter.”* Matt 7:21

Proof of life is found in those who no longer live for themselves but for Him who died on their behalf. 2 Cor 5:15

We are to follow the example of Jesus who was witness to the Father, *“If you have seen Me you have seen the Father.”* (John 14:9) As the witness of Jesus we are to represent Him in the same way He represented the Father. Jesus said *“I did not speak on My own, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak.”* (John 12:49) *“I do nothing on My own, but I say these things as the Father instructed Me.”* John 8:28

Therefore, as witness to Christ, we don't speak on our own initiative, but we say and do only that which is consistent with what Jesus said and would do.

Those who serve the Son of God know how He served and left us an example to follow as we live for Him. *“For even the Son of Man did not*

come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

Mark 10:45

"For I gave you an example, so that you also would do just as I did for you."

John 13:15

'For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps,' 1 Peter 2:21

Those who are in Christ look to Him in order to stay on track as witnesses to Him.

'We do see Him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of His suffering death crowned with glory and honour, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone. For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the originator of their salvation through sufferings.'

Heb 2:9-10

Jesus is our High Priest so we can be His priests to one another

'For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things just as we are, yet without sin.'

Heb 4:15

Jesus is our example of priestly service, and we are called to serve Him as obedient priestly servants of God. *'You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.'*

1 Peter 2:9

The people who belong to Jesus are a chosen to represent Him as His priestly servant. This priesthood is a collective, not many individuals doing their own thing. We are granted everything we need for this task that is *"pertaining to life and godliness"* so that we can live as a holy priesthood.

'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, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust. Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love.'

2 Peter 1:3-7

The purpose of godliness results in brotherly kindness in love.

Not just priest of God but the dwelling of God

We are not without divine revelation concerning the will of God because we have received the Spirit of Christ who now lives in us. *'Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?'*

1 Cor 3:16

The "you" in this verse is not singular but plural. We are the collective people of God. The collective people are members of one another as the temple of God. This unifying life takes precedence to a greater extent over the individual who has received the Spirit, for the Spirit is given for the good of the whole body of Christ. *'Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?'*

1 Cor 6:19

Priestly witnesses to Christ are God's own possession to carry out His desires. The church is a collective purchased by God by the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ in order for them to serve as servants of Christ so that His life is manifest in the world of darkness through the light of His servants under the governance of the Spirit of God.

Jesus Christ has now ordained His followers to the role of priests in His church in order to aid godly worship and to minister to one another. Historically the priests were set apart for the exclusive work of purification and worship. For this alone they are sanctified.

And we are sanctified for this work of service as the priesthood of God. *"Therefore, holy brothers and sisters, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession: Jesus;"*

Heb 3:1

'For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection.' Rom 6:5

'Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,'

Rom 6:8

'Do not go on presenting the parts of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those who are alive from the dead, and your body's parts as instruments of righteousness for God.'

Rom 6:13

'For just as you presented the parts of your body as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your body's parts as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification.'

Rom 6:19

Priestly witness are aliens and strangers in the world

We are foreigners in the world that does not know God. *'Beloved, I urge you as foreigners and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts, which wage war against the soul.'*

1 Pet 2:11

As the priests of God, we are called out of the world. *"I am not asking You to take them out of the world, but to keep them away from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world."*

John 17:15-16

Being called out of the world to be witness to Christ means we don't find our meaning in the world but in the kingdom of God.

'Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. The world is passing away,

and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever. As for you, let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father. If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone also who practices righteousness is born of Him.'

1 John 2:15-17, 24, 29

Living for the world is sure proof that the Spirit of Christ is not resident in us and actively leading us into all righteousness. *'He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal.'*

John 12:25

The priests of God are separated from the world in order to exclusively serve His people in maintaining corporate holiness even as they served God. The Levitical priesthood had no worldly inheritance, they had no worldly considerations that would distract them from their holy calling. Likewise, we are called out of the world to serve one another as the priests who follow the example of Christ our Great High Priest. Those who are in Christ are priests to one another. *'Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able also to admonish one another.'* Rom 15:13-14

'For bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance. For it is for this we labour and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of believers. Take pains with these things; be absorbed in them, so that your progress will be evident to all.'

