

Life Or Death



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"He that hath the Son hath life and he that hath not the Son hath not life."
– 1 John 5:12

CHRISTIANITY differs from all other religions in that it does not deal in half measures. It is an 'either-or' religion. You are either saved or not saved; regenerate or unregenerate; spiritually alive or dead. You are either quickened in Christ Jesus, possessing the light of his spirit and the power to walk therein, or you are dependent on the natural heart in spiritual darkness and without divine power.

The reason is that Christianity is the only religion whose motive power is of an entirely different order than anything in the natural man. The power of God must always have an effect that is complete and perfect both in saving and condemning. The power of nature can accomplish what is only partially right. Thus the sanctification of believers, their union with Christ, their having died and having been together raised in Christ Jesus as their new covenant head – all these can only be accomplished by the saving power of Christ. When taken over by men, they are lowered down to suit the ways of the world.

This is what the Roman Catholic church has done. It teaches that, by its law and ritual, sins are forgiven in part; that by them a man may remain not good enough for heaven yet not bad enough for hell; that the spirit of God may be in men while they are yet dead in sin; that intercession of the Virgin Mary and of saints can make up for the lack of the redemptive power of Christ; that one can die half-saved and complete the work of his salvation in the fires of purgatory; that without the offering of sacrifice daily by priests for the sins of men, no one can be saved at all.

Against this Paul definitely states (Gal. 3:21): "If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law..."

Nothing in the natural heart of man has the power to originate and maintain the grace of salvation or the light of truth. A lamp or window may be called a light, but only in the sense of communicating or transmitting it from its source. Thus the heart when quickened in Christ receives of his spirit the

light, and power to walk therein.

Why wonder, then, that men today are helpless in face of the release of physical forces they cannot control? If they are not born of God, regenerate, fully alive in Christ, active transmitters of the power of his spirit, they are dead and their world will remain a nightmare. It is a cruel mockery to exhort men to obey God and love their neighbor until they have first received the life that can only be had through faith in Christ Jesus.