



# ON DYNAMIC CHRISTIANITY

By

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[These notes are from a Bible study taught more than 40 years ago. The notes are in outline form.]

# The Beginning!

“For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.” 1 Corinthians 1:18

When we say that the Christian life should be “dynamic,” we’re saying it should be “powerful.” The Greek word Paul used in his letter to the Christians in Corinth is *δύναμις* (*dunamis*). The English word “dynamic” comes from the Greek and means “power, might, ability, energy” (the French word is *dynamique*). A **dynamic life** is a “powerful” life, a life with the energy and ability to achieve mighty things.

The idea of the Christian life being **powerful** is a central theme of the Bible. With that introduction, I’d like to share a series of Bible studies taught in churches more than 40 years ago. We invite you to read and share with others in any way God leads you.

## *Questions and Answers*

- Question: What is the inner proof of salvation?
- Answer: The fruit of the Spirit (Love) – Galations 5:22-23

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.”

- Question: What is the outward demonstration of our salvation to the world?
- Answer: Our love for the brethren – John 13:35

“By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”

- Question: What are some practical ways we can demonstrate our love to a Christian brother or sister?
- Answer: (Ask audience and list on overhead)

Answer –

Answer –

Answer –

Answer –

Answer –

- Question: What is a good definition for real love?
- Answer: (Ask audience and list on overhead)

Answer –

Answer –

Answer –

### *3 definitions of what love is NOT!*

1. Love is NOT an impulse from feelings (talk about the difference between loving when we “feel” like it and loving because God “commands” it)
2. Love is NOT always running with the natural inclinations (talk about “natural” love and “supernatural” love)
3. Love is NOT spending itself only upon those for whom some affinity is discovered (talk about choosing certain brethren over others)

### *15 definitions of what love IS!*

1. Love IS “selfless” — love does not make good to self its end, but good to God in general is its end.
2. Love IS “opposed to sin” — love will be opposed to all sin in every form and degree.
3. Love IS “justice” — love will always do the right thing.

4. Love IS “truth” — love will be truthful in every instance.
5. Love IS “compassion” — love will promote concern for the poor and needy.
6. Love IS “patience” — love will be patient in every circumstance.
7. Love IS “meekness” — love will remember where it was before Christ found it.
8. Love IS “humility” — love will be humble in any position of life.
9. Love IS “condescension” — love will be willing to descend to the poor, the ignorant, or the vile for the purpose of securing their good.
10. Love IS “candor” — love will treat every subject with fairness and honesty. It will oppose prejudice and pre-judgment.
11. Love IS “kindness” — love will be kind and gentle to everyone.
12. Love IS “sincerity” — love will always be opposed to hypocrisy in any form.
13. Love IS “gratitude” — love will always be thankful in heart and grateful in action.
14. Love IS “severity” — love will always act for the public good in cases where sin exists and where the public interests are at stake.
15. Love IS “unity” — love will chose the same that God chooses. It is dedicated to the highest well-being of God and will be in harmony with the mind of God.

## *What is Unity?*

“For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.” Romans 12:4-5

“ For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.” 1 Corinthians 10:17

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.” Galatians 3:28

“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.” Ephesians 4:11-16

The expanded translation of Ephesians 4:13 is – “until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the experimental, full, and precise knowledge of the Son of God, to a spiritually mature man, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of the Christ.”

“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!” Psalm 133:1

### *Invitation*

How many of you would say there is at least one brother or sister in the family of God who you have not been one with? There’s at least one brother or sister you’ve not loved in the way you ought?

Are you serious about experiencing the fulness of God? Do you want to live a “dynamic” Christianity? Do you want to have the power the Holy Spirit active in your life? Then you need to find that brother, that sister, wherever they are, and be reconciled with them.

# The Life!

I was raised by Christian parents and attended both a Christian church and school as a child, but did not understand Christianity until after I became an atheist and investigated the true meaning of Christianity as an adult. It is **Christ living in us** – “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27).

It is **Christ living in us** that enables us to comprehend God’s deep love for us and be filled with all the fullness of God –

“That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.” Ephesians 3:17-19

Christianity is not dull, it is not lifeless; it is exciting and full of life! Christianity comes to each of us through the **power** of Christ’s resurrection from the dead –

“Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.” Romans 1:3-4

“That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.”

Philippians 3:10

### *Questions and Answers*

- Question: How is a man saved?
- Answer: By grace through faith. Ephesians 2:8-9 & Romans 5:1

“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.”

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

- Question: What is faith?
- Answer: Substance and evidence – Hebrews 11:1

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”

- Question: How is our faith increased?
- Answer: Through study of the Word. Romans 10:17

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

- Question: How is a Christian to live this present life?
- Answer: By faith. Romans 1:17

“For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”

### *Living By Faith*

God wants us to live by faith, but most Christians live by sight. We need to put off the “sight life” and put on the “faith life.”

