

The Word of the Lord

An Exposition of I & II Thessalonians

I Thessalonians 4:7–13

I Thessalonians 4:7 For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

While it is true Christians are called unto liberty,¹ they are also called unto holiness. Thus, it is a great distortion to infer that the freedom Christ gives,² will allow any the right to sin. Yet this is often evidenced in sinners where one truth of God is used against another truth in order that men may justify themselves for the sin they commit. *For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.*³

An occasion to the flesh.—Do not, under the name “liberty,” give way to sensual excesses.⁴

Only use not liberty ... - The word *use* here introduced by our translators, obscures the sense. The idea is, “You are called to liberty, but it is not liberty for an occasion to the flesh. It is not freedom from virtuous restraints, and from the laws of God. It is liberty from the servitude of sin, and religious rites and ceremonies, not freedom from the necessary restraints of virtue.” It was necessary to give this caution, because:

(1) There was a strong tendency in all converts from paganism to relapse again into their former habits. Licentiousness abounded, and where they had been addicted to it be-

fore their conversion, and where they were surrounded by it on every hand, they were in constant danger of falling into it again. A bare and naked declaration, therefore, that they had been called to liberty, to freedom from restraint, might have been misunderstood, and some might have supposed that they were free from all restraints.

(2) it is needful to guard the doctrine from abuse at all times. There has been a strong tendency, as the history of the church has shown, to abuse the doctrine of grace. The doctrine that Christians are “free;” that there is liberty to them from restraint, has been perverted always by Antinomians, and been made the occasion of their indulging freely in sin. And the result has shown that nothing was more important than to guard the doctrine of Christian liberty, and to show exactly what Christians are freed from, and what laws are still binding on them. Paul is, therefore, at great pains to show that the doctrines which he had maintained did not lead to licentiousness, and did not allow the indulgence of sinful and corrupt passions.⁵

I Thessalonians 4:8 He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.

If a man treats as insignificant the pursuit of sanctification, then this reveals contempt for the Lord Himself. For none can spurn God’s spiritual command that His people should be holy⁶ and not at the very same time show contempt for di-

¹ Rom. 8:21 *Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.*

² II Cor. 3:17 *Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.*

³ Gal. 5:1 *Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.*

⁴ Gal. 5:13 *For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.*

⁵ John 8:36 *If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.*

⁶ Rom. 8:2 *For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*

³ Gal. 5:13

⁴ *Ellicott’s Commentary for English Readers, Gal. 5:13*

⁵ *Barnes’ Notes on the Bible, Gal. 5:13*

⁶ I Pet. 1:16 *Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.*

vine law.⁷ The Greek word for *despise* is *atheteó*, “to do away with what has been laid down, set aside.” Its usage is “I annul, make of no effect, set aside, ignore, slight; I break faith with.”⁸ For then to set aside that which has its origin in God is to both ignore and set aside God Himself. Consequently, no man should think that he can *set aside, ignore, and make of no effect* God’s commandments and not in the process despise the Lord who gave them to men to live by.

I Thessalonians 4:9 But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.

Transitioning from one of the strongest desires of the flesh, fornication, to now the strongest evidence of the Spirit, love, the apostle again takes up the importance of pursuing love. God had taught the Thessalonians to love, and the fact that they possessed it proved their obedience to the gospel. Because God had led these early Christians to love, it became unnecessary that Paul needed to teach it again but only that he should encourage them to increase manifesting it in their lives.

Ye need not.—A sweet rhetorical figure, by which men are encouraged to the performance of a duty in which they are not perfect, by the praising of their imperfect attempts: a specimen of that “courtesy” which is a part of “brotherly love.”⁹

In truth, there is no greater evidence that men and women have been taught of God than when love manifests itself in their lives. By *love* Jesus said men would know who were His true disciples,¹⁰ and by *love* we can know if a man has passed from death unto life.¹¹ Love is the mark of true Christianity, and if a man does not possess divine love, he should not assume himself Christian at all. The genu-

⁷ Matt. 6:24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

⁸ Strong’s Concordance, #114

⁹ Ellicott’s Commentary for English Readers, I Thess. 4:9

¹⁰ John 13:35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

¹¹ I John 3:14 We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.

