

# The Secret of Christian Living

by Stephen Kaung

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*The sermon emphasizes that true Christian living is about allowing Christ to live through us, requiring faith, mind renewal, and active pursuit of Him.*

**Duration:** 1:03:33

**Scripture:** Mark 6:30-52, Luke 24:13-35, Romans 12:1-2, Philippians 1:21, Philippians 2:5, Philippians 3:13, Philippians 4:13

**Topics:** "Christian Life"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of living a Christian life and having a renewed mind. He explains that as Christians, we should desire to live like Christ and view the world differently. By consecrating ourselves to the Lord and allowing the Holy Spirit to transform our minds, we can see the world as temporary and the knowledge of Jesus Christ as valuable. The speaker also highlights the need for continual pursuit of Christ and the power He gives us to overcome any circumstance.

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## Transcript

Will you please turn to the Letter to the Philippians. Philippians chapter one, verse twenty-one, the first part. For for me to live is Christ.

Chapter two, verse five, for let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus. Chapter three, verse thirteen, brethren, I do not count to have got possession myself, but one thing, for getting the things behind and stretching out to the things before I pursue. Chapter four, verse thirteen, I have strength for all things in him that gives me power.

May you have a word of prayer. Dear Heavenly Father, as we continue in thy presence, we look to thee that thou wilt open thy word to us. And open us to thy word.

That thy word may really be spirit and life to us. That thou mayst be glorified. We ask in thy precious name.

Amen. Dear brothers and sisters, it is a great joy for me to be here with you all. As I waited before the Lord, I feel led to review with you.

We want to review something that is most fundamental, most essential to our Christian life. What I am thinking is the secret of Christian living. Thank God that he has saved us through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Thank God we are called Christians. Thank God that to all who are redeemed of the Lord, there is a desire to live like Christ. I don't believe that anyone who is redeemed of the Lord does not have such desire.

We all know that to believe in the Lord Jesus is not just an end. We believe that we who believe in him should live according to him. You know in the early days, when the first name Christian was given, it was found in Acts 11, verse 26.

The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch. Because when the gospel was preached in Antioch, many Gentiles, many believed in the Lord. They not only believed in the Lord Jesus as their Savior, but they were also exhorted to continue to abide in the Lord.

And they were being taught to be disciples of Jesus Christ. And only at that time, the world began to realize, here was a people totally different. And they tried to give them a name.

And they gave them the nickname Christian. You know at that time, that name was a mockery. It was the sarcastic way of speaking of that people.

But today, we believe that the word Christian is an honorable name. We do not call ourselves by any other name, but the name of Christian. But dear brothers and sisters, in the beginning when the name was given, the dear brothers and sisters in Antioch, they earned it.

Now, are we today worthy of this name? What prize have we paid for it? And we all know that if we want to be real Christians, it is not just a matter of simply believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, which is great. But to earn that name Christian, we know that we have to live like Christ. Anything that is less than that is unworthy.

And I believe, dear brothers and sisters, we have all tried. And we tried very, very hard. But the more we tried, the more we found it was impossible.

I believe this is something that must be in the heart of every true believer. How can I live like Christ? It is more than just a minute, just more than the thing of believing in him. But to live like him, this is something that is very, very essential and very, very basic to us as Christians.

And as I think of this matter, I'm thinking of the Apostle Paul. You know, of all the letters written by the Apostle Paul, there are two letters that gave us an intimate knowledge of Paul himself. In 2 Corinthians, we find the secret of Paul's ministry.

And in the letter to the Philippians, we find the secret of his living. So this morning, we would like to go into this letter to the Philippians. What is the secret of Christian living? How can we live as a Christian? Actually, the secret is very simple.

You know, when you really come to the truth, it is always simple. It is human beings that make things complicated. We complicate the whole thing.

So this morning, we would like to go to the simplicity that is in Christ. Now let us hear what Paul says. What is the secret of his living as Christian? Very, very simple.

In chapter 1, verse 21, he simply says this. For me, to live is Christ. He doesn't say, I'm Christ.

Far from it. He just says, for me, to live is Christ. If you look at me, yes, I'm Paul.

But the one who lives in Paul is not Paul. It is Christ. Now this is the secret of Christian living.

You know, dear brothers and sisters, we are so complicated. If you hear something simple, you say, how can it be? But that's what it is. How can I live a true Christian life? Nobody can.

If you think you can, you are lost. There is only one person who can live a Christian life. And that person is Christ himself.

But dear brothers and sisters, as you look back to your own experience, have we not all tried to live as a Christian? And we really try very, very hard. But we find it is impossible. Now remember, there is no possibility of anyone other than Christ to live like Christ.