The last words of Romans 1:17 in a literal translation from Greek reads – “The just out of faith shall live.” Faith is the source out of which we are saved, sanctified and ultimately glorified. We can’t be saved by works, set apart by works, or glorified by works. Everything is the work of God. Faith is the gift of God to the lost sinner and the fruit of God to the saved believer. To have faith in someone is to “trust them, have confidence in them.” The Word of God does not leave us to question what it means to trust the Lord. “Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.” Psalm 37:3

“Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.” Psalm 37:5

“It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man.” Psalm 118:8

“Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.” Proverbs 3:5

“Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength” Isaiah 26:4

“Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.” Isaiah 50:10

“Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about.” Psalm 32:10

“They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever.” Psalm 125:1

“The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe.” Proverbs 29:25

“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.” Isaiah 26:3

One of the best definitions of **trust** is: “assured reliance on the character, ability, strength, or truth of someone.”

When you live by faith, you are saying to the world –

- I believe in the character of God
- I believe in the ability of God
- I believe in the strength of God
- I believe in the Word of God
- I believe in a God worth loving and serving

When you do not live by faith, you are saying to the world –

- I do not believe in the character of God
- I do not believe in the ability of God
- I do not believe in the strength of God
- I do not believe in the Word of God
- I do not believe in a God worth loving and serving

Quotes overheard from Christians –

- “I believe in God, but ...”
- “I know I should live by faith, but ...”
- “I know what God’s Word says, but ...”
- “I’m trusting God, but ...”
- “I have faith in God, but ...”
- “I know God’s called me to the ministry, but ...”
- “I want to please God, but ...”

Faith has been described as visualizing what God intends to do in a given situation and acting in harmony with it. God sees from the “supernatural” and man sees from the “natural.” Thus, why God tells us to live our lives according to “faith” in His Word rather than by what we “see” with our eyes.

From where do you see? Will you be like Moses, who, through faith, “saw Him who is invisible”? Or will you be like the disobedient of Israel who Jesus spoke of when He said, “The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!”

### *Invitation*

How many of you would say that you have not been living by faith up to this time, but that by an act of your will in obedience to the Word of God, you will “live by faith”?

# The Walk!

## Questions and Answers

- Question: What is the purpose of being a Christian?
- Answer: Be holy and pure in behavior of life – Ephesians 1:4

“According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.”

- Question: Why did God save us in the first place?
- Answer: Our love for the brethren – Ephesians 2:4-7

“But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.”

- Question: What is the ultimate of Christianity?
- Answer: To know the love of Christ and be filled with the fulness of God –  
Ephesians 3:17-19

“That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.”

- Question: What has God ordained our behavior to be in this present evil world?
- Answer: Live as a new man in righteousness and true holiness – Ephesians 4:17-24

“This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. But ye have not so learned Christ; If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”

## *Pleasing God*

I want us to look at the behavior, or walk, that pleases God. Let's begin with Ephesians 4:24 –

“And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”

The **new man** is created “after God.” This literally means that the Christian has been created “according to what God is in Himself.” That is, created after the pattern of God and what He is.

If you ladies want to use a pattern to make a dress, you will have to follow that pattern exactly or else the dress will not fit and look as it ought.

Ephesians 5:1 reads – “Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children.” Literally, this is – “be becoming therefore imitators of God, as children beloved.”

To **imitate** someone is to produce a likeness of that person in your life. Paul is telling us that we are to produce a likeness of God in our behavior. We are to be **God-like!**

But, we say, how can we know what God is like? The Bible teaches that **in Christ** “dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (Colossians 2:9).

Look at Ephesians 2:10 – “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

Expanded translation – “We are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus with a view to good works which God prepared beforehand in order that within their sphere we may order our behavior.”

We are to order our behavior in the sphere of –

- Good works (Ephesians 2:10)
- Righteousness (Ephesians 4:24)
- Holiness (Ephesians 4:24)

There are only two reasons why a Christian does not experience a dynamic life. Look at Psalm 19:12-13

1. Secret faults (ignorance)
2. Presumptuous sins (disobedience)

- The dynamic Christian “knows and obeys.
- The non-dynamic Christian either “doesn’t know” or “knows and disobeys.”

Look at James 1:22-25 –

“But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.”

- Christian A – hearer only
- Christian B – hearer and doer

The Bible is a very practical book. It deals with our real-life, every-day problems. God not only tells us what to **put off** or stop doing, he also tells us what to **put on** or start doing.

### *Put Off*

- Lying
- Stealing
- Evil speaking
- Bitterness
- Anger
- Malice (ill will)
- Hatred

- Profanity
- Hypocrisy
- Worry
- Doubt
- Conceit
- Judging
- Rebellion
- Murmuring
- Discontent
- Temper
- Gossip
- Other gods
- Lack of joy
- Jealousy
- Irresponsibility
- Procrastination
- Laziness
- Neglect of prayer and Bible study
- Temporal values
- Following the crowd
- Cheating
- Over-eating
- Drinking, smoking, drugs
- Gambling
- Adultery
- Fornication
- Necking and petting

- Dating wrong people
- Homosexuality
- Lust of the flesh
- Lust of the eyes
- Self (egocentric)

### *Put On*

- Truth telling
- Giving
- Edifying
- Kindness
- Tender heart
- Forgiveness
- Love
- Sincerity
- Trust
- Faith
- Humility
- Searching my own sin
- Submission
- Gratefulness
- Satisfaction
- Self control
- Speaking with praise
- Jesus first
- Rejoicing always

- Preferring others
- Discipline
- Diligence
- Prayer and Bible study
- Eternal values
- Following Jesus
- Honesty
- Balanced life
- God's temple
- Stewardship
- Fidelity
- Purity
- Abstinence
- Equally yoked
- God's purpose
- Pure desires
- Pure thoughts
- Christ (Christocentric)

### *Invitation*

Is there anything in your life today that needs to be put off? Is there something that you need to put on? If there is and you would like us to pray for you, please raise your hand (or [email us](#)).

