



October 2023

Letter L-49

4 pages

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LIFE AND IMMORTALITY

FOR YE ARE DEAD, AND YOUR LIFE IS HID WITH CHRIST IN GOD- (Col.3:3) The first man Adam, had life. This life was called Eden, it was a sinless state with no death. When sin entered, the Adam creation lost its Edenic life and put on the temporal life of these flesh and blood bodies. Edenic life was somewhat eternal, but it was not guaranteed; there was a condition attached to it, *"If you eat of that tree, ye shall die."* And they died, and plunged all of their future descendants into the same death. The life that is hid with Christ in God is superior to the life that was lost in Adam, for that life is rooted in God; it is divine and not of the earth. The life that we now have in the flesh is temporal which means it is limited to "time." It is life for a season; we are mortals, *"For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away."* (I Pet.1:24). The fruit of the tree of life that is found in the garden, is the Word of God. If one eats of the Word of God, one lives forever. Christ is that tree. Jesus said, *"Eat my flesh and drink my blood or you have no life in you."* He meant eat the living Word that I give you, and you will have life. In Eden, Adam and Eve had not eaten of the tree of life, and God quickly cast them out saying, *"Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil, and now lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from when he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the East of the garden of Eden, Cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."* (Gen.3:22-24)

In these earthly bodies, we are restless, we constantly feel the need to move on to something more. We are striving to escape this death, and to find the precious life that we have lost in Adam, or perhaps the glorious life that is ours in Christ. And so we work to "better" ourselves, to find our true identity, and we feel that we have just a short time to do this in. The pot of gold at the end of the rainbow is our "life" which is hid with Christ in God. Paul said, *"For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?"* (I Cor.15:53-55) There is a drive within each mortal, a need to put on immortality, and if it is hid with Christ, then **we must find Christ**. Both, life and Christ are hid in God. When we find Christ, we find the true God. *"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."* (Jn.17:3)

THE CARNAL MIND IS DEATH- What the serpent offered Eve was not an apple; it was a new mind. In that moment, the Adam creation lost the light of life and fell into gross darkness, not knowing where they came from, or where they were going. From that day forward, they, and all their descendants, would be guided by a mind that strives to be like God through acquiring knowledge; only this knowledge would leave God out of the equation. The carnal mind has no connection to God's spirit; it abhors God and cringes at the mention of anything pertaining to God. The carnal mind is aggressive and resolute in its search for knowledge, which is the source of its power. The saying, "Knowledge is power," relates to the carnal mind. The carnal mind is self-centered and egotistic; it competes forcefully to achieve its desires, above all others. It is very sly and knows how to scheme, to steal and to bully until it overpowers and controls. This is the mind that drives man to fight wars in order to gain wealth, possess lands and rule over the populace. **The carnal mind is man's most powerful enemy;** it is our Goliath.

While the root of the carnal mind is evil, it is also brilliant, and it is greatly admired by the world, but this is so deceitful! Intellectuals, scientists, explorers, inventors and such, have made great progress and amazing discoveries; they have found and pioneered ways to improve the daily lives of many humans. But by the same token, because the carnal mind is void of the light of truth, and because man's heart is naturally "wicked above all things," these mighty accomplishments have not slowed or stopped the death and ultimate destruction that evil is pushing the world into. Men and women of good will have dedicated their lives and some have even given their lives, trying to teach men, women and children, to respect and love one another. Laws have been enforced to protect people, and have succeeded to a point, but they can no longer slow down or stop the momentum of the herd which is heading toward the precipice of wars and desolation. The carnal mind is still the ruler of the darkness, and until the light of life which is hid with Christ, rises and overcomes the darkness, man's hearts will still be defiled with "...evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies." (Matt.18:19)