So the wonder of the salvation of the Lord is this. He not only died for us, but He also lived for us. He not only died on the cross 2,000 years ago for us, but even today He lives in each one of us.

Now, what's the sense of living in us if it's not to live? Christ lives in us. Why? To guarantee us for heaven? No. Christ lives in us in order to live through us.

So the secret of Christian living is an open secret. As if he says, if you want to live a Christian life, don't live yourself, but let me live in you and for you. It sounds very simple.

But it doesn't work that simple. Now, how does Paul come to this simplicity that is in Christ? If anyone on this earth who can try to live as a Christian, I think none can surpass Paul. He has such a strong will.

Before he believed in the Lord Jesus, he has manifested that strong will. If he wants anything, he will get it. He will pay any cost for it.

So for Paul, after he was saved to live a Christian life, there seems to be some possibility. But he found it's impossible. Now, how does he come into this simplicity that is in Christ? How does he come that Paul is willing to step aside and let Christ take over? Very simple.

Listen to Galatians 2.20. I am crucified with Christ. No longer live I, but Christ who lives in me. And I now live in the flesh.

Not I. It is my faith. Whose faith? Not my faith. The faith of the Son of God.

Who loves me and gave himself for me. Brothers and sisters, our problem is here. We have believed in the Lord Jesus.

We have a new life. We have Christ in us as life. We are supposed to let Christ live through us.

After we believe in the Lord Jesus, we are supposed no longer to live anymore. But we are supposed to live only by Christ. But it doesn't work that way.

Even though we believe in Christ Jesus, and we know that he lives in us, we know he has the power to do that. But we will not give up. Our old man, our flesh, is so strong.

As we use our flesh to commit sin, now we use our flesh to live like Christ. The whole problem lies with I. Who is to live from now on? Formerly it is I who live. What a mess I have done.

Now I have believed in the Lord Jesus, and he lives in me. But I still struggle to live by I myself. How can we get rid of this I, I, me? I cannot destroy myself.

How can I annihilate this? What should I do? Thank God. When Christ was crucified on the cross, he did something much more than we suppose it was. Not only he bore our sins in his own body, that our sins might be forgiven.

But he took all of us, the old Adam, and crucified it with him on the cross. It is as if he is such a big man. He included all of us into him.

And when he died, we died. I am crucified with Christ. I cannot crucify myself.

This is one thing nobody can do. You can kill yourself, but you cannot crucify yourself. Only God can do it, and he did it in Christ Jesus.

And Paul believed it. He said, I am crucified with Christ. Now if I am crucified with Christ, no longer I. I think this is very clear.

But strangely, I find myself still living. I still live in flesh. So, our appearance seems to be the same.

As I lived before, so I live now. But that's the appearance. The reality is now different.

Because I have been crucified with Christ. No longer I. That I life has been crucified with Christ Jesus. The physical I, the personal I is still here.

But the one who lives in this I is not me anymore. It is Christ who lives in me. So our appearance, I am the same.

But the spiritual reality is heaven and earth different. I live in flesh. But not I. It is Christ who lives in me.

Formerly it was I myself who lived. But now it is Christ who is using me to live. And this is not a matter that you can see with your naked eye.

It is a matter of faith. Because faith is the ability to substantiate something into you and become a living experience. But strangely my faith is weak.

Sometimes I believe. Sometimes I don't. But thank God Paul said I live by faith.

Whose faith? Not my faith. It is by faith of the Son of God. His faith never changes.

Once he did it, it's done. He loves me and gives himself for me. So dear brothers and sisters, it's very simple.

I hope all of us today will leave our complexity and return to the simplicity in Christ. Our Lord Jesus said we have to be childlike. Not childish.

In other words, we have to simply believe what he has done. And he will see to it that it works. So thank and praise God.

We who are here this morning it seems as if everyone is different. But thank God the reality in each one of us is the same. It is Christ who lives in you.

And you can say for me to live is Christ. Everyone can say that. And if you're able to stand on that you'll find the secret of Christian life.

But brothers and sisters, sometimes we want to ask a question. It is true. For me to live is Christ.

But how do I know that it is Christ who lives? So you'll find in chapter 2, verse 5 he said, Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus. You know, this matter of the mind is the key. The way you live is governed by your mind.

If you are earthly minded you become earthly. If you are heavenly minded you live heavenly. Our natural mind is earthly.

It is carnal. It is satanic. And that's the reason why you'll find people in the world live earthly, worldly, fleshly, satanically.

