

John 5:26

God is Life

Open your Bible to...

John 5:26 For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself

Pray

Intro

✓ Intro

Before we jump into our study, I think it's important to remember why we started this journey to grow in our knowledge and understanding of God, and that is because as Tozer observed...

"The greatest thoughts that a man can entertain are thoughts of God."

So, we want to occupy our minds with God, Who He is, and what He's like that we might...

...know Him better, that we might love Him more.

We turn now to the attribute of Life. When theologians say that "God is Life", they mean that He is alive...and that He is the Source and the Sustainer of all life.

That's the short and easy answer!

The difficulty comes when we try to define what "life" is and what being "alive" means!

God is Life ~ a definition

✓ Life

For example, Merriam-Webster's dictionary defines "life" as...

"The quality that distinguishes a vital and functional being from a dead body."

Seems reasonable, but while debating with the Sadducees, Jesus confidently declared that those who are physically dead are actually still alive!

"But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."

Matthew 20:31-32

Clearly then the dictionary definition of "life" does not provide us with a complete understanding of what life and being alive is.

In part because according to Jesus people long dead — like Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are still very much alive in the spirit realm!

Perhaps then we could say that...

"Life is existence."

But that definition falls short because rocks exist, but they aren't alive! Okay, how about...

“Life is the animation of beings that have an eternal soul.”

Nope, that doesn't work either because flowers, trees, and bacteria are alive, but they do not have eternal souls...

...nor is there any indication in the Bible that the lobster you had for dinner last week will be waiting for you in Heaven!

✓ A working definition

So let me suggest that a working definition of life that flows from the pages of Scripture is as follows...

“Life is that which God is, and that which other animated beings have as a gift from Him.”

This definition works because it acknowledges that God possesses life intrinsically, that is to say, it is His nature to be alive, He can be nothing else...

And at the same time recognizes that every other living being has life extrinsically...that is to say, it is not our nature to be alive...

...rather we only have life because God made us alive!

Let me illustrate; think back to the account in Genesis 2:7 of how God made Adam, we read first that...

“...the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground...”

And then, only after Adam came into existence as a figurine fashioned from dust, we're told that...

*...(God) breathed into his nostrils the breath of life;
and man became a living being.”*

Note the progression...

God made Adam—he existed, like a rock.

God gave Adam life, then he became a living being.

The point that we don't want to miss here is that the Bible says that life is a gift from God and without it...

Adam would have simply been a very nice and perfectly formed manikin made from dust.

So too all of us here this morning are alive only because God has given us life...He alone is life, and the source of life.

The Biblical Foundation that God is Life

✓ God is Life

Let's look at the testimony of Scripture for additional evidence that God is life and the Giver of life. We begin with Psalm 84:2, which reads...

*“My soul longs, yes, even faints
For the courts of the Lord;
My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.”*

The psalmist's point is that the God of Israel, the God revealed on the pages of Scripture is not like the idol-gods worshipped by the pagans.

He is not a rock, or wood or some image crafted from precious metal...

...He is the living God, Who thinks, speaks, moves and creates.

In fact, 28 times the writers of Scripture refer to God as the "living God."

Distinct from the false gods and goddesses who have eyes, but cannot see...

Ears but cannot hear...

Mouths but cannot speak...

The God revealed in Creation, on the pages of Scripture and most perfectly in Jesus is the One and only living God!

√ An invention of Man's mind

Nor is God a figment of Man's imagination, a god made in the image of man formulated by the thoughts and prognostications of philosophers and thinkers—a god who is limited, weak, and given to fits of passion, a god made in the image of Man.

The true and the living God is above, beyond and before the thoughts and meditations of the mystics...

...He is the Author of Life, the One Who has life in Himself, and is the Giver of Life.

We see this contradistinction played out on the pages of the New Testament where we listen in as the apostle Paul tried to restrain the pagans in Lystra from worshipping Barnabas and himself as if they were gods...

"Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men with the same nature as you, and preach to you that you should turn from these useless things to the

*living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea,
and all things that are in them...”*

Acts 14:15

Later while waiting for his mission team to arrive in Athens Paul entreated the intellectuals of city with these words...

