

# The Life-Side of the Cross

by Jessie Penn-Lewis

---

*The life-side of the Cross is about balancing the 'negative' and 'positive' sides of the Cross, abiding in Christ, and being rooted in Him, in order to experience the fullness of the Spirit and to stand firm against the wiles of the devil.*

**Scripture:** Romans 6:10, Colossians 2:12

**Topics:** "Spiritual Warfare", "Balance of Death and Life in Christ"

---

## Description

Jessie Penn-Lewis emphasizes the inseparable connection between the death and resurrection of Christ, urging believers to maintain a balance between the 'negative' aspect of dying to sin and the 'positive' aspect of living in the power of the resurrection. She explains that true Christian life is rooted in being 'in Christ Jesus', where believers experience the severance of their old nature and the impartation of new life through the Holy Spirit. The sermon highlights the importance of understanding the Word of God as a spiritual weapon that divides soul and spirit, enabling believers to live victoriously against spiritual adversaries. Penn-Lewis calls for Christians to recognize their position in Christ and to actively engage in spiritual warfare, relying on God's strength to overcome the forces of darkness. Ultimately, she encourages believers to be rooted in Christ, drawing from His life to fulfill their calling in service and battle against evil.

---

## Transcript

"Raised with Him."Colossians 2: 12

Dr. MABIE says in one of his books: "in the thought of Scripture the reconciling death, and resurrection, have always been taken together. They are inseparable parts of a real Unity-TWIN PARTS OF ONE FACT". This is a very clear statement and true, but in experience, and in teaching, the danger lies in not giving the 'twin parts' equal balance. This affects the practical results in the life, for you cannot have the 'positive' life-power without the negative death-application. If there is too much 'negative', that is death-then there is too little 'positive' in the practical life. If you overemphasize the 'positive', the 'life' of the resurrection-then you do not get sufficient 'negative' of the death-application to deal with the old-Adam life, which is in the way of the new-creation, and has to be dealt with by the 'death' making room for the Christ-life. Therefore the two should have equal emphasis, and, so to speak, run together in the Christian life-death and life, Calvary and the resurrection-'twin parts of one fact'.

Let me repeat again: In the experience of the believer, it is exactly in proportion to the experimental apprehension, and co-working of the Spirit of God in applying the 'negative' side of 'death with Christ', that he gets the actual, experimental, and 'positive' impartation of the power of the resurrection. The two sides of these truths should evenly run together. It is for lack of seeing this that there are so many one-sided Christians. They are either so 'negative', by dwelling much on the 'death' side, that they have no activity of life; or, they

are so anxious to avoid the 'negative'-the over-emphasis on 'death'-that they dwell too much upon the 'positive' side of life, and in experience are in danger of calling the old life of nature, the life of the resurrection. We have need of the balance, so as to obtain a real impartation of the life of God. But it is so 'human' to go to extremes! It is only as we know the danger, and rely upon God to guard us, that we can be kept spiritually sober, and balanced in truth. When we are conscious of the difficulties of it on account of our human limitations, we are less dogmatic in our statements to others about ourselves and our 'views'. We can always be sure of all that is plainly written in the Word of God, but not always so sure that we personally have the full knowledge of the meaning of His Word.

Now let us turn again to Romans 6 and see in verses 10 and 11 how it gives not only what we may call the death-side of the Cross, but the key to the life-side of our union with Christ in His resurrection. "He died once, and once only, unto sin; but He lives [for ever] unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but living unto God IN CHRIST JESUS." In the three words "IN Christ Jesus" we have the key to the life of union with the Risen Lord. We have died with Christ on the Cross, so that we may 'live unto God' in another sphere altogether, 'IN Christ Jesus'.

