

THE SENSE OF LIFE

How can we know when we are in the presence of God? God is light, and when we are in the presence of God, we can sense the light. Not only do we sense the inner flowing but also the inner shining, which comes only through the fellowship of life. This is not a doctrine but an explanation of our experience. If we cannot say Amen to these experiences, then I am afraid there is something wrong with us. This is exactly what we should have experienced since the day of our salvation, although we may not have been able to explain it. Allow me to repeat: something within us is moving and flowing, and when we are in the flow, we are simply in the presence of God. Then we have the shining within us, and everything is in the light. We are clear about all things—whether this is right or wrong, whether this is the will of God or not, whether this is something of death or of life. All things are made clear by the inner sense.

The sense of life, therefore, is very much related to the fellowship of life. The fellowship of life helps us to realize the sense of life by bringing us into the presence of God, where we may enjoy the shining of God as light. This shining makes us clear about everything. It penetrates into every corner and avenue of our being, bringing to us a very tender and keen sense. A slight mistake is immediately detected by this sense. The more we have the flowing of life, the more we are in the presence of God, and the more shining we will experience. The more we experience this shining, the more we will realize a keen and tender sense. It is by this sense that we can know God, His will, and His way. This sense searches and tests everything.

Furthermore, this inward sense of life always depends upon the degree of our inward relationship with the Lord. When we set our mind on the flesh, as we have pointed out in Romans 8:6, we are simply setting the self on the flesh. To set the mind on the flesh means that our self is cooperating with the flesh, and if we cooperate with the flesh, our relationship with God, of course, is wrong. Remember the three concentric circles illustrating the three parts of man. The flesh is the body (outer circle) changed in nature through Satan's corruption. The mind is in the soul (middle circle), representing our human being, the self. The Triune God dwells in the spirit (center circle). The mind, located between the flesh and the spirit, has the possibility of moving in either direction. Never forget Romans 8:6; it is one of the most important verses in the Scriptures. In a sense it is even more important than John 3:16. If we only remember John 3:16 and forget Romans 8:6, we are a poorly saved Christian; we could never be a victorious Christian. John 3:16 is adequate for us to receive eternal life, but Romans 8:6 points out how to be a victorious Christian.

To set our mind—that is, to set our self—on the flesh is death. To set our mind, or our self, on the spirit is life and peace. Here is the key to death or life. The mind is quite neutral; it is on the fence. It may turn toward the flesh, or it may turn toward the spirit. Again, the story of the garden of Eden must be repeated. The free will can make either of two choices. To choose the tree of knowledge means death, but to choose the tree of life means life. We are between these two; we are neutral to life and death. The issue depends on our choice, our attitude. Personified sin, representing Satan, is in the flesh; the Triune God is in the spirit after we are saved; and the self is in the mind. The secret of life or death is dependent upon our cooperating with the spirit or with the flesh. When we cooperate with the flesh, we have death; when we cooperate with the spirit, we are partakers of God, who is life.

Sensing the Taste of Death

How do we know that we have death? We know by sensing it. Death gives us a certain kind of inward sense. One such sense is that of emptiness. We sense death when we feel empty within. Another sense that death gives us is a sense of darkness. When we sense darkness within us, we have death. Death also gives us the feeling of uneasiness, which includes restlessness and disturbance. This is a sense of nothing soothing within us, a sense of everything within being in a state of friction—no peace, no rest, no comfort, no calm. Another sense of death is weakness. Often we say, "I cannot bear it any longer." This indicates that we are weak. We have no strength, no

force, no weight to stand against our frustrations. Finally, death gives us the sense of depression, oppression, or suppression—all these “-pressions”! Because we are weak, it is easy for us to be depressed. Why? It is because our mind is set on the flesh, which results in death. Emptiness, darkness, uneasiness, weakness, and depression—all these are the tastes of the sense of death. We know death within when we sense the emptiness, the darkness, the uneasiness, the weakness, and the depression. This kind of sense proves that we are in the flesh and standing with the flesh.

But this sense of death really comes from the sense of life. Suppose a person is truly dead, a corpse. He would not have any sense of emptiness, darkness, uneasiness, and so forth, because he does not have life. But if he has life within, though the life may be sickly and weak, he still has a certain sense of emptiness and darkness. He is able to sense all these things because he is still a living person. As a living person, he is contacting death, and it is the life within him that gives him the death sense. One of the functions and purposes of the sense of life is to sense the taste of death.

Sensing the Taste of Life and Peace

The sense of death, however, is only something negative. On the positive side there is the sense of life and peace. What is the sense, the taste, of life and peace? First of all, in contrast with emptiness, there is satisfaction and fullness. We sense that we are satisfied with the Lord. We are full in His presence, neither thirsty nor hungry. Second, we sense light, the opposite of darkness. Along with our inward satisfaction we have the light shining within us. Every corner and every avenue of our being are full of light. Every part is transparent; nothing is opaque. Then, in contrast to uneasiness, we have peace, which soothes all our disturbances. Peace with rest, peace with comfort, peace with ease, is the sense within us. There is no feeling of friction or controversy. Strength versus weakness is another taste of the sense of life. We feel the full strength and power of life. There is a living dynamo within us, and it seems as if there is not only one motor but four motors. Sometimes we feel the horsepower of a million horses. There is a real strengthening within us that overcomes all our weakness. We do not care about the long face of our spouse. If our spouse disagrees with us, we will say Hallelujah. Our spouse will not upset us and cause us to lose our temper, for we are strong. We are not light and weak; we are weighty and full of power. Nothing can turn us upside down. Praise the Lord! This is the inner sense of life and peace. Finally, in contrast with depression we have liberty. Through the flowing of life we are not only liberated but also transcendent above all oppression. Nothing can suppress us. The more the depression comes, the more we are in the heavenlies.

This is how we perceive life and peace. We simply perceive them by sensing them, and we sense them because we have life. This life within us is a flowing life. Through the flowing of life we are living and in the presence of God. Therefore, we have the deep, inward sense that we are satisfied, enlightened, strengthened, comforted, uplifted, liberated, and transcendent. The more we are in the fellowship of life, the more we will sense the life; and the more we sense life, the more we will enjoy the increased fellowship of life. These two are always experienced in cycles—that is, the more fellowship of life, the more sense of life; the more sense of life, the more fellowship of life. This is wonderful. Praise the Lord!

The fellowship and sense of life are by-products of resurrection. The main riches of resurrection are God Himself, Christ as life, the divine nature, the law of life, and the anointing of the Holy Spirit. From these riches issue the secondary but practical things: the fellowship of life and the sense of life.