

“If you continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel which you have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven” (Col. 1:23).

# **The Kingdom of the Middle Ground**

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# The Kingdom of the Middle Ground

(Why don't we walk steadily in the fullness of this Abundant LIFE?)

Sylvia Pearce

Why don't we Christians walk in the fullness of the Kingdom within us and experience the Lord's presence all the time? Are these promises of God's just platitudes boasting of a future day, or is this quality of life possible right now? Hear, by the Spirit, what is rightfully yours today:

"Life in the Spirit is an adventure, and thrilling, yet at its heart there is a desperate seriousness. Through the Cross of Christ, we have received the Spirit of son-ship, and by Him we cry "Abba, Father" (Rom. 8:15). The Spirit Himself "bears witness with our spirit that we are sons of God, and if sons then heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:15-17). As co-heirs with Christ, God promises us, "joy unspeakable full of glory" (1 Peter 1:8); a "peace that passes all understanding" (Phil. 4:7), and "all sufficiency in all things" (11 Cor. 9:8).

We also have "all the fullness of God" (Eph. 3:19) and "reigning in life"(Rom. 5:17b). We have self-release from bondage into liberty, and an overflow of the rivers of the Spirit. And finally we count temptations and trials as all joy (James 1:3), instead of miseries to be avoided or endured. Though always only the earthen vessels in which the

“Excellency of the power is of God, and not of us” (II Cor. 4:7), we count it a privilege to “bear about in our bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus” (II Cor. 4:10), so that “death works in us, but life in others” (II Cor. 4:12).<sup>1</sup>

We have this inheritance because all is centered in the one reality, our Lord Jesus Christ, crucified, risen, and ascended. He now lives this life in His body members (Eph. 1:22-23; I Cor. 6:15). Even though this inheritance is available to all Christians, few experience this quality of life. Most Christians live condemned and frustrated lives, trying to cope with their difficulties and wondering why they can't make Christianity work. What is the answer to this heart breaking reality?

The problem, simply put, is a not a self problem, but rather a *source* problem. What do I mean by “*source problem*”? We Christians are in Christ, who is the Tree of Life, yet we still *operate* as if we are separate beings drawing life's sufficiency from the false satanic tree of the knowledge of good and evil. We have our trees mixed up. We are in Christ, the Tree of Life, yet we live and try to draw life from an old satanic source. We have the heart of Jesus, but we still think like we did when we were in Tree of the knowledge of separation, independence and self effort.

We *were* Satan-indwelt humans, and now through the Cross, we *are* Christ-indwelt humans, but most of us Christians function as if we are

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from Yes, I Am by Norman Grubb

self-indwelt and live by our own supposed self-sufficiencies. To the Christian, the Kingdom of the Middle Ground is a false kingdom; however, when we eat from this empty source, we will manifest its deadly fruits, expressing fleshly thought patterns. Here are some of these condemning thought patterns:

"I don't have the power to keep myself from evil, nor can I do enough good to please God." "I have no inner rest." "I am threatened and often live with insecurities, and fears. I live under the 'should's and ought's' of the law." "I am always trying to become better, but I am never satisfied with myself." "I am a very needy person." "I never have enough of Jesus' love, peace, long-suffering, because I'm trying to produce the fruits of the Spirit." "I find it hard to keep everything and everybody under control, but the worst is trying to control myself." "I tend to be co-dependent, I am either trying to control, or I am being controlled." "I live protecting myself by staying in my own comfort zone." "I don't know how to draw boundaries, and when I don't, others steamroll me into doing things that I end up hating." "It is so easy for me to blame others, and not look at myself." "I have Christian expectations for others and, when they don't come through to what I think is right, I get disappointed, angry and hurt." "That is why I feel justified when I criticize others, I was right." "All of life is centered in on me, (how I feel, or what I think)." "I'm always comparing myself with others, and I even feel competitive with other Christians." "Yet, as I analyze myself, as I so often do, I come short of the Christians that I so admire, and try to be like." "I am always trying to perform my best, because I think that my performance is why God accepts me, yet, jealousy pride, temper, lust, and fears control me." "I don't have victory over these passions, because they rule me." "I'm always trying to impress others with what I know, but when I do, I seem phony." "I live in worries concerning my body, my health, my future, my finances, and my marriage, etc." "I am over attached to things and people, especially