If you look at verse 13 it reads: "Give yourselves to God, as being restored to life from the dead, and your members to His service as instruments. . . ." Now what does it mean to be "in Christ Jesus" on the resurrection side of the Cross? Turn to Romans 7: 4; "You ... were made dead to the Law, by [union with] the body of Christ; that you might be married to another, even to Him who was raised from the dead". In the margin of Schofield's Bible the word is 'joined'. 'Dead' is the 'negative' side of the truth of death; 'joined' to the Risen Lord is the 'positive' side of the truth. Twin parts of one fact. Therefore there is no impartation of His Risen life apart from Himself. Moreover the 'joining' is a joining of spirit. 'He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit' (I Corinthians 6: 17) not one soul. Therefore the 'negative' side of death with Christ means practically a breaking away, or severing, or cutting away, of that which prevents the joining of your spirit to the Risen Christ. The experimental outcome of the Cross is really a releasing of the spirit. It was held, so to speak, in the grip of the soul and of the 'flesh'. It was so entangled in the life of nature that it could not be fully joined to Him Who is a quickening Spirit. But how is the 'cutting away' done? How does the Spirit of God apply the Cross, and bring about the death-severance whereby the spirit is free to be joined to Christ?

This we find in Hebrews 4: 12- "The Word of God liveth and worketh, and is sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit. . . ." Here we have a dividing and something that is immaterial and intangible. The 'Word' therefore is a spiritual weapon, acting like a sword in the spiritual sphere-as a sword cuts in the material realm-and actually 'dividing' immaterial things. That part of the Word that does this is the Word of the Cross, 'dividing' soul from spirit, first by giving the believer the distinctions between the two, and secondly, severing the two as the believer yields to the operation of the 'Word of the Cross' telling of the death with Christ.

It also says that the 'Word' discerns and reveals the thoughts, because "all things are naked and opened in the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do". Notice that it is the Lord Himself using the sword to cut away the old life Him, with Whom we have to do. He alone knows how to wield the 'sword of the Spirit', which will 'cut' like a knife, so that the spirit is severed or 'disentangled', as an old writer says, "from the embrace of the soul"!

This is all psychologically and experimentally true. In Dr. Andrew Murray's "Spirit of Christ", he gives in the Appendix a very clear explanation of the dividing of soul and spirit which has to be done in the believer. He explains how man fell from the 'spirit' dominating his whole being, into the soul, and then again how the soul sank down into the flesh, so that at last God said of man "He is become flesh". He descended from spirit to soul, and from soul to 'flesh'. The spirit of man, says Dr. Murray, is that in us which is capable of knowing God-spirit-consciousness. The soul is the seat of the self-consciousness, and the body the seat of sense consciousness. An understanding of simple Bible psychology is necessary for any apprehension of the full life of victory through the atoning work of our Lord Jesus Christ. There is more to be dealt with in us than what we call 'sin', and more than 'sin' which prevents our full knowledge of God.

Now to know in real experience the life side of the Cross, we must know not only death to sin, but the Word of the Cross severing between 'soul' and 'spirit', so that the spirit is liberated to be joined to the Risen Lord. Then through the channel of your spirit, "joined to the Lord one spirit", the quickening life of Him Who is a quickening Spirit comes into the 'soul' in resurrection power. For the 'soul' is not destroyed, nor is the individuality of the believer destroyed. We do not become automatons, but the 'soul'-the personality-should be animated from the spirit, instead of from the lower realm of the life of nature. We may say the same words, perform the same acts, but with a different source of animating life at the back of them.

When the spirit is thus 'one spirit' with the Risen Lord, it is via the spirit, into the mind, we experience the leadings of the Spirit, and intimate knowledge of the personal Christ. It is through our spirits joined to Him by the Holy Spirit, that we 'know' Him personally-for the whole purpose of the truth is that we should KNOW Him, as well as the power of His resurrection.