# The Hope!

“And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.” 1 Corinthians 13:13

“If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard ...”  
Colossians 1:23

**Question:** What is the hope of the Gospel?

**Answer:** The favorable and confident expectation of the fulfillment of all the promises presented in the Gospel (e.g. Heaven, eternal life)

Turn to 1 Corinthians 15:49-52 –

“And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”

Look again at verse 49 – “... we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.” This means that one day we will be clothed with the likeness of Christ. Romans 8:29 tells us that God predestined us to be conformed or *fashioned* and *formed* into the image or *likeness* of His Son, Jesus Christ. Have you ever seriously thought that one day **you** will be fashioned into the likeness of Christ and be dressed with the “heavenly”? Have you ever realized that **you** will one day leave this planet and begin to live in Heaven?

(Apply this to the person)

1 Corinthians 15:51-52 says, “we shall be changed.”

This is possibly the most hopeful truth I can share with a child of God! This is the foundation of Biblical counseling. We will be changed! We are not going to remain in this body full of pain and problems. One day we will be totally and fully changed!

1 Corinthians 15:39-47 –

“All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in

incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven.”

Not only will we change *bodily* in the future, but we are also being changed at this very moment. The Bible calls this “sanctification,” a fancy word for being “set apart” to God. Our spirit has been born and now we are changing in our emotions, our intellects, our wills, our desires, our goals, our purposes. We are being conformed daily to the image of Christ Jesus. Biblical *change* is the foundation of biblical *counseling*. The Apostle Paul wrote, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” (Philippians 4:13) I can do all things through Christ! There is hope for change through Christ! He is my strength.

(Mention the context of Philippians 4:13 – how Paul had learned to be content in whatever state he found himself. He knew how to be abased and to abound. Contentment is important to understand in God’s process of conforming us to the image of Christ.)

## *Hope For Change*

Here are some practical examples of what I mean by biblical hope for change:

### EARTHLY

- Alcoholic
- Marital discord
- Rebellion
- Hate
- Spite
- Variance
- Pride
- Bitter spirit
- Disobedience
- Fornicator
- Adulterer
- Homosexual

### HEAVENLY

- Non-drinker
- Marital harmony
- Submission
- Love
- Compassion

- Unity
- Humility
- Forgiving spirit
- Obedience
- Abstainer
- Faithful mate
- Heterosexual (in marriage)

### *Two Hopes*

Here are two of the hopes we glean for Christians from Scripture:

1. The hope of Christ's return for the Church – Titus 2:13
2. The hope of an abundant, dynamic, power-filled life, right now – John 10:10

Everybody needs hope these days. Almost everyone of us has experienced defeat or been disheartened. Almost all of us have been dis-spirited and many times this can lead to despair and even depression.

(Talk about discouragement in the home, work, church, etc)

In Christian counseling I have found there are some people who need more immediate attention than others in this area of biblical hope:

- People with long-standing problems.
- People with peculiarly difficult problems.

- People who have been labeled by doctors, psychiatrists, family or friends as incurable.
- People who are harassed by paralyzing fear.
- People whose hope have been dashed repeatedly in the past and are afraid to try again.
- People who have tried and failed, tried and failed.
- People who are older citizens.
- People who are depressed.
- People who are suicidal. (Key: take their problems seriously)
- People who have suffered life-shattering experiences.

Hope bound to grief checks tendency to move toward despair.

**Foundation of Biblical Counseling** – “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.” 1 Corinthians 10:13

**Building of Biblical Counseling** – “But refuse profane and old wives’ fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness. For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.” 1 Timothy 4:7-8

**Question:** How long does it take to discipline one's body and mind for the Olympic Games

**Answer:** Many years

**Question:** How long does it take to discipline one's body and mind for godliness?

**Answer:** Many years

There is no such thing as "instant" holiness or godliness. A man or woman of God is a person who has day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year disciplined themselves to obey the Word of God in every point. Discipline is work – hard work!

## **WHAT IS THE DISCIPLINED WAY TO GODLINESS?**

Turn to Matthew 16:24-25 –

“Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.”

- Going after Christ (love and devotion)
- Denying self (obedience)
- Taking up the cross (self-sacrifice)
- Following Christ (becoming His servant)

### *Invitation*

You may have for some time believed that situations or problems in your life were beyond hope ... that there was no escape. But let me assure you that there is always hope in Christ.

Please let us know how we can help you.

[Thank you for reading these teaching notes from more than 40 years ago. My prayer is they will be a blessing to you, your family and your ministry.]

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