Six Secrets to the Christian Life

Introduction – Summary and Review

**Secret #1** – The Christian Life is the Miracle of Resurrection

 Believe Believe

 Eternal Life New Life Dead Body

 Christ in You Dead Body Righteousness

 New Life His Spirit Life

How?

**Secret #2** – The Christian Life is the Miracle of Transformation

-- Life

 Continues Faith Dead Body

Unveiled Faith

His Power



 **Transformation**

 **Process**

**Secret #3** – The Christian Life is Coming to be in Experience What We are Already in Our Innermost Being.

Continues Faith

Unveiled Faith Conformed to His Image

Double Image



**No Sin**

 We See What We See Ourselves

We Truly Are and the Lord Jesus Christ

Continues Faith Cheerful Doer Legalism

Unveiled Faith

 Law of Liberty Obligation



 Delights in the

Commandments

“have to” -- Obligations versus Liberty – “get to”

Reading and Studying the Bible

Prayer and Fasting

Church Attendance

Giving / Tithing

Cloths, Housing, Transportation

Benefits and Consequences

 “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.” (Galatians 6:7-8)

**Secret #4** – The Christian Life is Living with Our Hearts Open to God’s Truth.



Repent

 The Light Walk in

 Darkness

 Fellowship No Fellowship

 Exposes Sin No Exposure

 Forgiveness No Forgiveness

 Confession Denial of Sin

 Example: Laodicea Church

Prayer -- If We Ask

1 John 5:14-15

“Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.”

Me Prayer

“If we want something and we ask God for it in faith, believing it is His will, then we know He hears us, He is then obligated to give us what we want.”

Question: How Can I know what is according to His will?

Answer: We can know it from His Word.

Context – God’s “commandments are not burdensome” (5:3a)

In the last verse of chapter four God commands us to love our brothers/sisters in Christ.

“And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.” (4:21)

In the first verse of chapter 5 John identifies who our “brother” is, who we are to love. That brother is anyone and everyone who “believes that Jesus is the Christ”.

“Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God…” (5:1)

Question: How can the believer **know** when he keeps this apparently difficult command? (Some Christians are not easy to love!)

Answer: It is **not** when we “feel” a certain way toward other Christians. We know we are loving our brother “when we love God and keep His commandments” (5:2)

Question: How do we know when “we love God”?

Answer: By keeping His commandments.

Question: Is loving my brother **hard**?

Answer: John assures the readers, “It is not hard to love your brother”, for “His commandments are not burdensome” (5:3b). This is contrary to popular belief, “God’s commandments are a great burden”.

John gives **the reason** God’s commandments are not burdensome in (5:4a), “For whatever is born of God overcomes the world,” Our **new birth** was by faith in Jesus Christ and a victory over the world.

The world is a system dominated by Satan (5:19) He creates a world that is hostile to faith in Christ. Whenever anyone believes in Christ he is born of God and overcomes the world.

“And this is the victory that has overcome the world -- our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? (5:4-5)

What John has written in this section (5:6-12) is designed to reassure the readership that their faith has truly brought them eternal life. He has two aims,

“These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, **that you may know that you have eternal life**, and **that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God**.” (5:13)

If they had already believed in Christ for eternal life as a present possession then what is meant by the words, “that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.” The answer is given in the follow verse (5:14)

Jesus instructed his disciples to pray in His name (Jn. 14:13-14; 15:26; 16:23-24). They believed in the effectiveness of His name to bring eternal life, and they can also **continue** to believe in the effectiveness (efficacy) of His name in prayer.

The effectiveness of that prayer depends on asking **according to His will**.

Question: What is His will?

Answer: His commandments.

Question: How do we do His will, and keep His commandments?

Answer: By praying that **God will enable** us to keep those commandments, i.e.: to love my brother. At this point the burden is now God’s and He is more than able to produce in us the obedience that we ask in His Son’s name.

Thus, by faith we are victorious over the world again, whenever we keep His commandments as a result of our continual faith by asking Him to enable us in prayer.

We overcome the world initially when we receive eternal life by faith in His Name and we overcome the world when we receive the necessary assistance we need to keep His commandments, to love one another, by continual faith in His Name.

[We should expect a period of time could be involved. The work of God’s Spirit in transforming us is a process that proceeds from stage to stage. It is a process of growth and maturation (2 Pt. 3:18; Eph. 4:14-15). God does not “zap” us with maturity. We must be prepared to “wait on the Lord”. We must let Him work in us in His own way and in His own time.]

Christian living is a resurrection miracle produced by the power of the Holy Spirit. It is He who transforms us as He enables us to see the “glory of the Lord” in the Scriptures. It is He who teaches us to see in the Word the true “face of our birth”. Without the Spirit’s power we can accomplish nothing. It follows that we should then ask God to work this transformation in us. We should not be self-confident or too proud to ask for help. The fact is no Christian can live effectively without prayer.