It is our mind that directs our living. You live as you think. You know, the old Greek philosopher says, I know I am because I think.

So our mind is very important. Thank God we have Christ as life in us. But unfortunately we still have an old mind.

So our mind still directs our way in the old traditional way. And that's why the life of Christ within us is not able to break out. Does God make provision for that? Of course he does.

Because he knows us more than we do. His provision is perfect. But there is something that God wants us to cooperate.

For instance, when you believe in the Lord Jesus, you know when Christ died on the cross, for whom did he die? For everyone. His work is able to save everyone ever born to this earth. But why is it not everyone got saved? The reason is some believe, some don't believe.

If you don't believe, you don't get it. It doesn't mean it's not there. It doesn't mean it is not there.

It is there. There. Here he is.

But it doesn't come to you. And the same thing is true. God never does anything against your will.

After he creates us with a free will, he respects it. Therefore, he wants you to cooperate. You know in Romans chapter 12, we all know the book of Romans from chapter 1 to chapter 11.

It shows us the mercies of God. And after all the mercies of God, what does God want us to respond? He said, Brethren, by the mercies of God, I beseech you to present your bodies as living sacrifices. Holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service of spiritual worship.

So after we have received all the mercies of God, his love ought to constrain us. Not only to believe in him, but to present our bodies as living sacrifices to him. Brothers and sisters, why is it we who believe in the Lord Jesus, we say it is all free gift.

It is all grace. Why is it he wants us to present our bodies as living sacrifices? It is not because he's lacking anything. It is still for us because there is so much more for us waiting for us to present our bodies as living sacrifices in order to get into them.

So consecration is the most basic, the first Christian experience. And consecration is not only a door, but it is a way. But every believer, in order to really live a Christian living, not only to receive Christ, but allow Christ to live through him.

You must present your bodies to him as a living sacrifice. You know, consecration is not that you give yourself to him in order to work for him. Consecration is you give yourself to him that he may complete the work in you.

Because he will not do anything against your will. You have to give him the permission. You have to give him the right that he has the right over you.

And if you give him the right that he will pour his grace upon you. Why is consecration so important? Because if you consecrate your life to the Lord and give him the right of your life, my life is yours. Now you can do anything you like with it.

When you do that, the Holy Spirit does something that something which you cannot do. We often hear people say, I changed my mind. May I ask you, can you change your mind? You may change your mind from this to that, but it's still within the realm of the old mind.

Nobody can change his mind. And that's the reason why nobody can live a new life. The Holy Spirit is the only one who can transform your mind.

When you consecrate your life to him, you experience the renewing of your mind. Formerly, you liked the world. So you are conformed to the world.

It's useless to tell young people not to love the world. Because they say, I'm not like you old men who have tasted all the sourness of the world. I want to taste it myself.

Brothers and sisters, why do you love the world? Because in your mind, the world is lovely. Can you change your mind? You cannot. The Holy Spirit can, but it's based upon your consecration.

If you really give yourself to the Lord, let go yourself to the Lord, then he will transform it. That's the renewing of the mind. And when your mind is renewed, you know what happens.

You look at the world as trash. And you look at the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ as treasure. You begin to prove the good and perfect will of God.

And when your mind is changed, the Christ life within you is released. So you can live the Christian life. That is the catch.

So, brothers and sisters, it is very, very important for you for us to live is Christ. You have to have your mind renewed. And then you find everything is supernaturally natural.

It is not something you try, you struggle, you strive. That's what we did before. It is now so natural, but it is supernatural.

Only the mind of Christ is lowly, is humble, is obedient, even unto death. How can we deny ourselves? Nobody can, but thank God. When the mind is renewed, you find denying self is natural.

The cross is a treasure. Because it gives us Christ. More of Christ.

So, brothers and sisters, how do we know that we today live a Christian living? How can we say, for me to live is Christ? The mind of Christ in you. That is the proof. When your mind is renewed, your living is renewed.

So, brothers and sisters, it is not a matter of outward appearance. We may outwardly look like a real Christian. You know, when we were young, we heard that Christians should be humble.

So, we try to humble by low. But the more we bow low, the more we say, let's see how humble I am. It's not there.

Real Christian living begins from within. The change is from within. Your mind is a heavenly mind.

Therefore, you are able to live a heavenly life. But more than that, when you come to Chapter 3, you'll find Paul said, I pursue. You know, Christian life is never static.

It is always pursuing. The strangest thing in the Bible is, you know, twice in the Gospel. One is in Mark, Chapter 6. You remember that day when our Lord Jesus used five loaves and two fishes to feed five thousand people.

