

## Eternal Life

*“...I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.” John 10:10*

This past Christmas season, as I was enjoying all the things that come along with my favorite time of year, my heart was stirred in a way that I wasn't expecting. Like many of us, I am moved by the thought of the creator of the world humbly coming to earth to be born as a baby. It's an incredible condescension on the part of Almighty God. But as I was reflecting on the wonder of baby Jesus laying in a manger my thoughts went to the simple but profound question: **Why? Why was Jesus born?**

Christ's birth narrative in Matthew tells us—“*You shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins*” (Matt 1:21). Jesus himself tells us in Mark, as he gets ever near the cross, that he came to serve and to *give His life as a ransom* for many (Mk 10:45). And Ephesians explains just how he was going to be that payment for sins—“*In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us...*” (Eph 1:7-8)

It is often said that Jesus was born to die. And that is certainly true, but I think that simple answer falls short of the fullness of the good news. Jesus repeatedly said that He has come to give us **life**. “*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.*” (John 3:16-17).

Eternal life is more than a future promise of heaven. The words Jesus uses describe **the very life that comes from God Himself**—a fullness of life that has no beginning or end, the life humanity was created for in the beginning. Jesus came to be the sacrifice for our sins SO THAT we could be restored to this **absolute fulness of life**, here and now. We have not been saved merely so we can go to heaven one day, but so that **the life of heaven can dwell in us today**.

That leads to a personal question for every one who claims faith in Christ—**Is the life I am living the abundant life Jesus made possible?** Another way to think about it—**Is the life I'm living the life my heart most deeply desires?**

Jesus' invitation to “*Follow Me*” is not merely a call to belief, but to a **newness of life**. Life that is no longer lived for myself or for the fleeting ways of the world, but for Jesus and His Kingdom. Throughout history, true followers of Christ who have lived in this newness of life have shared common spiritual rhythms—practices that keep their hearts focused on the Kingdom of God, the kingdom of abundant life, rather than the lesser things of this world. Practices that Jesus himself embraced. Intimate time with our Heavenly Father, earnest prayer, meditation on God's Word, fellowship and accountability with other believers, just to name a few.

Full, abundant, eternal life has been made possible through Emmanuel but we must take hold of it through intentional spiritual rhythms. My prayer for us is that we would not settle for a lesser life, but we would pursue the abundant life that is found in Christ with devotion.

Heavenly Father, thank You for coming to give us life—true, abundant, eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Search our hearts and expose where we have settled for less than what You offer. Give us the courage to follow You fully, walk the narrow path, and live as people transformed by Your life within us. Amen.