Now turn to Colossians 2:6-7 for more light on the meaning of the words, "In Christ Jesus". "As, therefore, you first received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him." When we first 'received' Christ, by a simple act of faith, we were put into Him by the operation of the spirit of God. Christ is in us, and our spirits are joined to Him as the Risen One, but we are also to abide 'In Him' as a sphere in which we are to walk day by day. As we began, so we are to continue-simply trusting and relying upon Him, and abiding IN Him. The life side of the Cross means to be 'alive' to God-'In Christ Jesus'

"Having in Him your root," continues the Apostle. You cannot be 'rooted' in one place to-day, and in another place the next. Therefore see to your roots. "Having in Him your root." "Thou bearest not the root, but the root thee"! "And in Him the foundation whereon you are continually built up, persevering steadfastly in your faith. . . ." This clearly shows the need of our understanding the Cross as the basic position from which we must never be moved. It is into His death that we are to be rooted. We cannot ever pass on into a life where we get past the Cross, or advance to any goal, leaving the Cross behind. To do so is like a 'tree' refusing to 'root' itself into the ground. We are to reckon ourselves 'dead indeed unto sin' and living unto God, but it is 'IN CHRIST JESUS'. 'In Him' we must be 'rooted', and 'in Him' have our 'foundation', whereon we are continually to be built up; i.e., we must ever be striking our roots deeper into His death.

Let us go back just here to John 3: 16, and see how the being 'In Christ Jesus' began at the initial stage of our new life. The words read, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth into Him" should have life. Why the translators of the Bible into English have used the word 'on' instead of 'into', I do not know. We do not merely believe 'on' Christ, but we believe into Him. Newberry says, that the word 'into' in the original has in it the thought of motion and thus is very suggestive, i.e., as you 'believe into' Christ, you are taken in by the coercion of the Holy Spirit. And Calvary is the place where this is done. The Lord Christ preached His own Cross at the beginning of His ministry. He told Nicodemus of the necessity of the new birth and told him of His forthcoming death that sinners might have life. He said in John 3: 14,15, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth into Him should ... have eternal life". We are put 'into' Him in His death, and then 'into' Him in His life, on the resurrection side of the Cross, "having in Him your root"! Therefore "persevere steadfastly in your faith . . ." i.e., when you first received Christ Jesus the Lord, you believed into Him, now stay in Him, be rooted in Him, have your foundation in Him, have all your spirit life built up in Him.

Now turn to Colossians 2: 9- 1 1. "IN Him dwells all the fulness"! It is as we abide in Him we get the 'fulness' of the Spirit. You say, "Oh, I want to be filled with the fulness of God"! Yes, but you can only hold, shall we say, a 'teacup' full! Paul puts it quite another way-"In Him you have your fulness"! You have died with Him, now joined in spirit to Him, abide in Him, and you are in an ocean of life. "In Him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead in bodily form, and in Him you have your fulness; for He is the Head of all Principalities and Powers. In Him, also, you were circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, even the off-casting of the whole body of the flesh." The 'flesh' cannot be taken 'into Him'. It must be 'cast off'. "For with Him you were buried in your baptism [into death], wherein also you were made partakers of His resurrection, through the faith wrought in you by God, Who raised Him from the dead." Here again are the 'twin parts of one fact'.

The severing work of the Cross takes place as we abide in Him; the cutting off of the 'flesh', even the "off-casting of the whole body of the flesh" takes place as we abide in Him. It is a 'circumcision' which is done without human hands, for it is wrought by the Holy Ghost as the believer consents, and trusts Him, to carry out in him the full work of the Cross of Christ. It is the Spirit of God who baptizes us into the death of Christ, and gives the believer the power to cast off all the 'body of the flesh', and to carry this out in detail, so that he may live according to God in the Spirit,

Now let us see two or three verses for the practical outworking in the life. "Whosoever, then, is in Christ, is a new creation; his old being has passed away, and behold, all has become new" (2 Corinthians 5: 17). "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision is anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation" (Galatians 6: 15)- 'In Christ' nothing is made to depend upon any external thing. 'In Christ Jesus' nothing avails, nothing is of any use, nothing is of any account, but a new creation. Going into the sphere of Christ, we leave outside the 'old'. Abiding in Him, we may conform to the externalities of religious things, but you do not rely upon them, or place undue emphasis upon them, or ever allow them to become a cause of division between you and other children of God. Thus you will never find a child of God that you cannot get into spirit touch with, for you will always recognize that you have one life in the Lord.