The carnal mind is the force that keeps man in the cycle of death. *"For to be carnally minded is death...because the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."* (Rom.8:6a-7) Paul counselled, *"Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewal of your mind..."* (Rom.12:2) Paul knew his own wretchedness; he exclaimed, *"O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord..."* (Rom.7:24,25a). Paul knew that the mortal body constantly demands our attention, our time, our labors; it needs to be fed, pampered, entertained. It wants to feel good and look good all the time or else it will make us feel very uncomfortable. The mortal body works together with the carnal mind to drive us away from seeking God. Paul saw his need for deliverance when he asked, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Paul was looking for immortality; he was looking for a glorious body that would not always pull him down and demand all his attention. Then he exclaimed. *"I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord..."* Jesus Christ came to open the way and to show us the way out. *He brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.* Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life. Follow me!" Ah yes we have life! But it is HID WITH CHRIST IN GOD. The way to find our life is to find Christ, and the way to find Christ is to follow Jesus. Jesus is the Christ. He is the first of many such beings. He is the Pattern, the Anointed, the EnChristed One. He is the Word of God in the flesh. "When you see me, you see the Father."

THE SPIRIT OF MAN *is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward part of his belly.* (Prov.20:7) We are searching for the blessed life that we lost through Adam's disobedience. Adam could hear the voice of God; in the garden, he held conversation with God. We know this because *"The Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and hid myself."* (Gen.3:9-10) In the garden, they could talk with God, but when Adam died, his candle went out and the light of his spirit was no longer burning. There was no more connection with God. From that time on, the entire creation in Adam was dead and in the bodies of this death. Years ago, a dear brother in the Lord told me that as a young man, he had been sowing his wild oats, living foolishly, until he had this dream, *"He was driving recklessly, when sud/denly the car hit a boulder and he was propelled out of the car into a deep, dark cave. Walls of earth were surrounding him and all was pitch black. He became so afraid and panic took hold of him. He groped and tried to find a way out, but it was useless; he was buried alive in this cave. Then, in his panic, he cried unto Jesus, a name that he had heard about but had had no desire to know. Soon, a little light as it were a small candle flickered in a far corner and revealed the way to a hidden stairway in the dirt wall. Slowly he moved toward it and began to climb out."* When he awoke from this dream, this young man gave his life to Jesus, and when I met him years later, he had been a missionary for many years, in the service of the Lord. The dream is clear in describing the gross darkness of our soul and the need for a "light" to appear and show us the way out. This light appears at a time when we finally realize our desperate need to turn our lives around, repent from our

sins and follow Jesus. At that time, our spirits are quickened, or made alive by God's Holy Spirit. Then the candle of the Lord is lit and we begin to see, and to search our inner soul by this new light. At first it is a flickering light, but what a relief! The prison's gates that were set against us were now opening to a brand new vista. Joy filled our hearts; we had found the way out of our darkness. The SPIRIT OF MAN, which is the candle of the Lord is ready to lead us, and to grow into an even brighter light, out of death and into the life which is hid with Christ in God. The Psalmist prayed, *"For thou wilt light my candle, the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness."* (Ps.18:28) When this happens, we are born again from above. The next light that we often encounter is the Bible and the Law. The Law is a discipline to follow that leads us to Christ, and to a steadier and brighter light. As we follow this light, the light of the Holy Spirit begins to shine, and if we dare follow that light, the spirit of revelation will take us into the light of a new Day. It is tempting to remain in the semi darkness, where we feel safer, but each step forward causes us to leave the past structured security behind, and trust the voice of God's Sun or Son of righteousness. On this journey, we meet obstacles and testing, but the bright light of the Son takes us through and makes us stronger in the faith and in the Spirit. *"But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."* (Prov.4:18) *"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."* (Ps.119:105)

While on earth, Jesus was the Word made flesh. He came and *"In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it."* (Jn.1:4-5) Although Jesus, the Word of life was rejected and slain by His own, it was still God's full-proof plan, ordained from the beginning. When they nailed the Lord to the cross, they were executing God's purpose for mankind. *"But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: which none of the princes, (leaders), of the world knew; for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."* (I Cor.2:7-8) The crucifixion of Jesus was not a defeat; it was a great victory. Jesus knew this, and He willingly remained on the cross. Through death and resurrection, Jesus brought heaven down to man. *"And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven."* (Col.1:20)

