



JESUS, THE PATTERN OF TRUE LIFE—1

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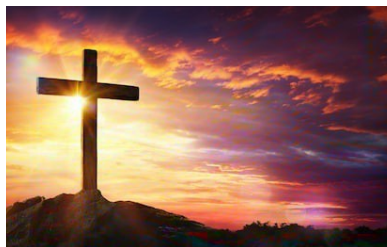
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Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Hebrews 12:1-2 (NKJV)

The Author and Finisher of Faith

Jesus Christ, the Only Son of the Living God is the author and finisher of faith. In the original Greek Bible, the pronoun, “our” is not in it, however, it is not improperly



added because the statement, “the author and finisher of our faith” can be understood in different senses. One way of understanding this is by taking Jesus to be the originator and

perfecter of our faith according to what is written in Philippians 1:6: “...He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.” Although, the pronoun “He” properly refers to the Father, the good work done belong to both the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. For none of the three Persons in the Godhead does anything without the other two. According to this understanding of the statement. “the author and finisher of our faith”, Jesus is the cause or producer as well as the perfecter of our faith. He ignites, sustains and perfects faith in the heart by His grace.

The second sense in which we can understand the Scripture above is to remove the pronoun “our” and read it as in the original: “the author and finisher of faith”. In this sense, Jesus is the Pioneer of the life of faith. He is the first to begin and successfully finish the life of faith. Hence, He is the Leader whose example we must emulate. This is the original meaning of the text; for when the

Apostle exhorts us to look to Jesus, saying, “looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith”, he means that we should follow Jesus’ example because He began and finished successfully the life of faith. The proof is that Jesus is now sitting “down at the right hand of the throne of God”. In the above text, the Apostle exhorts us to follow three examples of Jesus: (1) He set His eyes on the joy that was set before Him, and so (2) He endured the Cross, and (3) He despised the shame.

In this edition of the Signpost, we will not limit ourselves to only these three examples. I present to you the whole life of Jesus Christ as a pattern of the kind of life you must live on the earth. My audience are both Christians and non-Christians; for the Christlike life is meant for everybody since He is the “true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world” (John1:9). For the only difference between Christians and unbelievers is that whilst the former has entered unto the path that leads to life, the later is yet to begin. My work here is to lay before you the pattern of life as pioneered by Christ and urge the unbeliever to enter into this life, and also encourage the Christian to remain in the way His Lord has created for him. May the Lord help me in this. Amen!

What We Are Here For

Our life on the earth is a journey and so we are sojourners in this world; for this world is not our home. Our home is God. Accordingly, this journey does not involve movement from one place to another, but a change from one state to another. You had a home but you lost it. You are in this world to make it back to your original home. That is, you were created in God’s image and likeness. But that was defaced in Adam, your first earthly father. Your life here on earth must have for its aim the restoration of that image and likeness. If you do not live for this one purpose, you have missed the essence of your life and are on the path to destruction. This world, then, is not our end but a means to attain our true end, which is eternal goodness and happiness. This journey to true happiness is what Jesus has pioneered for us.

The Pattern of True Life

I am the way (John 14:6)

Jesus Christ is the way, the only way to true blessedness and happiness. Our objective in life is simple—It is to be happy. But true happiness is found in none but God, who is the unchangeable Good and Wisdom. Unless man attains to unchangeable goodness and wisdom, he can never be truly happy. Jesus, by His life here on earth, has given us the pattern of that life which makes us unchangeably good and leads to true and lasting happiness. Therefore, consider carefully the following phases of Jesus' life; for it is the only way to our true home. I will touch on these things briefly because I do not have much space for an elongated discussion.



First—His Condescension

“who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men” (Philippians 2:6-7).

He who was truly God; co-equal and co-eternal with the Father became man. He is divine but He condescended and became human. Why did God become a man but that men may become God. That is, the only Son of God took on the likeness of men so that men may partake of the divine nature. But what is the path beaten here by Christ, that is, the example we must emulate? It is the path of humility. This the first pattern; the first phase of a truly blessed life. It is emphatically written, *“He humbled Himself...” (Philippians 2:8)*. The gateway to the blessed life is humility. For the Truth Himself said, *“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven”*. O proud unbeliever, humble yourself; acknowledge your sins and come to Jesus, who alone can settle your debt with God for you. Beloved Christian, you began in humility; and will you be perfected in pride? Hear the Word: *“...be clothed with humility, for ‘God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble’” (1 Peter 5:5)*. Pray my brother, pray for humility, my sister, lest God resist you and cast you out like He did to the angels who sinned.

Second—His Life on Earth

In the above example, Jesus shown us the spirit in which

we are to enter into and continue the blessed life. Here, we will learn how we are to live on the earth. So, the question is: How did Jesus live on the earth? He lived His life according to God's will. In everything and at all times, the will of God was the determining factor in His life. What is God's will? In simple terms, it is to be like Him; for there is no other reason why God created us in His own image and likeness. Our duty is to love God with all of our being and to love our neighbor as ourselves (See Matthew 22:37-40). Solomon concluded, *“...Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole [duty] of man” (Ecclesiastes 12:13, NIV)*. What are the commandments of God but His will? Therefore, your whole life must revolve around God's will. Seek not only to know God's will; pray that you may fulfill it too.

Do you ask how you will know and be able to do God's will? It is through (1) Prayer; for the Lord taught us to pray: *“Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10)*. God's will, will be done but how does that benefit you if that will is not done in you or by you? So this prayer means that God's will should be done in you and by you. (2) Renewal of mind (Read Romans 12:2). Change your mindset; renew the spirit that controls your mind. To renew the mind is to cast aside evil and corrupt thoughts and bring your mind in agreement with God's word. Thus, (3) Read, meditate and study God's word (Read Ezra 7:10). Ezra determined to “seek”, that is, study God's law in order to know His will and do it. (4) Practice obedience; *“For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away” (Matthew 25:29)*. That is, the more you do God's will, the more He will reveal His will to you. May the Lord be gracious to you and grant that you may know His will and do it to the glory of His name. Amen!

Now, the following are the stages of Jesus' life that depict the pattern of the kind of life we must live: Condescension, actual life on earth, death, resurrection, ascension, intercession and reigning. Whereas the first five stages are in the past, the sixth is ongoing and the last is in the future. We have dealt with the first two stages; we will discuss the successive stages in subsequent editions of the Signpost.

Happy Sabbath to you. May the Lord be with you throughout the coming week. May this new month be a month of spiritual growth, blessings, favour and advancement in all areas of life. Amen!