And he sent not only the people away, he sent the disciples away. Because even his disciples wanted to make him king. And he was alone in the mountain praying.

Then, after midnight, he came walking on the water. The disciples were rolling the boats. And they saw our Lord Jesus passing.

The Bible said, he is going forward. He is not coming to the boat. And the disciples cried out.

They know it is a spirit. And then, of course, we know the story. And another occasion is Luke, Chapter 24.

You remember the two disciples, they go from Jerusalem to Emmaus. And they were sad. Because Christ was crucified.

And even if the woman said he has risen, but that is too wonderful to believe. So they were talking with sadness. And our Lord, in another form, came among them and walked with them.

And the Lord began to tell them all that is the prophecies in the Old Testament. And how it all happened in Christ Jesus. And these two disciples were very warm in their hearts.

But they arrived at Emmaus. But Jesus seemed to be going forward. So they asked him to stay with them.

You know, the Lord is always going ahead. You cannot ask him to stay put. So in spiritual life, this is the same thing.

Thank God we believe in him. Thank God we are saved. Thank God we have consecrated ourselves.

Thank God we have our mind renewed. Thank God we have experienced something of Christ living in us. But don't stop.

Always pursue. He is still ahead. Not only during this life.

In eternity. That's the thrill of eternity. You won't be just there playing the harp and singing.

You are going to know him more and more quicker and quicker. Fuller and fuller. And there is no end.

Because he is infinite. Isn't that wonderful? Christian life is worth living. Not now, but for eternity.

So brothers and sisters, Paul said, I won't say I have arrived. Now I can rest. No, I pursue.

I pursue Christ. I know he is still there. I know there is something more of him.

He is beckoning me. So I must pursue. And pursue is with effort.

It is not something just lottery around. You have to run after him. So brothers and sisters, for those who are more aged, let me encourage you and encourage myself.

Don't think that it is. There is always something there. We have to pursue.

And we should run as fast as the young people. Maybe faster than them. Brothers and sisters, don't ever stop.

Christ is always ahead. Thank God for that. And then you find in chapter 4, he said, verse 13, I have strength for all things in him that gives me power.

Brothers and sisters, it is not just a matter of mental newness. It is not a matter of outward pursuing. It is a matter of above overcoming all things.

Paul said, I know how to be full and how to be hungry. I know how to meet any kind of circumstance. We think that our circumstance controls us.

Our circumstance make us. But the Bible doesn't say that. We are able to rise above every circumstance.

And learn from every circumstance of Christ Jesus. He can do all things through him who empowers us. But you need an initiation.

How do you initiate into it? Paul said, I have been initiated into this. Initiated into this power. The power of the life of Christ.

The overcoming power over all circumstances. We will be surrounded with all kinds of circumstances. Sometimes it's adversity.

Sometimes it's abounding. You know, abounding sometimes is more difficult than adversity. God will use all kinds of circumstances to train us.

To show forth the mighty power of the life of Christ. Have we been initiated into it? When did Paul was initiated, is initiated into it? I wonder if it happens in 2 Corinthians chapter 12. You remember Paul who had received such visions in order that he may not be proud.

God allows Satan to put a stake in his life. It is not just a little thorn. It is a big one.

And Paul was preaching. Teaching the victory of Christ. But people said, look at him.

Trembling. Maybe he had malaria. We don't know.

But it's possible. Because he traveled in the area that malaria was there. And when malaria really attacks, it affects your eyesight.

So Paul's eyesight was very poor. And when malaria attacks, you shake. We don't know.

So Paul prayed to the Lord. I'm preaching the power of God. But look, I'm trembling.

How can people believe me? Take this away from me. That I may be able to use, to be really used by these people. But the Lord said, my grace is sufficient.

My power is perfect with no weakness. I won't make you strong. But I will overcome your weakness.

Dear brothers and sisters, and Paul said, I boast in my weakness. Now, who wants to boast of his weakness? This is very unnatural. We boast of our strength.

But one day when you're able to boast of your weakness, you've got the secret. Because God wants to show his power is perfect in you. So after he was initiated into this secret, he can meet any circumstance and is always above and not below.

This is the way Christ lived. And this is the way that Christian can live a Christian life. So dear brothers and sisters, when such things happen, you know that it is Christ who lives.

There is nothing for us to boast except boast in our weakness and boast of his strength. And this is the way that Paul lived. Not Paul.

It is Christ in Paul. And if Christ can do it in Paul, he can do it in everyone of us. So may the Lord lead us in this way of Christian life.

Amen.

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