LIFE AND IMMORTALITY- The light of the gospel is the good news, that according to the power of God, *"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."* (II Tim.1:9-10) This is the best news ever! Our Saviour Jesus Christ not only abolished, (made void, totally took away), death, He also brought in **life and immortality**. Life comes when, with resurrection power, His Spirit quickens or revives our spirit. Then He cleanses the adulterous soul from seeking worldly lovers, especially those who thrill the base emotions of the soul by fraudulently imitating the things of God, and enticing the people to follow them and to shame them if they do not support their endeavors. We have all gone through such experiences. While Christians wait for Jesus to appear again, the coming of Christ has been ongoing since the Holy Ghost entered the disciples in the Upper Room. He has been appearing from glory to glory, revealing Himself from within, until the time when the firstfruit harvest is fully manifested to the world. It has been His work and not our own. Indeed He has made us alive in spirit and soul, yet now, there is just one more thing...**immortality**. Our holy calling, according to His own purpose and grace, includes immortality. This has to do with a body which will never see the grave. Paul declared, *"So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?"* (I Cor.15:54-55) This is the life that all of creation is waiting for.

WHEN CHRIST WHO IS OUR LIFE *shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.*" (Col.3:4) Christ is our new life. Soon, all will see that the Christ that is about to appear is no longer just one man but *"a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people..."* an entire company of transformed beings, who are in the image and likeness of the first Son. The entire creation eagerly waits for this appearing. When it happens, those who were caught up in the cloud of witnesses beyond the veil, will return with Jesus, while those who have come to their completeness on this side will join them as together all become one new Man, manifested as Christ in the world.

It was some sixty years ago that I heard the word on life and immortality, and that I embarked, with many earnest brethren, on this journey for more light and truth. From the beginning, the Spirit in me gave a strong witness that surely this was what my soul had been hungry for. Many of the brethren at the time and since are no longer on this earth; they have joined the cloud of witnesses, who are waiting for the time of their perfection or completeness in Christ. They are looking for the "better resurrection". They have found life in spirit and soul, but they need to put on immortality, which is the land of promise that we inherit in Christ. During this journey, the Spirit has spoken many things to us concerning these things. And now He is opening the mystery of Christ as never before. He is revealing the glory that we have been hoping for, and we rejoice as we see that the Day is now within our reach.(Gal.4:19)

Through the years, the Holy Spirit has spoken to His called out people about these things. He spoke to me through various dreams about the time of this much awaited appearing. A particular dream, (shared previously, but closer to the time now than then), reveals the last leg of this journey. *"My husband Michael and I were traveling by car with others. We had stopped to rest at this hotel, and now we were all ready and anxious to get there. We were all going to the same place at the same time, but each in our own car. It was evening and we were checking out of our hotel. We were packing our car and I told Michael to be sure and not forget my little red footstool. Then standing by the car I see this tall nice looking man. He looked very kind and extremely knowledgeable. I asked him if we could make it "home" in one more trek. He said Yes, if you don't get too sleepy. We were traveling on a two-lane road, not on an expressway. There were 225 miles to go but because it was evening and we will be traveling by night, we could get sleepy. He said, "If you get too sleepy don't feel bad if you have to pull over, you must pull over. (End of Dream.)*

This dream has to do with sons who are moving toward their perfection in Christ, which perfection includes immortality. *"The life of the flesh is in the blood."* (Lev.17:11) So the red footstool under my feet, speaks of overcoming our mortality in Adam. The dream speaks of the company of sons, who are traveling in the pitch darkness of this world, on a narrow two lane road, (for the way is narrow). It is not a crowded expressway. Each one were moving by the light of their own car's headlights, (The Spirit within), for this is an individual journey until the final goal is reached, and death is swallowed up of life. Some will need to pull over, perhaps because of their old worn- out bodies, but there is no shame in that. The sons who are on the other side now, will return to put on immortality with the sons who reached the goal here on earth. We think of Abraham, Joshua, Moses and all who have waited a very long time for the sons on earth to reach the final goal. We read about them, *"And these all, having obtained a good report through faith received not the promise , (of a land which is a new body), God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us, should not be made perfect, (complete, spirit, soul and body). (Heb.11:39-40)*

This my dear brethren, is the glorious promise of life and immortality that Jesus has been revealing through the light of the Gospel, after He abolished death! This is very Good News indeed! May our Lord and God be praised forever and ever!

Because He is love, *Jackie Caporaso*