my family." "I have self-hatred, I am self-centered, I am self-conscious, I have false humility, or I'm trying to build myself up." "I have self-pity—'old poor me', or 'what is wrong with me,' is my constant thinking." "I always have to be right when there is a argument, I'm afraid when I am wrong, that people will find out, so I get defensive." "I'm always finding a need to justify myself." "I am more miserable as a Christian than when I was a sinner." "I live a lot of the time in the negative, I am sin-conscious, devil-conscious, and self-conscious." "I am judgmental about others, and when others don't live up to my expectations, I cut them off--either physically, or emotionally or both." "I am afraid that others won't like me, so I try to please them by doing nice things, but it doesn't work." "I am always seeking more of God." "I worry about my reputation--I don't want people to think I am wrong, or have done wrong." "I wear a bracelet saying W.W.J.D. to remind myself of how to act, but the more I try to imitate Jesus the more I end up acting like the devil." "My prayer life is more Asking than it is believing, and it seems like it doesn't go any higher than my ceiling." "I am always trying to maintain my own spiritual temperature by doing good things like reading my Bible, going to church, and praying, but it never seems to work." "The more I try to conquer my passions, and tempers the more I fall into sin--that is why I call myself a saved sinner." "I feel like a victim--I often say to myself, why did this happen to me again?" "Sometimes, I feel paranoid, like most people are against me." "I feel abandoned, rejected, and not loved by God." "I am always trying to find my place in the Christian world--something that will make me feel good about myself." "I feel guilty, but confessing my sins doesn't help." "I never feel at home anywhere, at church, at my office, at school, even at in my own house." "I am restless, have fleeting peace, and am threatened and insecure, but I try to hide it." "I have condemnation because I have a self who should try to do good, but can't"

Does this describe your life? Or maybe, you can't identify with all of these many symptoms, but if you can identify with most, or even some of them, you are probably living in the "Kingdom of the Middle Ground."<sup>2</sup>

Take heart, I do have good news for you: these thoughts and feelings are *not WHO you are*. Yes, it inundates your mind, and monopolizes your feelings, but praise the Lord, it is not who you really are. If you are a Christian, you are joined to Christ (1 Cor 6:17), and the real YOU is HE (Gal. 2:20).

These insidious thoughts that you are experiencing is Satan's *voice and temptations*, and not your own thoughts. He speaks to us in the *first person* and lies to us concerning our true identity. I call him a true *"identity thief."* However, if you do not renew your mind to the truth and instead "walk" and live in these flesh feelings and satanic thoughts, as the bible says, *"you will die"* (Rom. 8:5-6). That means that you are living in a "false kingdom" where a "performing you" who is independent from Christ is in charge and totally responsible for living your own life. As you live in this lie, you will experience frustrations, defeat, and misery which is a slow death. How do we get free from living like this?

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<sup>2</sup> As Spirit people we can be tempted with any of these thoughts and feelings, but we live free from their domination. As we recognize that Christ, is our real life, as well as acknowledge these flesh temptations as from Satan, then acceptance and faith replaces striving and fear as the light of the truth swallows up the darkness.

You can't get out of the Kingdom of the Middle Ground, which is really your old consciousness while you were in Satan,<sup>3</sup> until you can agree with God and say by faith that *"you are dead"* (Col. 3:3) to the old life in Satan, and alive in Christ, who is your new life (Col. 3:4).

When Christ died he representing the old you, He *"dead to sin"* (Rom. 6:2) as well as *"dead to the law"* (Rom. 7:4) on your behalf. You are joined to Christ and are "dead to sin," because Christ was made sin on your behalf (II Corinthians 5:21) therefore you were made the righteousness of Christ.

The Bible says that "in Christ" we also are dead to the outer law. The Law presupposes that you have the power in yourself to overcome and resist evil by trying to keep *good* outer standards. When we know that we are dead to the Law, then we will experience human powerlessness to overcome these satanic temptations. Knowing that "you are dead" (Col. 3:3) is a tremendous key to liberation. Ask yourself, what can a dead person do? Can you keep the law? Can you be righteous? Can you sin? Can you resist evil? The obvious answer is No! A dead person can do nothing. Exactly! Jesus in us is the doer and keeper of the law; Jesus in us is the doer of righteous; Jesus in us is the person who can resist evil and keeps us from sin. See how important it is to know that you are dead? When you know that you are dead then the law has no hold on you.

The Law doesn't die, you die to the ability to respond to it. "He that is dead is freed from sin" (Rom. 6:7). Since the power of sin is the

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<sup>3</sup>After the new birth, you do not still have the old nature, however, we still have the old consciousness thought-patterns. That is why the Bible tells us to be transformed by renewing our minds to the truth of the Mind of Christ .

law (I Cor. 15:56), then when there is no outer law to abide by, there is no sin. How can that be? The essence of sin is the opposite of being dead, it is an alive self with the power to resist evil and be good apart from God. It is a separate self that believes that it can keep the law by its own power.