Now turn to Ephesians 2: 4-6. "God Who is rich in mercy, because of the great love wherewith He loved us even when we were dead in sin, called us to share the life of Christ.... And in Christ Jesus, He raised us up with Him from the dead and seated us with Him in the heavens." In Christ is our root and our foundation, from which we must never move, but here we see the outcome of that death position. joined to Him in

spirit we are seated with Him in spirit 'in the heavens'. "Crucified with Him," we are called to share His life, "for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Colossians 3: 3) Resurrection power is uplifting power. Joined to the Risen One it can lift your spirit up, and keep it 'far above all' in Christ, however deeply it may have been 'down' under the bondage of the flesh, or mingled with the life of nature of the soul—we are 'seated with Him in the heavens' by union with Him Who on His ascension 'sat down'. joined to Him, He holds us as we abide and rest in Him.

Now finally as to the 'life-side of the Cross' in service. Let us turn to the sixth chapter of Ephesians, verse 10. It is to those who are 'in Christ' as set forth in the early chapters of the Epistle, that the Apostle now opens up spiritual service and warfare. He begins this closing passage, this summing up of the life he had been describing, with the word 'Finally'. "Finally ... let your hearts be strengthened in the Lord, and in the conquering power of His might. . . ." The Lord Christ, Paul said in chapter one, is above the Principalities and the Powers. He is not under them, and the believer is also seated with Him 'far above'. Now, let such a one be strengthened in the Lord, be confident, be sure, know for certain the position of victory, and be strong in the conquering power of His might.

Also, in this place of assured victory, "Put on the whole armour of God" (verse 11). You know your position, now be established there, and put on the armour of God, "that you may be able to stand". But you were 'seated' a moment ago! Yes, you cannot 'fight' external foes if you have a conflict within! You must be 'sitting down' inside! If you lose your inward peace you are at the mercy of the devil. For conquering warfare the believer must have the inward calm of God, and be strengthened, established, rooted in Him. Now 'put on the armour' that you may be able to stand.

And why need we 'stand'? Because of 'the wiles of the devil'. This is all his strategy, wiles, methods, planned to get you out of your victorious position. The wiles that you do not see are the most dangerous. They are planned against you from morning to night. You say that you do not want to be thinking about 'evil spirits' all the time? But they will be thinking of you. You are only called to think about them to the end that you may be on the alert in perpetual prayer. The knowledge that they are perpetually planning to ensnare you, drives you nearer to God in prayer that their wiles do not succeed. As you do this your eyes will be opened to see their wiles, and you will keep steady and quiet when you discern them at work upsetting things in your home, to draw you out of your place in God.

"Stand firm against the wiles of the devil, for the adversaries with whom we wrestle are not flesh and blood." It is strange, in the face of this, how God's people perpetually see only 'flesh and blood' as the cause of the conflict, and trouble in their lives. They will not recognize that there are spiritual foes. Or if they see some other cause than the flesh and blood, at the back of circumstantial troubles, they put all down to the 'will of God'. By some means or other, they will ignore the supernatural powers of evil. In the one case they have friction with the ones who injure them, or in the latter they submit, as they think, to the 'will of God', and become actual victims of the forces of Satan attacking and seeking to injure every child of God. They do not know how to discern between what is really of God, and what is of Satan. The Apostle says, our real adversaries are not flesh and blood. These spiritual foes are in the aerial heavens. They roam in the air around our planet, seeking to do all the evil that they can. It is very manifest just now in Britain—not to speak of other lands. These powers are working upon the people in an intensified form, and arousing the fallen Adam in them. The wave of Spiritism has much to do with it. It is not possible to have thousands of people communicating with demons, under the deception of speaking with their dead relatives, without these demons influencing the atmosphere of the whole country.

Our adversaries are not flesh and blood, but they are princes -"The Principalities, and the Powers, and the Sovereigns of this present darkness". We have three hierarchic ranks of Satan's governmental powers described here. The 'Princes' set over 'Principalities', the 'Powers' of those who are able to use the resources of the air; and the 'Sovereigns'-the kings or rulers, governing 'this present darkness'. Then last and lowest in rank, are the multitudes of 'spirits of evil in the heavens' who carry out the behests of Satan their chief and the other 'rulers' of their various spheres.