¹² I John 4:7

¹³ I John 2:15

¹⁴ Benson Commentary, I John 2:15

¹⁵ Matthew Poole’s Commentary, I Thess. 4:10

ineness, therefore, of any man’s religion is directly visible by love filling his soul. By abiding in God’s love, believers can know that they are no longer born simply of the flesh but now have been born of God. *Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.*¹² Love is that divine quality that proves that a man genuinely knows God and has had personal contact and relationship with Him. Yet when men love the world, any sincere love for God and His people will be absent. Practically speaking, if a man loves the world, then he cannot truly love either God or God’s people. *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*¹³

If any man love the world — Esteem, desire, or pursue it, or any thing in it, inordinately, so as to place his happiness in the enjoyment of it; *the love of the Father is not in him.*¹⁴

I Thessalonians 4:10 And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more;

The ability to love, and the sincerity of love, should increase the more believers are led by God’s Spirit.

Neither love, nor any other grace, is made perfect at once; even those that are taught of God.¹⁵

Regardless, then, of how much a man or woman loves, both the purity and the amount of it can be increased in their lives. By also spreading God’s love to others, the very fragrance of what God is gives witness that His presence remains in the world.

I Thessalonians 4:11 And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business,

and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;

It is God's will, and in agreement with walking in love, that believers study to be quiet and do their own business. This teaches us that it is always the opposite of love for any man to meddle in affairs that are not his own.

study to be quiet—Greek, “make it your ambition to be quiet, and to do your own business.” In direct contrast to the world's ambition, which is, “to make a great stir,” and “to be busybodies”...¹⁶

Do your own business.—Not merely was each individual to do his own work, but the whole Church was to refrain from interfering ostentatiously with other Churches.¹⁷

I Thessalonians 4:12 That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.

When men tend to their own affairs, and work with their own hands, while also not meddling in the lives of others, the promise is that they will live without lack. By keeping God's commandments, and walking in His love, the Lord shall supply all that man needs to both serve God and bless his fellows.¹⁸ Industry never makes a man poor, even as it tends towards godliness itself.

have lack of nothing—not have to beg from others for the supply of your wants (compare

Eph 4:28¹⁹). So far from needing to beg from others, we ought to work and get the means of supplying the need of others. Freedom from pecuniary embarrassment is to be desired by the Christian on account of the liberty which it bestows.²⁰

When men then work, they should not have to beg, and should also have sufficient left over to help with the needs of others. This is also why if men refuse to labor when fit and able to do so, then God says they should not eat.²¹ It is a man's responsibility to take care of himself, and if he refuses to do so, it should not be required of others who do work, to supply his needs.

I Thessalonians 4:13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

But I would not have you to be ignorant. The Bible speaks of many things men can be ignorant of: God's righteousness,²² the mystery of Israel's rejection until God's appointed time for their restoration,²³ ignorance of the fact that though many are called, few will actually be saved,²⁴ gifts of the Spirit,²⁵ Satan's devices,²⁶ and last, as seen in Thessalonians, ignorance of the hope that awaits the saved. Surprisingly, these areas of revelation that the Lord does not want people to be ignorant of are the very areas where human ignorance is at its greatest. This is seen by how many foolishly pursue their own

16 Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary, I Thess. 4:11

17 Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers, I Thess. 4:11

18 II Cor. 9:8 *And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:*

Eph. 3:20 *Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,*

Phil. 4:19 *But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

19 Eph 4:28 *Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.*

20 Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary, I Thess. 4:12

21 II Thess. 3:10 *For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.*

22 Rom. 10:3 *For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.*

23 Rom. 11:25 *For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.*

24 I Cor. 10:1 *Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;*

25 I Cor. 12:1 *Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.*

26 II Cor. 2:11 *Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.*

righteousness,²⁷ how they know little to nothing of the Holy Spirit or His gifts,²⁸ and how saints are wrongly tempted to believe that they have the same absence of hope as the unsaved around them.