How can you know these truths about yourself when you don't think or feel dead? You are not what you think, or feel, you are who God says you are. What does God say about you, and who are you? You are not you, you are the bodily form of Christ, Himself (I Cor. 12:12; Gal. 2:20). The Bible tells us that we are transformed by renewing our minds to the truth (Rom. 12:2). Therefore, here is your true confession of faith:

*"I have been justified--completely forgiven and made righteous" (Rom. 5:1). "I have redemption through the cleansing blood" (Col. 1:14). "I have been saved and set apart according to God's grace" (II Tim. 1:9, Tit. 3:5). "I have been redeemed and forgiven all my sins. The debt against me has been canceled" (Col. 1:14). "I died with Christ and died to the power of sin's rule over my life" (Rom. 6:1-6). "I am free forever from condemnation" (Rom. 8:1). "I am dead to sin and Alive to God; now recognize it is so" (Rom. 6:11). "I have received the Spirit that I might know what I freely have" (I Cor. 2:12). "I have the mind of Christ" (I Cor. 2:16). "I have been bought with a price; I am not my own" (I Cor. 6:19). "I have been established, anointed and sealed by God in Christ. I have been given the Holy Spirit as a pledge guaranteeing my inheritance" (II Cor. 6:19, Eph. 1:13,14). "Since I am dead, I no longer live for myself, but to Christ" (II Cor. 5:14,15). "I have been made righteous" (II Cor. 5:2) "I have been crucified with Christ and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. The life I am now living is Christ living in me" (Gal. 2:20). "I have been blessed with every spiritual blessing" (Eph. 1:3). "I was chosen in Christ before the*

*foundation of the world to be holy and am without blame before Him" (Eph. 1:4). "I was predestined—determined by God—to be adopted as God's son" (Eph. 1:5). "I have been raised up and seated with Christ in heaven" (Eph. 2:6). "I have direct access to God through the Spirit" (Eph. 2:18). "I have been made alive together with Christ" (Eph. 2:5). "I may approach God with boldness, freedom, and confidence" (Eph. 3:12). "I have been rescued from the domain of Satan's rule and transferred to the Kingdom of Christ" (Col. 1:13). "Christ Himself is in me" (Col. 1:27). "I am dead to the 'I should's' and the 'I ought to's' of the law" (Rom 7:4). "I have been spiritually circumcised. My old regenerate nature has been removed" (Col.2:11). "I have been made complete in Christ" (Col. 2:10). "I died with Christ and I have been raised up with Christ. My life is now hidden with Christ in God. Christ is now my life" (Col. 3: 1-4). "I have been given a spirit of power, love and self-discipline" (II Tim. 1: 7). "Because I am sanctified and am one with the Sanctifier, He is not ashamed to call me His brother" (Heb. 2:11). "I have been given exceedingly great and precious promises by God through which I am a partaker of God's divine nature" (II Pet. 1:4). "I have the right to come boldly before the throne of God to find mercy and grace in time of need" (Heb. 4:16).*

Colossians is very clear in instructing us not to lie to ourselves, or one another. *"Since you then be risen with Christ seek those things which are above" (Col. 3:1), and "lie not one to another, seeing that you have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col. 3:9-10).* These passages are admonishing us to say the truth about ourselves and not live in the lie concerning our true identity in Christ.

The human cannot produce the power to overcome the fleshly mind where the devil voice is heard, but we humans can put our faith

in the One, Jesus Christ, who is the power and has already overcome in us, the flesh (Ga. 5:24), the devil (Heb. 2:14), and the world (Gal. 6:14 & I John 5:4-5). Take it by faith, and see the Spirit put to death all these "Middle Ground" lies (Rom. 8:13).

We learn through the analogy of "*Slaves*" and "*Branches*" that we never exercise any kind of *in between life* as self-operators. We experience these symptoms simply because we are living in a false kingdom. There is no such kingdom unless we believe the lies voiced there. If we do believe the lies, it becomes a reality in us even though it is a lie and a delusion.

We are slaves of either one (Satan/sin) (Rom. 6:17) or the other (righteousness/Christ) (Rom. 6:18), but we never, never have had a life of our own doing some good and some bad. That is the insidious lie, and a vast human delusion permeating our minds, and therefore putting us squarely into Satan's hands.

There is no "YOU" with an in-between life of your own. That "YOU" is Satan disguised as you, and not the new creation you joined to Christ. God is calling us to rise out of the Middle Ground and He wants to lift us up to live on the Higher Ground of Spirit reality and Spirit identity.