



January 10 - January 15

DIED TO SINS, LIVE TO
RIGHTEOUSNESS

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EXPRESSING THE
LORD IN PERSECUTION

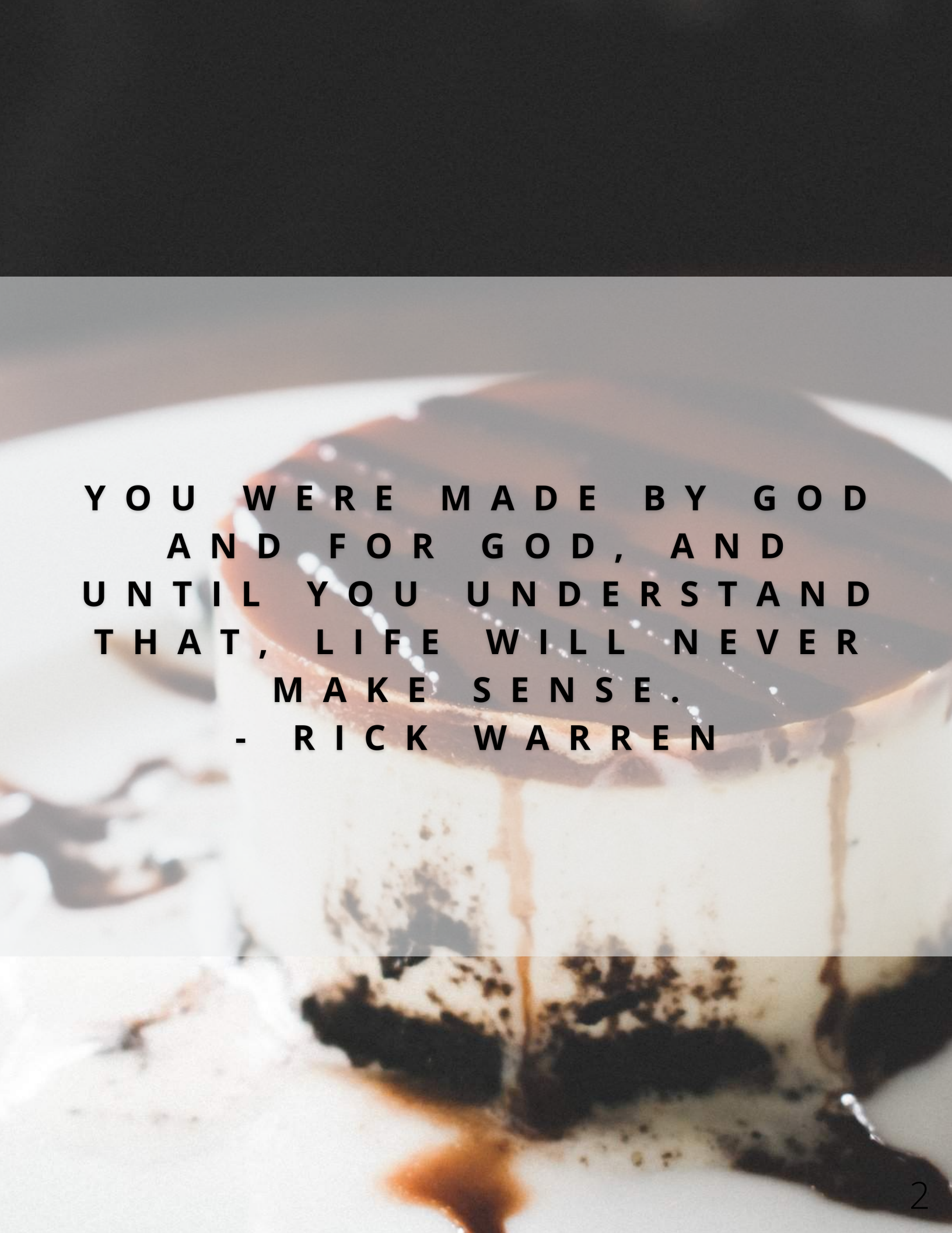
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YOU WERE MADE BY GOD
AND FOR GOD, AND
UNTIL YOU UNDERSTAND
THAT, LIFE WILL NEVER
MAKE SENSE.
- RICK WARREN



DIED TO SINS, LIVE TO RIGHTEOUSNESS

1Pet 2:24 Who [Christ] Himself bore up our sins in His body on the tree, in order that we, having died to sins, might live to righteousness; by whose bruise you were healed.

