

“For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.” James 2:26 KJV



“The lights are on, but nobody’s home!” is an expression indicating a façade of life where none exists. Sea shells are beautifully elaborate wonders of nature, but are seldom seen living. Those that wash up on shore are the “shell” of the former inhabitant; possessions of hermit crabs, merchandise, collections, or ground into sand by the sea. Yes, they still look pretty and when used by hermit crabs, take on the illusion of being alive, but are lifeless, nonetheless. So are those with nothing to verify their faith, but empty rhetoric. Obedience of God’s Word is the evidence of faith and repentance. Morticians and those who deal with corpses often refer to them as the “remains” of so and so; what they have left behind. In God’s economy, Life does not leave; it arrives, because God IS Life! *“In Him was Life and the Life was the Light of men.”* There is no Light in men without God! In John 3 Jesus tells Nicodemus, *“He that believeth on Him (God’s only Son) is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already. And this is the condemnation, that Light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than Light, because their deeds were evil.”* It’s like men who prefer flashlights in a dungeon, to the sunshine outdoors! Men are born into condemnation and darkness; their spirits separated from God for *“God is a Spirit, and those that worship Him must worship Him IN SPIRIT and in Truth.”* Only your spirit can truly commune with and know the sovereign invisible God! When men cry humbly to God to be forgiven of their sins and repent; that is, obey God’s Word, God’s response is to once again join their dead/separated spirit and they become, by virtue of His very Life, *“a LIVING soul!”* It takes a lifetime of diligent seeking to truly know eternity’s Sovereign, but once His Light begins to dawn in the consciousness of your soul, you will seek nothing else! *“We have also a more sure Word of Prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the Day dawn, and the DAY STAR arise in your hearts.”* Since God is eternal, all those joined with Him in spirit and Truth are, by essence of His immortality, also immortal. It’s not the PRACTICE of righteousness that resurrects men; it is the PRESENCE of Righteousness! If God is not joined to your spirit, your soul is yet *“dead in trespasses and in sins.”* You cannot live forever without the Presence of immortality quickening your eternal soul with His very being: His Word commanding your thoughts and thereby your deeds! Many professing Christians are like sea shells with hermit crabs. They look alive, but they are just a shell! The analogy is; works do not create faith, but faith creates works. Are you a “hermit crab, Christian?”

The life of God is what men need,
For righteous worth of goodly deed,
Without the Christ of evermore,
The faith of men will be no more! -CGP

Does your “shell” move around and look pretty because some crab of good deeds has taken up residence, or is it the very Life of God Himself that moves your soul and spirit to obedience? Is your faith alive or dead? Does His Word in your thoughts dictate your deeds? Is God with you or do you just pretend He is? Like my sister asked, “Are you reformed, but not revived?”

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the GIFT of God: NOT OF WORKS, lest any man should boast. For we are HIS workmanship, created (newborn) in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” Ephesians 2:8-10 KJV