

Your message burns in my heart and bones, and I cannot keep silent. (Jeremiah 20:9)

The testimony of JESUS is the spirit of the prophecy. (Revelation 19:10c)

by – Stuart H. Pouliot

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Zoe-Life

Lately, I have stressed the matter of life, more specifically, [the Life](#) (page 2), as Jesus calls it. He didn't say that He is *a* life; rather, He said He is **the Life**. Frankly, I have spent much time pondering *the Life*, especially what it means to us in practical everyday terms.

I have been pondering a question. As believers in the Lord Jesus, **have we missed the mark in understanding the true depths of the meaning of the Life?** Has it been relegated, almost entirely, to something outside of time that many call *eternal life* which comes after we put off our mortal bodies? It really comes down to how one defines the word *eternity* or *eternal*. Does it refer to endlessness or timelessness; or does it refer to a period of time, such as an age or ages of time? Years ago, after studying this question, I concluded that scripture predominantly speaks of ages and not endlessness or timelessness. This is explained in [Eternity or Ages? Eternal or Eonian?](#)

With this said, regardless of how one views the word *eternal*, Jesus Himself explains the expression *eternal life* as He prayed to His Father. Most translations use this expression but there are some that do not. Here are two of them.

“Now THIS is (exists being) **eonian life** (life pertaining to the ages): namely, that they may progressively come to intimately and experientially know You, the only true and real (genuine) God – even (or: and) Jesus Christ, Whom You send forth as an Emissary (Apostle). (John 17:3 JM-NT [bold added])

“Father,” he said, “the moment has come. Glorify your son, so that your son may glorify you. Do this in the same way as you did when you gave him authority over all flesh, so that he could give **the life of God's coming age** to everyone you gave him. And by ‘**life of God's coming age**’ I mean this **that they should know you, the only true God, and Jesus the Messiah, the one you sent.**” (John 17:1b-3 Kingdom NT [bold added])

Based on Jesus' own words, *eternal* or *eonian life* is about knowing God and His Son, and this knowing is in the now and progressively growing in the ages (of time) to come. Since this has already been explained in [Eonian Life - Knowing God and Jesus Christ](#), I won't pursue this any further here; rather, you are encouraged to check out this link.

There is one verse that, perhaps, best sets the stage for the point I want to drive home.

For as the Father has ***zoe¹-life*** in himself, likewise also to the son he has given ***zoe-life*** to be having in himself. (John 5:26 Faithful NT)

The *Faithful NT* is rather unique in its use of the expression ***zoe-life***, as it combines the Greek transliterated word for life (*zoe*) along with the anglicized equivalent (*life*). Although a redundant expression (i.e., *life-life*), nonetheless, it serves to distinguish the uniqueness of this life from other types of life referred to in scripture. The *Faithful NT* offers an explanation of *zoe-life* in the footnote below. (Note: the expression *life eternal* is used. I prefer the more literal rendering—*eonian life*.) Going forward, the word *life* used in all the verses quoted comes from the word *zoe* and could be worded as *zoe-life*.

Now, in explaining this verse, some theological scholars—seemingly, out of fear that people will interpret Jesus’ words to mean that God Himself was created or received life at some point in time—offer complex and, frankly, confusing and contorted explanations of what it means to have life in Himself. This is hardly necessary. As the uncaused, infinite Creator (source) of all things, God, as Father, is uncreated *zoe-life* and the source of all *zoe-life* in His creation. In other words, life is the very essence of God, just as love is, and, as such, if we want to know true life (and true love), we must know God. To be clear, this does not refer to the biological expression of life that all creatures on earth have. Again, it is about uncreated life that is God. It is on this basis, as the visible image of the invisible God, Jesus declared that He is *zoe-life* and that this life can never, ever die.

I am the resurrection and ***the zoe-life***. The [one] believing in me even if he die he will ***zoe-live***, and everyone ***zoe-living*** and believing in me will not die to eternity. (John 11:25-26 Faithful NT [bold italic added]) {Note: *to eternity* is best translated as *unto the age*, based on the Greek *aion*, referring to age or eon, meaning *one will never die*.}

I am the way, the truth and ***the zoe-life***. (John 14:6 Faithful NT [bold italic added])

¹ ZOE “ZOH-ay” (ζωη)—Life ‘collectively’, interdependent, interconnected. Although it means ‘life’ in the conventional sense (for example: Matt. 9:18, Matt. 27:63, Luke 2:36, Acts 25:24, Rom. 7:2, 2Cor. 1:8, 1Thes. 4:17, 1Tim. 5:10, Rev. 19:20), Jesus uses ZOE exclusively of ‘life eternal’ (with the possible exceptions of Luke 15:13, Luke 16:25). The other N.T. writers use ZOE in both senses—temporal and eternal, generally clear from the context. The Father is the ‘zoe-living God’ (see Matt. 16:16). The Septuagint (LXX) in Gen. 2:7 has “... [God] breathed into his nostrils the breath of zoe-life, and the man became a zoe-living psyche-life” (and see 1Cor 15:45); and Gen. 3:20 (LXX) “And Adam called his wife’s name ZOE, because she was the mother of all zoe-living.” Contrast PSYCHE (ψυχη): an individual manifestation of life/consciousness. See John 12:25 where both ZOE and PSYCHE occur. Greek also has the word BIOS (βίος) for ‘life’ in the sense of biological processes. (Source: **Faithful New Testament at www.faithfulbible.com**, by permission.)