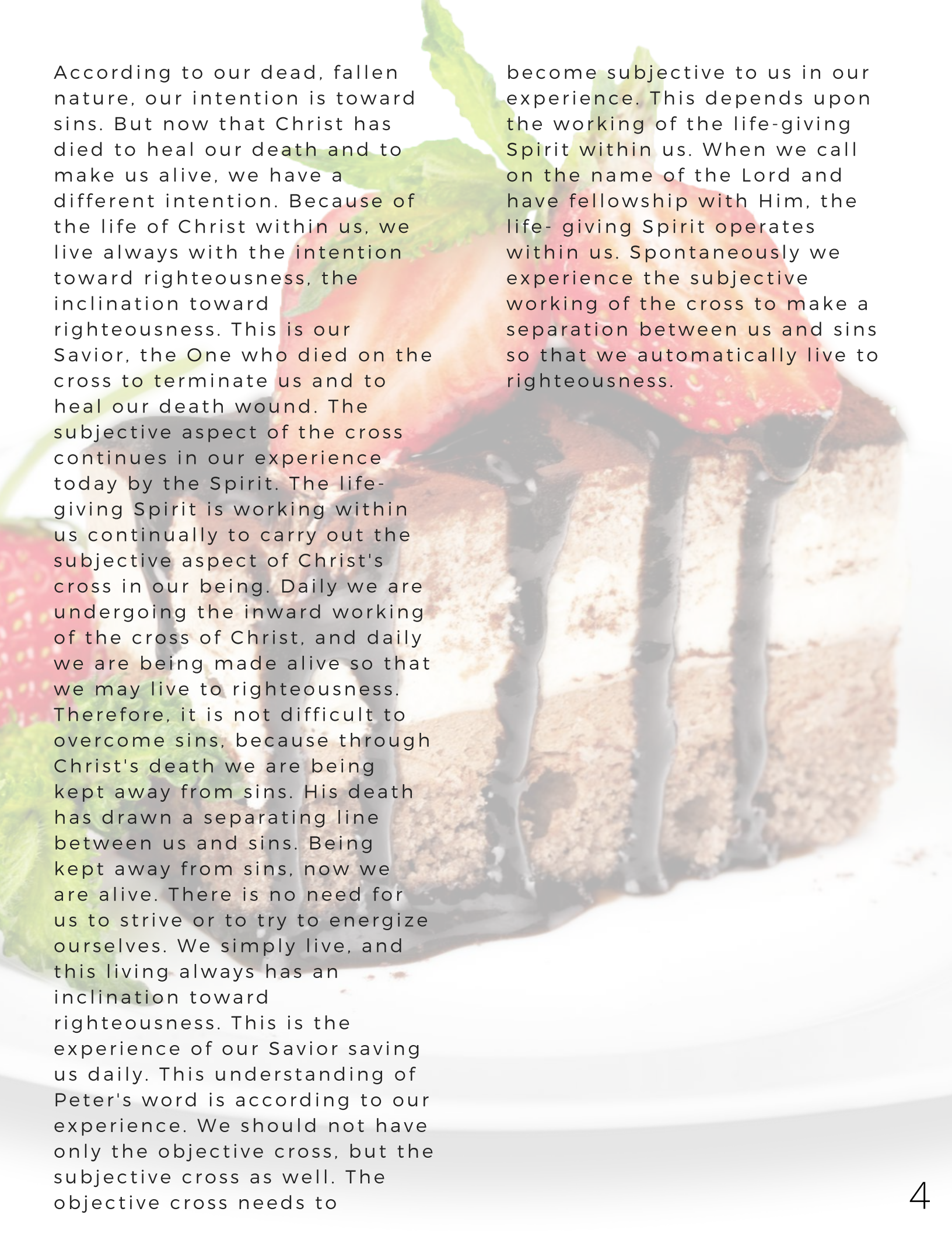
Rom 6:11 So also you, reckon yourselves to be dead to sin, but living to God in Christ Jesus.

