

and living God. So God created Man, in His image and after His likeness. Inwardly and outwardly, Man resembles God. He was created a fit vessel to contain and express God. God's purpose for this is that we should receive Him and allow Him to be manifested in us. (This does not refer only to the individual. It will take all the real believers from all ages to fulfil God's plan).

God does not force His will on anybody. He has decided that we can all choose our own way. In His greatness He did not make Man already containing His life; He only made him a proper vessel for it. We have to make the choice. Either we can receive this great gift and fulfil the purpose for which we were created or we can reject Him and go our own way. However, God has promised that we will be brought into judgment for our choices concerning these things. Those who choose rightly, God will reward and bless and those who reject Him, He will punish and destroy.

## WE MUST GROW

With this in mind, let us consider; what is our responsibility? Our responsibility is to grow. Receiving God's life is only the beginning. It is only the first step in God's wonderful design. Once we receive Him we are just starting a new and great experience. God wants His life to grow in us. Just as a baby, after it is born, needs to grow; so do we. The Bible says: "...as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby (I Pet 2:2)." In another place it says that we should: "...grow up into Him in all things (Eph 4:15).

After receiving Christ, we have two lives. We have our old life, our human life, and a new life, His divine life. Our old life, the life of the self, must decrease; His life must increase. This is necessary and important. This is crucial! In the Bible we read: "For whosoever will save his life (old self life) shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life (old self life) for my sake shall find it (Mt 16:25)." In another place it says: "...shall keep it unto life eternal (Jn 12:25)." What this means is that if we choose not to follow Him and not to allow His life to grow in us (in other words we "save" or keep our own life) we will lose it, but if we allow Him to have His way, He will fill us with His own eternal

life. (A rough analogy of this may be pickling. A cucumber is preserved by being saturated with the proper solution of salt, water and vinegar. So we will be "preserved" in that day by being full of Him.)

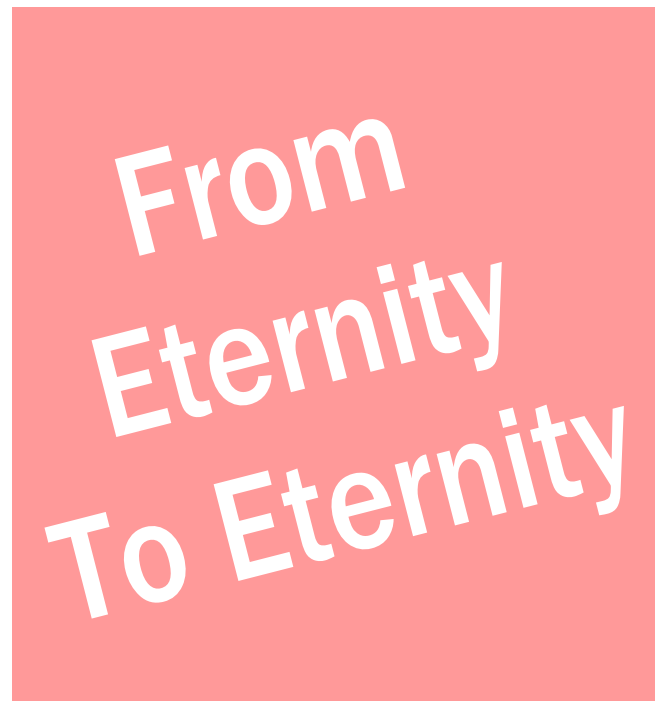
Another verse that applies here states: "if any man will come after me, let him deny himself (his "self life"), and take up his cross, and follow me (Mt 16:24)." Here is a marvelous thing. God's life in us has the full experience of Jesus' death on the cross. By allowing Him, Jesus Christ, to live and reign in our lives, His death will be applied through the Spirit to our self life, and His eternal life will live in its place.

This is our responsibility, to grow by allowing Him to have a free rein. We must present our bodies and even our whole being to Him in a complete way so that His life can have free course in us (Rom 12:1,2). Let us cast ourselves completely on Him and not hold onto anything that might keep Him from having His perfect way in our lives. He will then change us into His own likeness from glory to glory (II Cor 3:18). Hallelujah! We as human beings can contain and express the God of the universe. Let us then be found faithful in what we have been given and allow Him to complete His work in us while we wait expectantly for His coming.

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What does it mean to have eternal life? Surprisingly enough, many Christians cannot give a good, accurate answer to this question. Some may say that it means that they will live forever. Others think that it means going to heaven when they die. Still others might answer that it means being born again. While all these answers may have an element of truth in them, none of them really embraces the limitless revelation or the enormous consequences of the subject. This tract therefore is an attempt to help believers see how indescribably good God is and how much He has done for us in giving us eternal life. I pray that He may use it in this way for His glory.

As Christians we all have been told that since we have received Christ as our Lord and Savior, we now have eternal life. This is true. As born-again Christians we have eternal life. What a glorious fact! We have something that guarantees our existence in eternity. Not only this but by partaking of His life, we have become the sons of God. We have been divinely begotten.

