



Announcements

Today is "Mother's Day". We have mementos to be given to mothers. Please request mothers to stand up, mementos handed to them. Pray for them.

Sunday May 08, 2016 Born From Above, To Live From Above

John 3:1-13

vs 3: "born again" also meaning born anew or born from above.

vs 12: there are things (facts, information) about the natural world, and then there are things about the spiritual, heavenly world, the world "from above".

vs 13: Jesus had come down from heaven, was in His earthly body, and yet at the same time was "in heaven". (We realize that some manuscripts omit the "which is in heaven" part).

He is here on earth, but at the same time intimately one with the Father.

John 8:23

And He said to them, "You are from beneath; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world.

The earthly life Jesus life, He lived "from above", based on things of the spiritual, heavenly realm, based on Him being one with the Father.

As believers we are "born from above".

1 John 5:1

Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him.

1 Corinthians 6:17

But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him.

We are spiritually one with Jesus and our new life, our real life is hidden in Christ (Colossians 3:3). In Him we live and move and have our being (based on Acts 17:28).

So, we as believers are also to live "from above".

Declaration : "I am born from above, to live from above"



What does it mean to "live from above" and How do we live "from above"?

Literally it means that we live out of our life, our identity, our position in Christ and live in accordance to the ways and principles of God's Kingdom, as revealed to us in His Word. As we keep living from above, then this way of living becomes our norm. It is normal for us to "live from above". It becomes natural for us to look at things, to handle things and to respond to things from our life, identity and position in Christ and in accordance to Kingdom principles.

We grow in learning to "live from above". It does not happen automatically. There are two important practices that help us make the shift from "living from below" (i.e. from worldly, earthly ways) to "living from above":

1, Renewing the mind

Romans 12:1-2

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

do not be conformed to this world (don't live from below)

be transformed (live from above)

by the renewing of your mind - having a change in your way of thinking, reasoning, perspectives, etc.

Renewing our mind or being transformed in our mind is us letting go of our own thoughts and ways, and embracing God's thoughts and ways.

Isaiah 55:7-9

7 Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; Let him return to the LORD, And He will have mercy on him; And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon.

8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD.

9 "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.

Making choices and decisions based on the Word and the leading of God's Holy Spirit who brings the mind of God to us.

Practical scenarios

- about giving : give generously, not stingily
- about conduct : we live holy, pure, integrity, love



- about alcohol : stay away completely, no social drinking, because every bondage begins in a small way. Whatever you tolerate will dominate. The Bible teaches that drunkenness is sin. In fact this is a requirement for all volunteers at APC, that we stay away from questionable habits.

We are not saying that if you don't give generously, or if you don't do certain things, or if you engage in social drinking you are going to hell. Salvation is not based on our works. But we are going a step further and talking about living a life that honors God.

2, Walk in the Spirit

The Bible teaches us to walk in the Spirit in Romans, Ephesians and Galatians. Here is one verse:

Galatians 5:16 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

To walk in the Spirit means we live yielded, guided, being very sensitive to the Holy Spirit.

This also means that we walk out of who we are in Christ (Colossians 2:6-7)

Walk by faith (2 Corinthians 5:7)

So to "live from above" we must live with a renewed mind and must walk in the Spirit. This is a growth process as we mentioned earlier.

Born from Above, But Living From Beneath

What happens if believers "live from beneath" instead of living from above?

We end up with believers whom the Bible refers to as being "carnally minded".

Romans 8:5-8

5 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.

6 For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.

8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

1 Corinthians 3:3

for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?

carnally minded believers :

- have 'death' instead of life and peace



- cannot please God and actually find themselves doing things contrary to God's ways
- end up in bondage to sin and addictions
- find it difficult to understand the things of the Spirit
- behave like mere men

Now, let's talk about some paradoxes

A paradox is a statement that contradicts itself and yet both parts of the statement are true at the same time.

The "Paradox" of Being Spiritually Minded Yet Earthly Wise

Sometimes after hearing a message like this, we tend to swing to one extreme, where we disconnect from the practical aspects of daily life. We embrace spiritual principles, but then don't know how to correctly apply them to live our life here on earth.

Wisdom is the ability to take the principles of the heavenly realm and apply it correctly to daily life situations in a practical way.