The language Paul uses in his instruction to the Thessalonians that they should *sorrow not, even as others which have no hope*, is strong so that his point may be clear: the fate of an unsaved man is vastly different than that of a saved man. This teaches us that for Christians there is hope, but for those who have no relationship with the Son of God there can be only sorrow. And like the thieves crucified with Christ on the cross,²⁹ two men can die at the very same time and in the exact same manner yet have two totally different futures. For this reason, Christians should not grieve as do those to whom physical death brings much sorrow. If a man has Christ in him, though his physical body is destined for death,³⁰ his soul/spirit will live because of his connection to Christ. *And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.*³¹

And if Christ be in you — Namely, by his Spirit dwelling in you: where the Spirit of Christ is, there is Christ: *the body is dead* — *Το μὲν σῶμα νεκρὸν, the body indeed is dead*, devoted to death; for our belonging to Christ, or having Christ in us, does not exempt the body from undergoing the sentence of death passed on all mankind; *because of sin* — Heretofore committed; especially the sin of Adam, by which death entered into the world, and the sinful nature derived from him; *but the Spirit is life* — The soul is quickened and made alive to God; and shall, after the death of the body, continue living, active, and happy;³²

²⁷ Rom. 10:3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

²⁸ 1 Cor. 12:1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.

²⁹ Luke 23:39–43 And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. ⁴⁰But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? ⁴¹And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. ⁴²And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. ⁴³And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.

³⁰ Heb. 9:27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

³¹ Rom. 8:10

³² Benson Commentary, Rom. 8:10–11

³³ Gal. 4:6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

³⁴ Ezek. 36:27

³⁵ Matthew Poole's Commentary, Ezek. 36:27

The key to a man continuing to live once his fleshly body dies is through the Christ Spirit living within him. The manner in which Christ lives with the Christian is through the Spirit of God Christ imparts to them.³³ But how, though, does a man know that Christ lives within him? It cannot be just because he assumes it to be so but must rest on a much more concrete foundation than human assumption. Ultimately then, it is only by men keeping Christ's commandments that it can be seen that Christ lives in His people. The proof therefore that the Holy Spirit lives within a man is that he will both keep and walk in God's laws. It was for this purpose that the Spirit was sent, and all who have Him will manifest this fruit. *And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.*³⁴

My spirit; the Holy Spirit of God, which is the immediate principal cause of that change of an old heart into new, and of hard into soft. By the efficient cause we may know the effect; and understand what a new heart is, and what the new spirit is, when we know they are wrought in us by the Spirit of God, which is given to and dwelleth in the saints, which makes them saints, and then abideth with them.

Cause you; sweetly, powerfully, successfully, yet without compulsion; for our spirit, framed by God's Spirit to a disposition suitable to his holiness, readily concurrereth and co-worketh.

Keep my judgments; be willing and ready, able, and in your degree sufficient, to keep the judgments and to walk in the statutes of God, which is to live holiness.³⁵

Because of the presence of this divine spiritual nature, sent by the Son of God to

the saved, spiritual death need not follow bodily death. Though the natural body must return to the dust³⁶ from whence it was made,³⁷ the spirit, because its source is God, returns to God.³⁸ Practically speaking, the natural material realm, which is what the earthly body consists of, cannot pass over to the higher spiritual realm where God maintains His being. Each world, natural and spiritual, consists of two completely different substances, and because of this the natural body, whether alive or dead, cannot without transformation³⁹ enter the higher spiritual realm of God. For this reason, to save any from spiritual death, Christ must impart to them a new and different nature, which is holy and suited for heaven.

I Corinthians 15:45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.