In Daniel 10 the veil is lifted, and we are told about a 'Prince of Persia' and a 'Prince of Grecia' (Daniel 10 13, 20), withstanding the heavenly messengers to Daniel. Is there not a 'Prince of England' and a 'Prince of France'? In every land do not God's people wrestle against the 'Princes' of the Satanic forces?

Then what about the 'Powers' wielding for Satan the forces of the air? What resources they have to carry out their plans! We are only in this century learning about wireless telegraphy, and electricity, but the satanic 'Prince of this World' knew about them-and other 'powers' yet unknown to us centuries ago. This is why 'lies' spread like poisoned gas, and 'truth' has to fight its way. This is why the Bolshevik spirit in Russia is able so quickly to reach Wales and England, and to lay hold of men and inspire them with delusions which, if allowed their way, will wreck others and themselves. There are 'waves' of satanic delusions sent forth by the 'Powers' in the invisible realm, like a wave of electric currents, invisibly spreading, and drawing people under its power. Then there are the 'Sovereigns' of the 'darkness'. The Princes lead the fight like generals (Daniel 10: 13), the 'Powers' wield the forces of the air, but the 'Kings' or rulers govern the darkness. Their work is to plan how to keep people in the dark; to prevent truth and light reaching them-in brief, not only to frustrate the Gospel but to hinder truth and all light that comes from truth, in every way they can. The 'spirits of evil' are the multitudinous hosts of demons swarming about, and carrying out the personal attacks on individuals, for the fulfilling of the world-plans of their Prince.

The standing against the wiles of these, as described in Ephesians 6: 11, is the prelude to the aggressive war against them. The believer 'strong in the Lord', on the defensive against the wiles, is called to the aggressive, and by the wielding of the weapon of Christ's victory over them at Calvary, these foes can all be dislodged and driven from their strongholds, and the plans of their chiefs be frustrated, and broken up. The Apostle says this plainly, and tell us how. "Wherefore," he writes, "take up with you to the battle the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand (Gr. resist) them in the evil day, and HAVING OVERTHROWN THEM ALL, TO STAND UNSHAKEN". This clearly depicts an aggressive advance, with the sure and certain fact that they can be 'overthrown', and by the Lord's children in union with Him. There are 'evil days', when the 'princes' and 'powers' and the 'rulers of the darkness', come and besiege, say for instance, your church. Do not only stand on the defensive and protect yourself, but looking not at 'flesh and blood', go up to that battle with the hosts of darkness, strong in the Lord anchored in Him with the eternal calm of God centred in your being-and 'overthrow' the invisible hosts by the weapon of faith and prayer. Remember God is on the Throne, and when you are centred there in Him, you partake of His strength, 'rooted and fixed in God'. Strong 'in the Lord', you can safely take the aggressive against principalities and powers, and go up to the battle with confidence, because your 'defensive' is sure.

"Having overthrown them all" writes the Apostle, you can then 'stand unshaken'. So there is a 'battle'-a specific onslaught upon you, or upon the church, described as 'the evil day'-and there is an 'overthrow' of that specific attack of the enemy, and then a standing back in God in blessed victory. All this is part of the believer's experience on the 'life-side of the Cross'. He is not only 'joined to the Lord one Spirit' for sharing in His resurrection life, and for victory over sin and the 'flesh', but he is joined to Him, to be sent forth by Him to 'overthrow' the forces of darkness seeking to 'overthrow' the church of God, and to frustrate or

delay the Lord's appearing. The great need of to-day is that the Lord's children should apprehend the call to battle, and rise up in His strength to face the foe. It is not enough to simply 'endure' -crying out "Oh Lord, how long?" The Lord must have those who work with Him to 'overthrow' in glorious victory all the hosts of Satan, hindering his plans, until as victors they are caught away to meet the Lord. Twos and threes meeting together in prayer, can become strategic centres for the overthrow of Satan's onslaughts on the people, and the work of God. If they only know how to 'pray' against the foe! If they only know how to take their stand in God, and wield the weapon of Calvary's victory!

---

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/jessie-penn-lewis/the-life-side-of-the-cross/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**