**Secret #5** – **The Christian life is an answer to prayer.**

A Spiritual Mindset

We have consider the role of the Holy Spirit, the Word of God and prayer in the transformation process in the Christian life in bring us into conformity to the image of God. We will now look at how these three crucial factors work together in our daily life.

Romans 8:5-6

“For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.”

You do not live according to the Spirit by attempting to **stop** to doing the things of the flesh. But rather you stop living according to the flesh by living according to the Spirit, and by setting your mind on spiritual things.

Life and Death

The Christian life is lived with the understanding that in Christ our old self/nature died and a new self was raised in newness of life. (Rom. 6:3-4). Therefore, Christians should consider (think about the fact) that they are spiritually dead to sin in their inward being, but alive to God,

“…reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (6:11)

Remember that we should know that “whoever is born of God **does not sin**;” (1 John 5:18) in his inner being. The body/flesh, though alive physically, remains spiritually dead, and unresponsive to the good desires of our new spirit. Only the Holy Spirit also now indwelling our new spirit can become victorious over the deadness of the physical bodies (8:11) and give us life and peace,

“For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.” (Romans 8:6)

Death and life are our **spiritual options**, which are the outcome of two opposite mindsets (8:6).

A **Fleshly mind** thinks a lot about sinful things. This is “the flesh’s way of thinking”.

**The Word** can identify this way of thinking, living and doing things that are essentially fleshly in nature. But this carnal way of life is something that we can learn to lay aside “piece by piece” as a Christian mindset develops and matures (Rom. 12 :1-2)

**Two options** for the Christian, to be spiritually minded or carnally minded. It’s important to note that the Christian life can be attempted in a “canal” say. But this will only end in frustration, defeat and death.

**Note:** The carnal mind will never be completely or permanently conquered until the physical bodies dies. Even if we establish a spiritual mindset the carnal mind can always reassert itself.

The Spiritual Mind

The secret to victory in the Christian life is a spiritual mindset, “to be spiritually minded”. A spiritual mind thinks a lot about spiritual things. This is “**the Spirit’s way of thinking**” -- And “the Spirit’s way of thinking” is to **think of Jesus Christ** as our Savior and Lord. The Spirit uses “the glory of the Lord” as the means of transforming us into His spiritual likeness (2 Corinthians 3:18). This is expressed in a somewhat different form in Romans 6:3-4,

“Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, **even so** we also should walk in newness of life.”

Paul says the resurrection of Jesus is attributed to “the glory of the Father” and also suggest (with the words “even so”) that we can “walk in newness of life” **by the same means**. The glory of the Father who raised Christ also enables us to live “in newness of life”. This new lifestyle is in some sense a “resurrection”.

The “**glory of the Father**” is revealed in His Son. That glory can only be seen in the Word of God, shown to us by the Holy Spirit. This mindset is created by what the Spirit shows us in the Word.

“It follows from this, therefore, that a spiritual mindset shaped by our **Spirit**-led exposure to “the glory of the **Father**” revealed in **Jesus Christ** is the means by which our spiritual dead bodies are “resurrected” and become the vehicles through which “we walk in newness of life”. (Hodge, p. 68)

Or in terms of 2 Corinthians 3:18, we are transformed into the image of Jesus Christ “from glory to glory… by the Spirit of the Lord.

How It Actually Works -- How to Acquire a Spiritual Mindset – Essentials



 The Word -- Where we encounter “glory”

 Holy Spirit -- Our Change Agent

 Prayer -- Ask for the Spirit’s transforming work

 Spiritually Minded

Regular reading, meditation, and memorization is helpful, not regimentation. **God’s Word** should have a significant role in our daily life.

The **Holy Spirit** is needed for illumination/understanding of God’s Word. Only the Spirit can apply the Word to me the transforming power of the glory.

We need **prayer** in order to ask God to transform us by His Spirit.

**Will it Work?** – YES! – If we ask anything according to His will, He hears us (5:14). Transformation is God’s will for us. And He will do it through His Word and by His spirit.

With a spiritual mindset we learn to thick about God, about ourselves, about the world, and about sin from God’s perspective. This is more than just correct doctrine. It means truly sharing God’s point of view.

When we see sin His way, totally abhorrent, personally harmful and a spiritually destructive form of behavior, then I am thinking in God’s way. Only then is it possible to “**stop it**”.

**Secret #6** – **The Christian Life is the product of a spiritual mindset.**

**Conclusion**

**Secret #1** – The Christian Life is the miracle of resurrection

**Secret #2** – The Christian Life is the miracle of transformation

**Secret #3** – The Christian Life is coming to be in experience what we are already in our innermost being.

**Secret #4** – The Christian Life is living with our hearts open to God’s Truth.

**Secret #5** – The Christian life is an answer to prayer.

**Secret #6** – The Christian Life is the product of a spiritual mindset.