It was from the first Adam that we derive our natural, physical, and carnal nature, but it is from the last Adam, Jesus Christ, that a new spiritual life is given to us. This life is not natural; rather, it is spiritual and descends from the higher spiritual realm. Its source is God; its sender is the Son of God.⁴⁰ Those of the *last Adam*, who have been born again or born from above, are made living spirits both like and by Christ. Hence, whereas the first Adam genetically passed natu-

ral life to his progeny, the second Adam, Jesus Christ, because He is a living Spirit, imparts eternal spiritual life to His children.⁴¹

Christ is called Adam, because believers receive their sanctified, spiritual nature, and their immortal bodies, from him, (see Ephesians 5:32,)⁴² just as mankind have derived their corrupted nature and mortal bodies from the first Adam. He is also called *the last Adam*, because he is posterior in time to the first Adam, or because there shall be no restorer and head of the human race after him. *Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, &c.* — That is, as the first Adam existed before Christ was sent to assume our nature, and become our Saviour, so must we first wear that animal body, which we derive from the one, before we put on that spiritual body which we receive from the other. Here we are taught that the plan of the divine government is to lead his creatures from a lower to a higher state of perfection.⁴³

I Corinthians 15:46 Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.

Adam's creation by God was a natural one. All the elements used in it came from the natural realm. Adam was the first of an earthly race of men who would populate and spread over a natural and organic world. A splendid and bountiful earthly garden was prepared for Adam's

³⁶ Gen. 3:19 *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.*

³⁷ Eccl. 3:20 *All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.*

³⁸ Gen. 2:7 *And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.*

³⁹ Eccl. 12:7 *Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.*

⁴⁰ I Cor. 15:48 *As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.*

⁴¹ Luke 24:49 *And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.*

⁴² John 14:16&17 *And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; ¹⁷Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.*

⁴³ John 14:26 *But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*

⁴⁴ John 15:26 *But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:*

⁴⁵ John 16:7 *Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.*

⁴⁶ Heb. 2:13 *And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me.*

⁴⁷ Eph. 5:32 *This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.*

⁴⁸ Benson Commentary, Eph. 5:32

residence,⁴⁴ purposed by God not only to bless Adam's life but also to provide the necessary sustenance for his survival. The first man, Adam, was earthly in every way. The next Adam, though, Jesus Christ, is not natural but spiritual, and for those called to heaven through Him, God has purposed heavenly habitation.⁴⁵

I Corinthians 15:47 The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven.

Adam's body was from the earth, from the dust and matter that comprises it; whereas, Christ's origination is from above, and from the higher realm of heaven.⁴⁶ Jesus's words to the Pharisees who did not believe He was the Son of God reveal the great gulf between the natural and spiritual world. *Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come. Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come. And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world.*⁴⁷ In plain and simple language, Jesus revealed why those who did not believe in Him could not follow Him where he was to go. It was because they were from *beneath*, and He was from *above*.

For a man to enter the higher spiritual realm, biblically defined as heaven, he must be born again.⁴⁸ This teaches us that for any to live beyond the grave, a new spiritual birth must be given to them by God, whereby through the Spirit they are given the same nature as God. Jesus taught this important truth to Nicode-

⁴⁴ Gen. 2:8 *And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.*

Gen. 2:15 *And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.*

⁴⁵ Eph. 2:19–22 *Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; ²⁰And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; ²¹In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: ²²In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.*

⁴⁶ John 3:13 *And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.*

John 6:38 *For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.*

⁴⁷ John 8:21–23

⁴⁸ 1 Pet. 1:23 *Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.*

⁴⁹ John 3:3

⁵⁰ Gal. 4:6 *And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.*

⁵¹ Col. 1:27

*mus. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*⁴⁹ Ultimately, it is spiritual birth produced by being given the Holy Spirit that produces heavenly sonship.⁵⁰

I Corinthians 15:48 As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.

Just as believers must share in the weakness, deficiencies, and death of the first man, Adam, they will also share just as equally in the glory of the second Adam, Jesus Christ. *To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.*⁵¹ Being born of God through possessing the Spirit of God gives hope of glory in the world to come. Again, it needs to be emphasized that the connection to the second Adam, Jesus Christ, is not less than the one to the first man, Adam, once a man is born again. Thus, just as men must physically die because of their relationship to the first man, Adam, so too will they eternally live because of their relationship with God's second Adam, Jesus Christ.

