



Alive and Awake in Jesus!

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If you are ever going to tap into the unfathomable rejuvenating power of Christ AND you are going to accomplish it in this millennium, now is the year. Are you awake in Christ? Only our own decisions separate us from that moment of total awareness. Why not launch a new life right now? Why not come alive and stay awake in Christ!

I believe that God exists.

If God did not exist, then humans are just future fertilizer.

If God did not exist, then we are a stir in the slime, a movement in the muck.

If Christ did not exist, then our world is nothing more than a nomadic mud ball.

If Jesus did not exist then we are insignificant clots of accidental hurting molecules.

If our Savior did not exist then we are merely zombies zealously zooming to the tomb.

But connected to God - our future is inexhaustible. We become eternal, significant and vitalized! The greatest thing you can ever do is connect to God.

Invite Jesus to take up occupancy in your heart. When Jesus enters the heart, the old man of sin dies. They cannot coexist. When someone dies we have a funeral service. This burial to the old man of sin is

exemplified through the ceremony of baptism - and which also exemplifies a NEW LIFE.

Romans 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."

Have you made a decision for Jesus Christ? Do you want to stay awake in Christ?

Today, you are very special day in the eyes of Jesus Christ. **Matthew 10:29-32, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows. Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven."**

Today, we can celebrate new life and new hope! Truly we can say, "I want to be alive and awake in Jesus!" Today, we can come to Jesus – to the Water of Life and the Bread of Life! We can accept the eternal call of our Saviour to come to the Life-giving Water - to begin a new life in Christ.

It is through the waters of baptism by immersion where we confess our faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and testify of our death to sin and of our purpose to walk in newness of life. We acknowledge Christ as Lord and Saviour, become His people, and are received as members by His church. Baptism is a symbol of our union with Christ, the forgiveness of our sins, and our reception of the Holy Spirit. It is by immersion in water and is contingent on an affirmation of faith in Jesus and evidence of repentance of sin. It testifies that the Word of God, the precious Words of Life, the Living Bible, every Word that proceeds out of the mouth of our God have indeed set us truly free!

Nyangwira, who lived in Central Africa, did not consider baptism to be merely an option. For more than a year she had eagerly studied the Bible. She longed to become a Christian.

One evening she shared with her husband the things she had learned. Outraged, he shouted, "I don't want this kind of religion in my home and if you keep on studying I'll kill you." Although she was crushed, Nyangwira continued studying, and soon was ready for baptism.

Before leaving for the baptismal service Nyangwira knelt respectfully before her husband and told him she was to be baptized. He picked up his large hunting knife and shouted, "I have told you that I do not want you to be baptized. The day you are baptized I will kill you."

But Nyangwira, determined to follow her Lord, left with her husband's threats resounding in her ears. Before entering the water, she confessed her sins and dedicated her life to her Saviour, not knowing whether she would be laying down her life for her Lord that day, too. Peace filled her heart as she was baptized.

When she returned home, she brought the knife to her husband.

"Have you been baptized?" he asked angrily.

"Yes," replied Nyangwira simply. "Here is the knife."

"Are you ready to be killed?"

"Yes, I am."

Amazed at her courage, the husband no longer had a desire to kill her.

Sound incredible? But a true story! Jesus honors every decision for Him. He has loved you before you were even born and He loves all of us. Will He honour your decision today? Will he bless you? Will he strengthen you? Will He lead you beside the still waters even when strife and hardship may surround you? Is Jesus our Savior willing to walk the pathway of life with us when we surrender our wills to Him? Is Jesus willing to bestow upon His faithful children blessings eternal now and in the future? Come alive and stay awake in Jesus! Is it possible? Is Jesus willing? Yes!

Make your decision for Jesus today. In the choice for Him you are beginning an incredible journey. One that will leave you sometimes speechless, sometimes breathless and always marveling at the wisdom of your God.

Today, to be alive and awake in Jesus there are four essentials if you want to have a dynamic Christian life:

1. PRAYER (The BREATH of the Christian) - Prayer is the vehicle through which the awesome power of God is conveyed. This transforms this meaningless mass of molecules.