If we want to know this life, we must know God who is the source and explanation of life itself. It's not just *a* life nor is it a biological existence we would call *life*; it is ***the zoe-Life***—the uncreated and infinite life of our Creator God.

Adding to this, consider another word from Jesus.

I haven't spoken on my own authority. The Father who sent me gave me a [His] command [order; directive] what to say and to speak [preach; teach]. And I know that **His command is *the zoe-Life of the coming age*** [of the Ages; age-abiding; age-during; age-lasting]. What therefore I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me to speak. (John 12:49-50 compilation)

To the religious mindset, the word *command* means “do this and don't do that” or else—it refers to a set of rules, that is, laws that must be followed. But this is not what Jesus was given. He was commanded to speak only what the Father gave Him to speak with a very specific command built into all His words—*the zoe-Life* of the coming age (or: of the ages). In other words, Jesus was commanded to speak forth *the zoe-Life*! Everything Jesus taught and spoke to the disciples, the crowds, and even to those that rejected Him was *the zoe-Life*. ***The words I have spoken to you are spirit and are zoe-Life*** (John 6:63). He was the full manifestation and embodiment of *the zoe-Life* on earth, and we could say that, as this living word, He spoke Himself into God's creation.

John, the abiding apostle of love, adds to this by proclaiming Jesus to be ***the Word that was in the beginning and that was with God and was God*** (John 1:1) and ***in Him was zoe-Life and the zoe-Life was the light of men*** (John 1:4). Based on his personal testimony, John pulled together *the Word* and *the Life*, confirming that the command given to the Son to speak forth was *the zoe-Life*.

That which was from the beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we did behold, and our hands did handle, concerning ***the Word of the Life***—and ***the Life*** was manifested, and we have seen, and do testify, and declare to you ***the Life***, the ***age-during***², which was with the Father, and was manifested to us— (1 John 1:1-2 YLT [bold italic added])

Given these few but vital verses, I suggest that the Father's command to His Son overarches and sums up all other commands, including the command to love, for without *zoe-Life*, there is no love. **The command is to live! If you live, then you love!**

It is on this basis that John wrote that **he who has the Son has *the zoe-Life*** (1 John 5:12).

² The *Kingdom NT* translates this as *the life of God's coming age*.

Without any doubt whatsoever, the above verses lay a firm foundation for why God sent His Son to this earth to die and to be raised up from among the dead. Jesus clearly states it for us.

I came that they may possess ***zoe-Life*** [eonian], and have it superabundantly [**life in all its fullness**; overflowing; here and now]. (John 10:10b compilation)

Think about this: uncreated Life that cannot and never will die has come into created, biological-sentient beings! And *zoe-Life* is to be lived in the now, not off in the future in a heavenly existence. Jesus' life is to be experienced and lived out in the present for all given His faith to believe through the very same spirit that raised Him from the dead. His spirit resides in us today so that we may possess and live out God's *zoe-Life* today and grow into its full measure when, by God's grace, we put off this mortal and put on the immortal. We have received God's spirit as a down payment, as a guarantee this is so.

Now, with this understanding, I want to share what is on my heart regarding *the zoe-Life*, for this is what I have been driving toward.

Jesus did not come to give us a multitude of “how-to” books, doctrines, weekly sermons, systematic theologies, institutional organizations, denominations (or: non-), hierarchies of leadership, programs, platform ministries, marketing strategies, meeting places (buildings) where people go “to have church”, obligatory styles, formats, structures and vestments, spiritual exercises and religious works to perform, and the list goes on and on of the many things that now define and greatly divide what is called *Christian*. Don't take this wrong; a few (clearly, not most) of these things are useful and necessary for the growth of the body of Christ, but only if they come forth from the one who is *the Word of the zoe-Life*—Jesus. Jesus' life has always been meant to be organic in nature—springing up from within on the principle of *the Life* itself, much like a seed planted in rich soil. In speaking of the Kingdom of God, Jesus likened the kingdom to *a man casting seed upon the soil; and he goes to bed at night and gets up by day, and the seed sprouts and grows—how, he himself does not know* (Mark 4:26-27). *The zoe-Life*, which is the very nature of God's kingdom, operates on this same principle³. Jesus' life is what ignites and unites God's kingdom!