Rom 6:13 Neither present your members as weapons of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as alive from the dead, and your members as weapons of righteousness to God.

We have pointed out that the phrase "having died to sins" literally means being away from sins. When Christ carried up our sins onto the cross and died, that death accomplished many things. The death of Christ terminated us, and this termination can keep us away from sin. The best way for people to be kept from sins or from sin is for them to be put

to death. No matter how many sins a person may commit, once he has died, death separates him from sins. Peter speaks of being away from sins; Paul speaks of the one who has died being free from sin. Through Christ's death we can be kept away from sins so that we may live to righteousness.

Apparently, being kept away from sin terminates us; actually, it enlivens us so that we may live to righteousness. As we have pointed out, by Christ's bruise we have been healed. This means that His death heals our death. Verse 24 indicates that, as fallen human beings, we were dead and full of sins. But Christ put our sins upon Himself and carried them up onto the tree, the cross, where He suffered God's righteous judgment for all our sins. Christ's death on the cross was a bruise, and that bruise, that death, has healed our death. Now we have become alive. On the one hand, Christ's bruise that heals us keeps us away from sins through His death; on the other, hand this healing enlivens us so that we may live to righteousness.



According to our dead, fallen nature, our intention is toward sins. But now that Christ has died to heal our death and to make us alive, we have a different intention. Because of the life of Christ within us, we live always with the intention toward righteousness, the inclination toward righteousness. This is our Savior, the One who died on the cross to terminate us and to heal our death wound. The subjective aspect of the cross continues in our experience today by the Spirit. The life-giving Spirit is working within us continually to carry out the subjective aspect of Christ's cross in our being. Daily we are undergoing the inward working of the cross of Christ, and daily we are being made alive so that we may live to righteousness. Therefore, it is not difficult to overcome sins, because through Christ's death we are being kept away from sins. His death has drawn a separating line between us and sins. Being kept away from sins, now we are alive. There is no need for us to strive or to try to energize ourselves. We simply live, and this living always has an inclination toward righteousness. This is the experience of our Savior saving us daily. This understanding of Peter's word is according to our experience. We should not have only the objective cross, but the subjective cross as well. The objective cross needs to

become subjective to us in our experience. This depends upon the working of the life-giving Spirit within us. When we call on the name of the Lord and have fellowship with Him, the life-giving Spirit operates within us. Spontaneously we experience the subjective working of the cross to make a separation between us and sins so that we automatically live to righteousness.



EXPRESSING THE LORD IN PERSECUTION

1Pet 3: 14-15 But even if you suffer because of righteousness, you are blessed. And do not be afraid with fear from them, nor be troubled, 15 But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, being always ready for a defense to everyone who asks of you an account concerning the hope which is in you,

In sufferings that come from opposition and persecution, we should sanctify Christ as Lord in our hearts. The word "sanctify" in Greek means to set apart, to separate from things that are common. This is to make something particular and even outstanding. In our suffering of persecution, we should make Christ particular; we should show that He is magnificent, absolutely different from idols. Sanctifying Christ as Lord in our hearts is not a matter of outward activity to set Him apart from what is common. It is an inward matter. To sanctify Christ as Lord in our hearts means that when we are under persecution, we have the Lord in

our hearts. If we allow the Lord to be the Lord in our hearts when we suffer persecution, we shall express Him. This expression spontaneously will sanctify Christ and set Him apart from idols. If we are timid and fearful when suffering persecution, the Lord will not be sanctified in us. What a shame that would be to Him! It will appear as if we do not have the Lord in our hearts. Whenever we suffer persecution, others must realize that we have Christ within us as Lord. But if we are timid and fearful, others will think that we do not have anything within us. They will have the impression that we do not have the living Lord in us. But if we are bold, sanctifying the Lord in our hearts and expressing Him in our faces, others will realize that we do have something within us. This is to sanctify Christ as Lord in our hearts.