1 Tim 4:8-10, 15

In Christ we serve as His instruments in the hands of the Spirit

The fruit of the life of Christ is a heart of service for the many He has called to be His brethren. Life in the Church is a life of seeking the highest good for others so that the whole gathering of His people can be

transformed more completely into His image and likeness so they can do His work on earth.

Jesus died for many so that He would have many brethren born of the Spirit of God. And the words of Jesus show that many doesn't mean all, without exception if they should feel like being religious; the many will produce His life as true witnesses. Because it is by the Spirit of God His image has become the bench mark for the many who have real life in His Church. *"No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day."* John 6:44

The truth of the proof the world needs is that His sheep are alive with God so that the love of the great shepherd lives through His sheep. The Church is the body of Christ, so the members of the Church show evidence of Christ's mission to save the many.

'However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.' Rom 8:9-14

Biblical evidence of the spiritual life of Christ is that we are in Christ by the Spirit while we are serving in His church under His control. God has chosen those who live in Christ to be a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God. This is now their daily vocation regardless of the everyday necessities to provide for earthly existence in the world.

The reality of God's calling is that no one can have God on their own terms. If Jesus isn't Lord of all our life, He isn't Lord at all. Claiming to have a place in the Church without the Spirit working in us to build up

the body of Christ means we show we have no life from God. And thinking we have God in us without the love of the Spirit of Christ's church dominating our life means we are still living on our own terms.

If the Spirit of Christ isn't directing and enabling our life to carry out His commands according to the scriptures, we don't really know Him.

Being led by the Spirit means we do what God requires of His chosen people, not what we think will make us happy in the world. Claiming to have a connection with Christ without evidence of the injection of the Spirit means we are still without life.

If the Spirit is in residence, we will be active and productive in the church. If there is no productive evidence of the Spirit in us serving the Church, there is no evidence of life. The Spirit ensures each one in Christ is able to contribute to the life of His Church according to where He places each member.

'But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills. For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired. But now there are many members, but one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; or again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it.'

1 Cor 12:7-8, 11-14, 18, 20-21, 25-27

Those who are in Him who is life no longer to live for themselves because they walk according to the Spirit.

'I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the desire of the flesh is against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, in order to keep you from doing whatever you want.' Gal 5:16-17

When we are born again and incorporated into Christ, we have surrendered all that we were and all we had in the world, to live exclusively for Him in all He is as our Lord and Master. And this life in the Spirit is made possible by the Spirit given to us so that the Love of Christ becomes our motivation for life as His servants in the world. *'For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that One died for all, therefore all died; and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf. Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.'* 2 Cor 5:14-15, 17

Those who live for Christ will show the fruit of His life as proof of the Spirit of God reigning in their hearts. *'So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so must you do also. In addition to all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.'* Col 3:12-14

Here is the proof of life

"That they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me. I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me." John 17:21, 23

The world in verse 21 are only those who would in the future believe on His name to the end of the world. From the time of writing, the 'world' in verse 21 means all those who are now living in Christ, and those who

will join Him later. We need to see proof of life. The proof is in the unity of God binding all believers together in the life of Christ. There are others still to come into this relationship, and they too need to see proof of life just as we have received proof of life in Christ. They are like those in verse 6. *“I have revealed Your name to the men whom You gave Me out of the world; they were Yours and You gave them to Me, and they have followed Your word.”*

They are not like those in the world in verse 11 and 14. *“I am no longer going to be in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I am coming to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me, so that they may be one just as We are.”* *“I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.”*

The proof of the truth gives comfort to those who are in Christ and still living in the world. Verse 13. *“But now I am coming to You; and these things I speak in the world so that they may have My joy made full in themselves.”* ... *“They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth. Just as You sent Me into the world, I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, so that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth.”*

John 17:16-19

John 17 explains the intent of John 3:16. *“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish, but have eternal life.”* (John 3:16) The world needs to see proof of life if we are to be the true witness to our Lord Jesus Christ. *“I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word.”*

John 17:20

Those who believe through their word are still in the world looking for proof of life. With Jesus living as the example of the man God desires, on a scale of 1 to 10, are we living as individuals and isolated, or are we living as incorporated into Him, and proof of His life as He lives through us?