A large heavy truck stalled on the expressway and a man stopped to see if he could be of any help. He soon found that the wheel bearings had frozen up due to a lack of grease. What is so peculiar about that? The truck was an oil company truck which just happened to be hauling grease!

How often we Christians get so occupied bearing the duties of Christianity and the grease of the gospel that we neglect to lubricate our own spiritual bearings. How many Christians are stalled on the edge of a true and deep experience? Stranded there on the side of the road of life. Stalled out!

Hebrews 4:16, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

Have you ever watched a bird sleeping on its perch and never falling off? How does it manage to do this? The secret is the tendons of the bird's legs. They are so constructed that when the leg is bent at the knee, the claws contract and grip like a steel trap. The claws refuse to let go until the knees are unbent again. The bent knee gives the bird the ability to hold on tight to his perch. When you are sincerely on your knees you can't fall. Seek to get a firmer grip on those values which make life worth living. When we hold firmly to God in prayer, we can be assured He will hold tightly to us. Be assured that your Saviour will hold tightly to you as you hold firmly to God in prayer.

Seek a closer walk with God. Develop your prayer life. Communicate with Your Forever Friend. God answers EVERY prayer. But not always with a yes. If God said yes to every one of your prayers He would cease to be God. Instead, you would be in charge of the universe.

John 14:13, "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." The last part of **James 5:16, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."**

The first key in launching a new life is indeed prayer.

The second essential for living a Dynamic Christian Life is REGULAR, MEANINGFUL BIBLE TIME. (The FOOD of the Christian) - **Jeremiah 15:16**, **“Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts.”**

Job 23:12, **“Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.”**

Eat some exhilarating food to remain alive and awake in Jesus. The Word of God is exciting. Great value enriches the Bible reader from the spiritual life that surges out of its chapters. **II Timothy 3:15-17**, **“ And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”** The Bible is our spiritual food.

Do you plan to eat today? How many meals do you eat each and every day? How many feasts will you enjoy from the Bible? Your knowledge of God will increase in the proportion to the amount of food you eat. Too many Christians look like they have spent time in a Spiritual concentration camp! Plan on reading your Bible all the way through this year. Let us eat the Word of God!

The third essential for living a Dynamic Christian Life - WORK for God. This is the bodies EXERCISE. You may have made a new year's resolution to get more exercise. How about spiritual exercise. Paul Harvey said, "Too many Christians are no longer fishers of men but keepers of the aquarium."

Matt 4:19. **“And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.”**

If you wish to enrich days, plant flowers;
If you wish to enrich years, plant trees;
If you wish to enrich Eternity, plant Jesus in the hearts of others.

Acts 26: 17, 18, **“Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.”**

If you want to come alive remain awake in Jesus then try helping someone else. The story is told of a Pastor and his family who went to a Community Kitchen to lend a helping hand during Christmas. They arrived at 6:15 in the morning where a crowd of cold hungry folks waited.

One lady came to the serving counter and as the Pastor dished up some hot oatmeal and toast on her plate she said: "I had another seizure last night." There was a fresh cut on her forehead. The Pastor said: "God bless you Ma'am." She said: "He already has... I woke up alive this morning. I was not frozen, or hurt."

If you want to come alive and remain awake in Jesus then exercise your spiritual muscles for Jesus. Go on a Maranatha project yourself. Deliver food to a person in hunger. Use your car for transportation. Work for Jesus.

The fourth essential for living a Dynamic Christian Life - Daily Surrender to Christ. **James 4:7, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."** Submit to God and resist the devil. Yield your will to God's will and defy Satan's efforts. Every day you must give your all totally into Jesus hands. Oswald Chambers said: "Freedom is the ability not to insist on my rights, but to see that God gets His." Put God first every day!

You may say: I don't have time to study the Bible and pray and witness. So how do we find time? The answer is that we don't lose time in doing these things. We gain time! How's that? Because God can solve problems instantaneously, a problem that we might work on for months before solving. Come alive and remain awake in Jesus! Now is the time. Today is the day. Jesus invites you today to go all the way with your Savior - to come alive and remain awake in Jesus - alive in the Word - alive in prayer - alive in witnessing - alive in Jesus!