It is most unfortunate that many have been taught that they must do certain things to be “good” Christians. They need to worship a certain way based on certain types of music, liturgy, and formats. Some are told they need to spend X-amount of time each day in prayer and in the “word”, mostly every morning before doing anything else. It boils down to a whole bunch of do's and don'ts—man-made, religious laws. I'm not saying our lives don't consist of some of these. What I am saying is that our deportment springs up from *the zoe-*

³ See: [Authority - the Life and the Truth](#).

Life, not from outward rules. It's the difference between the spirit that gives life and the letter that kills.

As I write this, the thought has come to me that each day when we wake from a night's sleep, we enter the day as a new seed planted in the rich soil of Christ and this seed is to spring up in whatever way the spirit of the Lord so directs for the day. So, bounce out of bed as a new seed and see what the spirit of the Lord has for the day. See every day as a new day, regardless of what is going on in your life at the time. Be open to the Lord as to how the day starts and proceeds for you. If you are led to spend time (regardless of how long) in prayer, meditation, or reading scripture, then do it. If it is simply to go to your job or to start a home project or to care for a loved one, or whatever, then do it. If your day gets turned upside down and your plans are shot through, don't fret it. Whatever you do, do it as unto the Lord and worship God throughout the process.

We need to break the habit of thinking our spiritual life depends on time, place, action, form, and circumstance, and seek to live *the zoe-Life* every moment of our existence, being in continual communion (union; in oneness) with God and His Son regardless of time, place, action, form, or circumstance.

Early on in my walk with the Lord, I learned that it is paramount above all else to hear the voice of the Lord through His spirit in our inner man. He speaks to us probably far more than we recognize, which means that, through experience, we must learn to discern and heed His voice. Obedience is paramount. However, it isn't always about obedience; it might be about teaching, encouraging, warning, or exhorting us. Of course, prayer, reading of scripture, and worship play a part, but I caution against worshipping these things to the point that they hinder organic, *zoe-Life*. I recognize I'm treading on dangerous ground by offering this caution, but I do it based on observation. I have witnessed people who place so much emphasis on prayer and scripture that, especially in group settings, these things are venerated to the point of worship. Again, don't get me wrong on this point, for prayer and scripture are a vital part of the life of a believer, especially, if not critical, to bringing us into the presence of God. What I am cautioning about is making these things into an idol of worship that robs us of *the zoe-Life* of God that springs up by the spirit of God. Bondage to these things is the danger. Ancient Israel had a similar problem.

For those dwelling in Jerusalem and their chiefs (presently residing there, i.e., first century AD), being ignorant of Him and not knowing the voices of the prophets—those being regularly and repeatedly read in accord with every sabbath, fulfill them in judging (condemning) Him. (Acts 13:27)

Scripture was read to them sabbath after sabbath. They heard what the prophets had to say week after week and yet they only heard the words and failed to hear the message.

They were spiritually deaf. The result: *Crucify Him! Crucify the very one that the prophets said would come to Jerusalem!* They proudly held that they alone were given the holy scriptures, which were religiously read to the people week after week. They had all the outward vestiges of religion (i.e., form and structure) but without life; consequently, the message never penetrated their hearts and minds. When their Messiah appeared in their midst, instead of embracing Him, they judged and condemned Him to death on a cross.

Don't think that believers cannot and do not fall into this same trap, for they most assuredly can and do. For this reason, I often stress that we need the *rhema* of scripture that comes from the spirit that gives life, not the letter that kills. The written words are meant to bring forth *the Life*, not the death of the letter.

To all this, I would add to the list of dangers the supernatural and the prophetic. I have witnessed believers say that they "love the supernatural" and when confronted with the thought of "loving the appearing of the Lord Jesus", they act like a computer that freezes up and cannot compute. As for the prophetic, I acknowledge that I have presented much along this line, but I continually caution myself not to allow such things to override the preeminence of Christ. To this end, I hold the prophetic lightly. Frankly, there are far too many prophetic voices today. As scripture warns: *Beware of false prophets!* Our only safeguard is to hear the voice of the Lord!

Finally, we must recognize that the cross is always in play in our lives, but it is designed to lead to more life. It is not meant to keep us in the grave. The command of Jesus is to live and to love!

Dear saints, it is time to throw off the religious baggage of the "Christian" system that has weighted us down with its heavy load and divided us in so many ways. Now is the time to come into *the zoe-Life* of our King—to live as light as feathers so that the spirit of the Lord can blow on us, moving us without resistance, much like the wind—not only individually but also as the one body of Christ. All the resources of our infinite God are in *the zoe-Life!*

Jesus came to give us His superabundant, overflowing ***zoe-Life***, and He is coming again to consummate this life in us. Until then, let us be free from all idols and all that hinders and enter into *the Life* today. After all, as Jesus said...

He who is believing in Me, as the scriptures have said, out of his innermost being (from deep within; bowels) shall gush⁴ rivers of living (*zoe-Life*) water. (John 7:38)

Brethren, it's time!

⁴ See: [Upwelling-The Gushing Fountain](#).