

Sermon Series: "Tap into God's Rich Supply"—Lord of Life Lutheran, Westfield, IN—11/04/07

Title: "A New Life—Live it!"

Text: Galatians 2: 20

Intro: Ills.: Cure for a Terminal Illness

Theme: In order to receive back the life which God intended for us, we must die to ourselves and Christ will raise us up to a new, powerful, and limitless life for God.

Things that make us unable to tap into the riches of God's supply

- Self worship
 1. If you and I become our own god, pity the moment when we are helpless in the face of death/disaster and no help
 - a. Can take the form of self-determination and self-made—often look upon righteous in different settings
 2. The greatest challenge to accepting God promise of rich supply is a **total and unconditional surrender** to Jesus
 - a. *And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus. To our God and Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen. Philip. 4:19-20*
 - b. *"I am the LORD; that is my name! I will not give my glory to another or my praise to idols. Isaiah 42:8*
- Fear of dying
 1. Whether physical or spiritual dying, we would rather live in denial than acknowledge the loss
 - a. **Ills.: Sort of dead to sin**
 - b. We still want the option to "sort of" dabbling in the shadowland of sin—not realizing that it is the land of death
 2. We don't want the pain of the cross (*I am crucified with Christ*)
 - a. *Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. Mark 8: 34*
 - b. **Ills. Taking Jesus without the cross**

When we let it go of all of it, God makes it all come back

- The math of **sacrificial living**
 1. Our freedom came at a great cost (Free does not mean cheap)
 - a. Jesus willingly died to himself and lived for the Father's will so that he could accomplish our life
 - b. **Ills. Freedom at Great Cost**
 - c. *And He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf. 2 Cor. 5:15*
 2. Anything we give in response pails in comparison to what He gave to give us lasting freedom
 - a. *"Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?" "Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?" For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen. Roms 11:34-36*
 - b. Dying to self and rising in Christ leaves behind finding spiritual self-worth in our giving but rather finding his
 - c. *So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. John 8: 36*
- The power of **sacrificial living**
 1. Tied to Christ's death and resurrection, we experience a new person
 - a. *We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. Romans 6:4*
 - b. We come to like the person that we see rising in us every day
 - c. We marvel at what God is able to get done in us and through us
 2. Tied to Christ's death and resurrection, we experience a new attitude to God's opportunity all around us
 - a. **Ills.: Having a baby (a copier for a mission church)**
 - b. Willing to expend ourselves for God and others because of the joy in multiplying God's grace to others

- The promise of *sacrificial living*
 1. Peter said to him, "We have left everything to follow you!" "I tell you the truth," Jesus replied, "no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age (homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields--and with them, persecutions) and in the age to come, eternal life. Mark 10:28-30
 2. God loves his child who for the sake of his Son lives by faith and surrenders his life to Jesus' recreating power

Cure for a Terminal Illness

Imagine that you just found out you have a rare and terminal illness. You sit down with your doctor.

"Is there no hope?" you ask.

"Well," he says, "there is one thing. Without this one thing, it's over. But with this one thing, you will be completely healed. But let me be utterly clear: It's impossible for you to live without this one thing."

What would you say?

"*Listen, Doc*, you're boring me. My favorite sitcom is starting in five minutes, and I wouldn't miss it for anything. I don't have time for these silly cat-and-mouse games. See ya."

Or, "Well? That's interesting. But, Doctor, that's your opinion. You are completely entitled to it, and I'm sure it makes you feel better for having expressed it. But I resent your attempt to impose it upon me. I really don't need this kind of psychological blackmail, this medical fascism. Good-bye and good riddance."

Or, "What? What is it? Tell me now! I have to know, and I won't leave until I do!"

Of course, the only sane response is the last one. If we are *saved* by faith, and if we *live* by faith, and if it is *impossible* to please God without faith, the only sane response is: What is it? What is this faith? You have to tell me! I have to know, and I'm not leaving until I do! **Mark Buchanan, Things Unseen (Multnomah, 2002), pp.140-141**

Sort of Dead to Sin

In a classic Leadership cartoon by Mary Chambers, two couples are seated in a living room engaged in Bible study. One of the women is speaking. "Well," she says, "I haven't actually *died* to sin, but I did feel kind of faint once." **Mary Chambers, Leadership**

Taking Jesus without the Cross

In August 2003, New York City's Church of the Holy Cross was broken into twice. First a metal moneybox next to a votive candle rack was stolen. Three weeks later vandals got away with something far more valuable: a statue of Christ. The thieves unbolted the 4-foot long, 200-pound plaster Jesus from a meditation area, but they left the wooden cross on the wall. David St. James, 49, a caretaker who helps maintain the sacristy of the church, was amazed that someone would try to take Jesus without also taking his cross. "They just decided, 'We're going to leave the cross and take Jesus,'" he said. "We don't know why they took just him. We figure if you want the whole crucifix, you take the whole crucifix." **Andrea Elliott, "Thieves Take Figure of Jesus, but Not the Cross," New York Times (8-25-03);**

Freedom at Great Cost

One of the magnificent 19th-century military expeditions conquered no new lands for Queen Victoria. You won't find it mentioned in history books, but because of the monumental logistics, military historians compare the landing in Ethiopia in 1868 to the Allies' invasion of France in 1944. For four years Emperor Theodore III of Ethiopia had held a group of 53 European captives (30 adults and 23 children), including some missionaries and a British consul, in a remote 9,000-foot-high bastion deep in the interior. By letter, Queen Victoria pleaded in vain with Theodore to release the captives. Finally, the government ordered a full-scale military expedition from India to march into Ethiopia—not to conquer the country and make it a British colony, but simply to rescue a tiny band of civilians. The invasion force included 32,000 men, heavy artillery, and 44 elephants to carry the guns. Provisions included 50,000 tons of beef and pork and 30,000 gallons of rum. Engineers built landing piers, water treatment plants, a railroad, and telegraph line to the interior, plus many bridges. All of this to fight one decisive battle, after which the prisoners were released, and everyone packed up and went home. The British expended millions of pounds to rescue a handful of captives. **Jim Reapsome, Current Thoughts and Trends (May 1999)**

Galatians 2:20

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. [NIV]