It might seem contradictory to expect a believer to be "heavenly minded" and yet be "earthly wise", but this is what God requires us to do.

Matthew 10:16 "Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.

Luke 16:8 ...For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light.

Jesus made this comment in Luke 16:8, but that is not the way it should be. The sons of light should be able to walk in greater wisdom than the sons of this world.

Just an information to all of us here, we have a free APC Publication: "Being Spiritually Minded and Earthly Wise". We encourage you to get a copy and read it.

The "Paradox" of the spiritual and natural life of the believer

Now let's deal with something that is theological, but yet is important. There is the paradox of the spiritual and natural life of the believer.

God has completed things in the spirit and He calls us to live out of that in the natural. The work is "completed" in the spiritual realm, but is "still in progress" in the natural realm.

Here are some examples:



- Complete, Yet "Work in Progress" : We are new creation, complete in Christ, and yet we are being changed from glory to glory into that same image (2 Corinthians 5:17, Colossians 2:10, Hebrews 10:14, 2 Corinthians 3:18)
- Perfected, Yet Being Perfected : We have been 'perfected' (made complete) by Christ's sacrifice and yet we are still being made perfect (Hebrews 10:14, 1 Peter 5:10, Colossians 4:12)
- Sanctified, Yet being Sanctified : We are sanctified and set apart to God in Christ, and we are still being sanctified unto Him (Hebrews 2:11, Jude 1:1, Hebrews 10:10,14)
- Hidden, Yet Visible : I am hidden in Christ, yet everything I do is visible to Him, both the good and bad. Nothing is hidden. (Colossians 3:3, Hebrews 4:13, 2 Corinthians 5:10, 1 Corinthians 4:5, Matthew 10:26)
- New Creation, Yet "Be renewed" : We are a new creation in Christ, and yet the new man and our mind is being renewed in the knowledge of the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:17, Romans 12:2, Colossians 3:10).
- Righteous, Yet be Repentant : We are righteous, without any condemnation, guilt and shame in Christ, and yet we are told to repent and have godly sorrow for sin (2 Corinthians 5:17, Romans 8:1, 2 Corinthians 7:9-10, Revelation 2:5,16,21,22, 3:3, 3:19)
- Raised with New Life, Yet be crucified : We have been raised to walk a new life, yet we need to crucify the flesh and die to self (Romans 6:4, Romans 8:13, Galatians 2:20).
- Possessing, Yet Pressing In : We are blessed with all spiritual blessings given freely as gifts, and yet we are to press in to possess what has been given (Ephesians 1:3, Luke 12:32, Matthew 11:12, Hebrews 6:12).
- Resting, Yet Laboring : We have entered into a spiritual rest in Jesus, yet we are to work out our salvation, labor in prayer, wrestle against the enemy, work our faith, do deeds of love and labor diligently for the Kingdom (Hebrews 4:3,9-11, Galatians 4:13, Ephesians 6:12, Philippians 2:12, 1 Corinthians 15:10, James 2:17,26, 1 John 3:17,18)

So how do we reconcile the "spiritual" and the "natural"? We live out of the knowledge that the work is completed in the spiritual, which places me in a position of absolute



confidence and certainty of victory, as we continue to colabor with God and "progress" into living in the fullness of this in the natural realm.

Side Note:

If we only emphasize the 'spiritual' side of things, then we place no responsibility on the believer to colabor with God and walk in spiritual discipline to live from above.

If we only emphasize the 'natural' side of things, then we place the entire responsibility on the believer, similar to living under the law instead of walking in God's amazing grace.

The correct way to "live from above" is to know what God has already completed for us in the spirit, and work with Him to live this out in our daily life.

The Power of living from Above

God has declared that those of us who are born of Him, who have received His abundant grace and gift of righteousness will live victorious, as overcomers, rule and reign in life.

1 John 5:4

For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

Romans 5:17

For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.)

Jesus the "Heavenly Man" (1 Corinthians 15:47-49) is our Model. Our life on this earth is the same as His (1 John 4:17).

We are born from above, to live from above.

We live out of our life, our identity, our position in Christ and live in accordance to the ways and principles of God's Kingdom, as revealed to us in His Word.

This is the only way to live as a believer.

This is the key to victorious Christian living.