

**THE SELF LIFE AND
THE CHRIST LIFE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649743476

The Self Life and the Christ Life by Rev. A. B. Simpson

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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REV. A. B. SIMPSON

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The Self Life

...AND THE...

• • Christ Life

BY REV. A. B. SIMPSON.



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PUBLISHED BY
THE CHRISTIAN ALLIANCE PUB. CO.,
SOUTH NYACK, N. Y.

[1897].

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NOT I BUT CHRIST.

“If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.”
Matt. xvi. 24.

“I have been crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I but Christ.” Gal. ii. 20.

Here lies the great difference between the world's gospel and the Lord's Gospel. The world says, when it bids you good-bye, “Take care of yourself.” The Lord says, “Let yourself go, and take care of others and the glory of your God.” The world says, “Have a good time, look out for number one.” But the world gets left in the end, and the last comes in first. The man that lets go gets all, and the man who holds fast loses what he has, and the Lord's words come true—“Whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it.”

So the law of sacrifice is the greatest law in earth and heaven. The law of sacrifice is God's

great law. It is written in earth and every department of nature. We tread on the skeletons of ten thousand millions of generations that have lived and died that we might live. The very heart of the earth itself is the wreck of ages and the buried life of former generations. All nature dies and lives again, and each new development is a higher and larger life built on the wrecks of the former. A corn of wheat must fall into the ground and die, or else be a shrivelled-up seed, but as it dies it lives and multiplies, and grows into the beautiful spring, the golden autumn and the multiplied sheaves. And so it is in the deeper life of the higher world, as you rise from the natural to the spiritual. Everything that is selfish is limited by its selfishness. The river that ceases to run becomes a stagnant pool, but as it flows it grows fresher, richer, fuller.

If you turn your natural eye upon yourself, you cannot see anything. It is as you look out that the vision of the world bursts upon you. The very law of the natural life is love for others, caring for others by giving away and

letting go. It is death and self-destruction to be selfish.

The law of sacrifice is the law of God. God who lived in supreme self-sufficiency as the Father, Son and Holy Ghost gave Himself. God's glory was in giving Himself, and so He gave Himself in the creation, in the beauty of the universe, so formed that every possible sort of happiness could come according to its natural law. And then God gave Himself in Jesus Christ. "God so loved the world that He gave." He gave His best, gave His all, gave His only begotten Son. The law of God is sacrifice. He loved until He gave ALL.

Then it is the law of Christ Himself. He came through God's sacrifice, and He came to sacrifice. He laid His honors down, left the society of heaven for a generation, and lived with creatures farther beneath Him than the grovelling earth worm is beneath a man. He made Himself one of them, and became a brother of this fallen race. He was always yielding and letting go, always holding back His power and not using it. He was always be-

ing subject to the will of the men beneath Him, until at last they nailed Him to the cross. His whole life was a continual refusing of Himself, carrying their burdens and sharing their sorrows. And so love and sacrifice is the law of Christ. "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." The law of Christ is the bearing of others' burdens, the sharing of others' griefs, sacrificing yourself for another.

It is the law of Christianity. It is the law of the saint. It is the only way to be saved. From the beginning it has always been so. It was so on Mt. Moriah where Abraham, the father of the faithful, gave up his only child, the child of promise. It reached its climax on Mt. Calvary. All along, the way was marked by blood and sacrifice. Not only did Abraham give up his Isaac but Isaac gave up his life and all through his life he laid himself down for others. We know how he served for his wife, and then did not get the one of his choice. His was a suffering life, a passive life, a patient life. And so Joseph died to his circumstances. Because he was to rise so high, he must go down

as low; down not only into banishment but into shameful imprisonment and almost into death. When Joseph was out of sight and all God's promises concerning him seemed lost, and his prospects seemed hopeless, then God picked Him up and set him on the world's throne.

Moses had to be a fugitive. Moses had to try and then fail and for forty years God had to teach him and train him, and when at last Moses was out of sight, He gave him his desire. At the very last moment Moses had to let go the prospect of entering the Promised Land. He died outside the gates of Canaan, sacrificed his most cherished hope and waited till the years should roll and Jesus Himself should bring him in to stand with Him on the Mount of Transfiguration and say, "Now, Moses, you have the thing you let go, the thing you lost and died to, and now you have a better resurrection." And so it was all through the past. Saul would not give up himself, would not destroy Agag and Amalek; types of the flesh. So Saul, head and shoulders above the people, all that a man could be, went down into the darkness, sank into ob-

security and shame and perhaps perdition. And Jonah, the man whom God honored to deliver His own people and lead His kingdom into victory and mighty power in the days of Jeroboam II, the man whom God honored to be the first foreign missionary, the man whom God had picked up and sent to Assyria, and said, Go and preach to Nineveh, go bring the world to know and honor Me; and God mightily blessed him, so mightily that in that city the mightiest revival the world ever saw was consummated. And yet Jonah got angry because He did not kill all the people in Nineveh, and so compromised Jonah's reputation. Jonah had said that the people would die in forty days and before the forty days were up the people repented of their sins and God repented of what He said and forgave them, and Jonah said, "Where am I in this transaction? I will never be believed again. Why did you not destroy Nineveh and save my reputation." And because Jonah could not let his own glory go, God had to dishonor him and leave him under the withered gourd, a sort of scarecrow to show to all generations how