I Corinthians 15:49 And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

In all ways, those born of the first Adam have been made to share in his fleshly image and destiny. Equally true is that those born of the second Adam, Jesus Christ, will also share in Christ's heavenly image. The Greek word for *image* is *eikōn*.

eikōn (from 1503 *leikō*, “be like”) – properly, “mirror-like representation,” referring to what is very close in resemblance (like a “high-definition” projection, as defined by the context). Image (1504 *leikōn*) then exactly reflects its source (what it directly corresponds to). For example, Christ is the very image (1504 *leikōn*, supreme expression) of the Godhead (see 2 Cor 4:4; Col 1:15⁵²).

“1504 (*eikōn*) assumes a prototype, of which it not merely resembles, but from which it is drawn” (R. Trench). 1504 (*eikōn*) then is more than a “shadow”; rather it is a replication (F. F. Bruce, Hebrews, 226; see also Lightfoot at Col 3:10 and 2:21).⁵³

Natural men are not only the same as their forefather, earthly Adam, on the outside but also in their inner beings as well, where sin lives.⁵⁴ What Adam was, those born of him are the same in completeness and totality. This same principle holds true when a man is born of Christ. *Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.*⁵⁵ Ultimately, *we shall be like him* is the future hope of the Christian. For most men it would be enough to be saved by the Savior, but this is not what God’s Word reveals is the believer’s true hope. This hope is to be made through Christ’s power to share in Christ’s own glory and likeness.

*We shall also bear the image of the heavenly -
The Lord Jesus Christ, who was from heaven,*

and who is in heaven. As we are so closely connected with Adam as to resemble him, so by the divine arrangement, and by faith in the Lord Jesus, we are so closely connected with him that we shall resemble him in heaven. And as he is now free from frailty, sickness, pain, sorrow, and death, and as he has a pure and spiritual body, adapted to a residence in heaven, so shall we be in that future world. The argument here is, that the connection which is formed between the believer and the Saviour is as close as that which subsisted between him and Adam; and as that connection with Adam involved the certainty that he would be subjected to pain, sin, sickness, and death, so the connection with Christ involves the certainty that he will like him be free from sin, sickness, pain, and death, and like him will have a body that is pure, incorruptible, and immortal.⁵⁶

Being made to share in Jesus Christ’s heavenly image is the Christian’s hope and cause for rejoicing. *By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*⁵⁷ The Greek word for *glory* is *doxa*. Strong’s defines *doxa* as “honor, renown; glory, an especially divine quality, the unspoken manifestation of God, splendor.”⁵⁸ Because of the Christian’s connection to the glorified Son of God, he is said to have the hope of sharing in, and having conferred upon him, the same glory as the Son.⁵⁹ This hope of *glory* is the primary expectation of the Christian, whereby through God’s power he will be made to share in the same glory, honor, and heavenly inheritance that is the Son of God’s now.⁶⁰

52 II Cor 4:4 *In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*

Col 1:15 *Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:*

53 HELPS Word-studies #1504

54 Eccl. 9:3 *This is an evil among all things that are done under the sun, that there is one event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead.*

Jer. 17:9 *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*

Matt. 15:18 *But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.*

55 I John 3:2

56 Barnes’ Notes on the Bible, I Cor. 15:49

57 Rom. 5:2

58 Strong’s Concordance, #1391

59 Rom. 6:4 *Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*

Col. 3:4 *When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.*

60 John 17:22–26 *And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: ²³I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. ²⁴Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. ²⁵O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and*

The Word of the Lord

Because Christ became a living Spirit and has life within Himself, He can both quicken and make alive spiritually those whom He wills.⁶¹ *For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.*⁶²

As the Father raiseth up the dead - God has power to raise the dead. By his power it had been done in at least two instances - by the prophet Elijah, in the case of the son of the widow of Sarepta 1 Kings 17:22,⁶³ and by the prophet Elisha, in the case of the Shunamite's son, 2 Kings 4:32-35.⁶⁴ The Jews did not doubt that God had power to raise the dead. Jesus here expressly affirms it, and says he has the same power.