What is this life of which we have partaken? What does it mean to be the sons of God? These are

questions that this writing will attempt to explain. However, the truth of this subject is so immense and immeasurable that it probably will take all of eternity (if that can be properly said) for us to comprehend it. Therefore these words will of necessity be only a meager attempt by a human mind to unveil such a great mystery.

God has existed from eternity and will exist to eternity. The Bible says: "...from eternity to eternity, thou art God (Ps 90:2)." God is ever existing. He has had no beginning and He will have no end. In fact, He inhabits eternity (Is 57:15). Without him there would be no eternity. Everything that exists, exists by Him, through Him and for Him including eternity. I think that it would even be safe to say that God invented eternity for Himself to dwell in.

## **GOD'S LIFE IS ETERNAL LIFE**

This discussion of eternity is simply to show that God exists eternally. This means that God's life is eternal. It always has been and it always will be. His life is unchanging, immortal, indestructible, incorruptible, and everything that is associated with the idea of "lasting." Eternal life is nothing other than God's very own life. There is no eternal life outside of God; He alone is everlasting.

Do you see this? Eternal life is not our own life continuing on forever. It is God's life which exists eternally! Eternal life is the uncreated, ever-living life of God. This is what the Bible means when it says "eternal life."

## **WE CAN HAVE IT TOO**

Now, the most unspeakably great and wonderful fact is that God has decided to share His life with us. We, who are mere human beings - fallible, corruptible, sinful and very mortal - are able to receive the life of God! Since God is supremely holy, His Son's sacrifice - His death on the cross - was needed to cleanse sinful man so that we could receive such a tremendous gift. By the spilled blood of Jesus Christ, we have been made able to partake of all that God is and all that He has. What a

great love He has for mankind. He was willing to pay the supreme price for us so that we could receive His life and live for eternity.

Countless words would fail to tell this story which is the mystery hidden from ages, which has now been revealed (Rom 16:25,26). Jesus came not only to die for our cleansing, but to be raised again from the dead to be our connection with God. Jesus Christ is the channel through which God gives His life. It is through faith in Him that we can receive it. Not only this, but He is the unique manifestation of God's life. The Apostle John clearly stated this when he wrote:

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld, and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life (and the life was manifested and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare unto you the life, the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us)"; (1 Jn 1:1,2)

When we receive Jesus, we receive God's life through Him. This is what it means to be "born again" or "born from above." When we were born the first time we received a human life. The second birth means receiving the divine life. Now we have a life that cannot change - a life that cannot die. This is Jesus' promise that if we believe in Him we will not perish but have eternal life.

## **THREE GREEK WORDS**

Unfortunately, this great truth is somewhat veiled to us by the translation of the scriptures into our own language. In the Greek language, in which the New Testament was written, there are three words which we translate in English "life." These three Greek words are: BIOS, PSUCHE and ZOE. BIOS means biological or physical life; PSUCHE refers to our soul or self, that is our psychological life; and the word ZOE, in the New Testament, means God's life. W. E. Vine, in his "Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words," defines ZOE as "life as God has it." Praise God, HE really has it! When the Bible speaks of God giving us life in Jesus, it uses this word ZOE. In many cases it is important to know which Greek word is being used so that we can properly understand what each passage means. Due to the inadequacy of our

translations, when many people read that Jesus Christ came to give us life, they suppose that this means more of their own (BIOS or PSUCHE). NO! He came to give us His. To have life more abundantly (Jn 10:10) does not mean to have a happy, prosperous existence (although it may possibly include this) but to be full of God's supernatural, divine, eternal life - IONIAN ZOE (Gk).

By receiving God's life we have become God's sons - His children (1 Jn 3:2). We have been begotten by Him. As His sons, there are many promises made by God to us which we can receive. The Bible is full of them. Of foremost importance among them is the fact that we will inherit everything that God has made or ever will make and be able to enjoy and participate in all that He is.

From this it should be clear that we have received much more than just an extension of our own life. We have received a new life, an eternal life - God's life. This reality and the consequences of it are too meaningful to explain. It is a mystery which only God can reveal to those who are His chosen. May God open our eyes to see what He has done and is doing for us.

## **OUR RESPONSIBILITY**

Since God has given us as Christians the free gift of His life through His Son Jesus, what then is our responsibility? God has a plan and a purpose for His giving. Before the world began, God had chosen us to be His children. Now He wants to be doing something with us, in us, for us and through us. His plan is of the utmost importance. What we have received is so precious, so wonderful and paid for with such a great price that we should give careful consideration to our responsibility concerning it. We should not take God's gift lightly. It is not a small thing.

God desires to be manifested. He wants to be declared and expressed to all the universe. He desires that all of His creation would see and know Him. Although He is clearly seen in all that He has made, and the heavens and the earth declare His glory; yet all this is inadequate to fully contain and express such a great