WHY ARE THERE FOUR GOSPELS INSTEAD OF ONE?

Many have asked why there are four Gospels in the New Testament instead of just one. Though many of the same events are recorded in each Gospel, each author wrote to a different audience and emphasized a different aspect of Jesus' life.

Matthew was written as a Gospel primarily for the Jewish people to prove that Jesus is the long-expected Messiah. Its author, Matthew, began with the family line of Jesus, noting His fulfillment of messianic prophecy as being from the tribe of Judah, family of David, and His birth in the city of Bethlehem. More than any other Gospel, Matthew quotes the Hebrew Old Testament to demonstrate how Jesus fulfilled the words of the prophets.

Mark is the shortest Gospel and likely the first written Gospel produced. It has

traditionally been taught to be the summary of the apostle Peter's teachings written by John Mark, a cousin of Barnabas (Colossians 4:3), who served both Paul and Peter in their ministries.

An associate of the apostle Paul, the author of Luke was also a medical doctor and the author of Acts. Luke was also the only Gentile (non-Jew) who wrote a Gospel, making it of special importance in evangelism and discipleship in the Gentile world. Rather than the account of one person, Luke clearly noted his use of many eyewitness accounts in his work: "Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us, just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught" (Luke 1:1-4). Luke's Gospel focuses on verifiable historical evidence and demonstrates the rationality of the Christian faith for Gentiles

unconcerned with Jewish messianic prophecy.

John was likely the last of the four Gospels to be written and was done so by the apostle John. He included many events not in the other three Gospels as well as left out many events already mentioned in Matthew, Mark, or Luke. John's goal was clearly to write in order to help lead people to faith in Christ: "Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name" (John 20:30-31).

Taken together, the four perspectives provided in the four Gospels provide a more complete picture of the person, teachings, miracles, and life of Jesus Christ. In addition, the multiple attestations of these accounts from very early sources provide stronger evidence for the truthfulness of their claims. For example, each of these four books was likely written in different locations and at different times, in addition to being authored by four different individuals. While they sometimes record the same events with

different details, their message is consistent, indicating a level of truthfulness and accuracy that strengthens their testimony. These four Gospels ultimately provide one clear message that Jesus is the one, true, perfect, divine Son of God.

A HYMN A DAY KEEPS YOU HUMMING ALL THE WAY

I ONCE WAS DEAD - DEAD IN MY SINS



1

I once was dead—dead in my sins;
Behaved myself in lust of flesh.
By nature such a child of wrath,
Even as the rest.

2

But God being so merciful
Because of His great love to me
Enlivened me I'm now in Christ
Seated in the heavenlies.

3

But that's not all! I'm with the saints.
Together we're His workmanship,
His masterpiece expressing Him
In the heavens and on earth.

4

I was once apart from Christ, you know;
Alien from the wealth of Israel;
Not a hope—not even one to tell,
Without God in the world.

5

Now in Christ He has become my peace;
By the blood of Christ I am released.
I am one with all the saints, since He's
Broken down the middle wall.

6

He has died creating one new man.
Thus fulfilling God's eternal plan.
With all saints together, let us stand,
Shout and sing and praise the Lord!

1-3 can be sung simultaneously with 4-6



B I B L E C H A L L E N G E

GOAL: TO READ THE ENTIRE NEW TESTAMENT IN ONE YEAR

5 CHAPTERS A WEEK



MONDAY: MATTHEW 1

https://text.recoveryversion.bible/40_Matthew_1.htm

TUESDAY: MATTHEW 2

https://text.recoveryversion.bible/40_Matthew_2.htm#Mat2

WEDNESDAY: MATTHEW 3

https://text.recoveryversion.bible/40_Matthew_3.htm#Mat3

THURSDAY: MATTHEW 4

https://text.recoveryversion.bible/40_Matthew_4.htm#Mat4

FRIDAY: MATTHEW 5

https://text.recoveryversion.bible/40_Matthew_5.htm#Mat5