Quickeneth them - Gives them "life." This is the sense of the word "quickeneth" throughout the Bible.

Even so - In the same manner. By the same authority and power. The power of raising the dead must be one of the highest attributes of the divinity. As Jesus affirms that he has

the power to do this "in the same manner" as the Father, so it follows that he must be equal with God.

The Son quickeneth - Gives life to. This may either refer to his raising the dead from their graves, or to his giving spiritual life to those who are dead in trespasses and sins. The former he did in the case of Lazarus and the widow's son at Nain, John 11:43-44; Luke 7:14-15.⁶⁵ The latter he did in the case of all those who were converted by his power, and still does it in any instance of conversion.

Whom he will - It was in the power of Jesus to raise up any of the dead as well as Lazarus. It depended on his will whether Lazarus and the widow's son should come to life. So it depends on his will whether sinners shall live. He has power to renew them, and the renewing of the heart is as much the result of his "will" as the raising of the dead.⁶⁶

The Son quickens and has the power to make alive whom He wills. This was proven by Jesus raising Lazarus,⁶⁷ Jairus's daughter,⁶⁸ and the widow's son from

these have known that thou hast sent me. ²⁶*And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.*

⁶¹ *I Cor. 15:22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.*

Col. 3:4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

II Tim. 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus,

I John 5:11 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

⁶² *John 5:21*

⁶³ *I Kgs. 17:22 And the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived.*

⁶⁴ *II Kgs. 4:32-35 And when Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead, and laid upon his bed.*

³³*He went in therefore, and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the LORD.* ³⁴*And he went up, and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and stretched himself upon the child; and the flesh of the child waxed warm.* ³⁵*Then he returned, and walked in the house to and fro; and went up, and stretched himself upon him: and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes.*

⁶⁵ *John 11:43&44 And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.* ⁴⁴*And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.*

Luke 7:14&15 And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. ¹⁵*And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother.*

⁶⁶ *Barnes' Notes on the Bible, John 5:21*

⁶⁷ *John 11:39-44 Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days.* ⁴⁰*Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God?* ⁴¹*Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.* ⁴²*And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.* ⁴³*And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.* ⁴⁴*And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.*

⁶⁸ *Mark 5:22&23, 38-42 And, behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet, ²³And besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death: I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live.* ³⁸*And he cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly.* ³⁹*And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth.* ⁴⁰*And they laughed him to scorn. But when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying.* ⁴¹*And he took the damsel by*

the dead.⁶⁹ Hence, as surely as he who is without Christ will die eternally, just as certainly will believers who are given life through Christ live eternally.⁷⁰ All that was lost in Adam through the fall has

been regained, and then some, by the second Adam, Jesus Christ, in resurrection. Because of this, we who have believed upon the Son of God should *sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.*

the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise. ⁴²And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was of the age of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment.

Luke 8:41&42, 49–55 And, behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue: and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and besought him that he would come into his house: ⁴²For he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a dying. But as he went the people thronged him. ⁴⁹While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master. ⁵⁰But when Jesus heard it, he answered him, saying, Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole. ⁵¹And when he came into the house, he suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden. ⁵²And all wept, and bewailed her: but he said, Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth. ⁵³And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead. ⁵⁴And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise. ⁵⁵And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat. ⁵⁶And her parents were astonished: but he charged them that they should tell no man what was done.

⁶⁹ Luke 7:11–17 And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people. ¹²Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. ¹³And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. ¹⁴And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. ¹⁵And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother. ¹⁶And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people. ¹⁷And this rumour of him went forth throughout all Judaea, and throughout all the region round about.

⁷⁰ John 11:26 And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?