*“...God, who made the world and everything in it,
since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell
in temples made with hands. Nor is He worshiped
with men’s hands, as though He needed anything,
since He gives to all life, breath, and all things.”*

Acts 17:24-25

And perhaps most pointedly Jesus said...

*“I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in
Me, though he may die, he shall live.”*

John 11:25

Finally, as Peter preached from the Temple courtyard, he made it abundantly clear that Jesus—God the Son is the source of life when he rebuked the Jewish leaders with these words...

*“You killed the author of life, but God raised him from
the dead. We are witnesses of this.” ~ Acts 3:15 NIV*

So based upon the abundant testimony of God’s word we believe that...

...God is life, and He is the source of all life.

The Implications that God is Life

✓ The implications

Because God is life and the source of all life we can logically, and biblically conclude the following...

1) Life on earth (and everywhere else) did not originate by itself

We know that to be true because non-life cannot produce life as famously demonstrated by Louis Pasteur, the 19th Century chemist & micro-biologist who debunked the popular theory of his day called spontaneous generation.

Ex. Cheese wrapped in rags produced mice

Pasteur concluded, correctly I would submit, that living things come only from other living things, which scientists call biogenesis, which means...

Life does not spontaneously arise from non-living material like rags and rotting food, or random combinations of chemicals...

...life arises from living things—ultimately from the Living God!

That's an important distinction because it is contrary to the naturalist worldview of evolution so popular today which rejects the supernatural origin of life.

Rather the evolutionist believes in what they call abiogenesis.

That is; by putting an “a” in front of word “biogenesis”, they've crafted their own anti-God word to suggest that life arises from non-living things.

Specifically, the naturalist, the atheist, and the evolutionist believe that given enough time & chance non-living chemicals will produce life.

That's nothing more than the debunked theory of spontaneous generation dressed up in scientific gargon!

However, as John Adams famously noted, "*facts are stubborn things*", and when we look at the observational scientific facts, we discover that they don't support the belief that life arose from non-living chemicals.

Ex. Sir Fredrick Hoyle from *Evolution from Space*

Hoyle, along with his associated recognized that there weren't sufficient chemicals present on earth to generate life, so they hypothesized that the necessary chemicals for life must have come from space. However, after years of research he concluded...

*"...life cannot have had a random beginning...The trouble is that there are about two thousand enzymes, and the chance of obtaining them all in a random trial is only one part in 10 to the 40,000 power, an outrageously small probability that could not be faced even if the whole universe consisted of organic soup...
...The enormous information content of even the simplest living systems...cannot in our view be generated by what are often called "natural" processes."*

Ex. What are the odds of 1 X 10 to the 40,000?

Finding one single atom in the universe while blindfolded...

Not going to happen—life cannot arise from non-living chemicals no matter how much time is allotted.

The point is that the scientific facts affirm what the Bible tells us to be true and that is that life did not originate by itself...

Rather, the facts point to a supernatural Creator as the origin of life.

Because God is life, and He alone can make non-living things (like dust) alive!

2) Life is more than just biological

For example, the Bible tells us that first and foremost life is spiritual.

For God is life, but we must remember that He is pure spirit and as such does not have any biological composition—He has no blood, arms, legs, or cells.

Yet He is more alive than everything else in Creation!

So, life is more than just a physical characteristic, like a heartbeat, or a brain wave, it is first and eternally a spiritual animation!

Ex. Illustration

An amoeba is biologically alive, but it does not have the same capacity to live that you and I do.

An amoeba will never know the beauty of a sunset, or the sweet aroma of fresh baked cookies, or the thrill of love!

To say nothing of the wonder we experience when we come to know the Savior!

The point here is that God created humans with a greater capacity for life than just a physical biological existence.

He made us with the capacity to enjoy life physically, emotionally and spiritually.

But clearly every person does not enjoy life the way that God intended. For many, life is just a physical existence, surviving from one day to the next.

That's what a prisoner at the Supermax Prison in Colorado experiences.

Endlessly looking at the same concrete walls, meals slid under the door into their cell, no contact with any other inmate, and no view of the outside world, life without meaning—just waiting to die.

The point is that we don't want to miss is that there is a big difference between simply being alive (just existing like a Supermax prisoner and an amoeba) and living!

As believers in Christ, we have been given a greater capacity to experience true life than non-believers because Jesus has given us abundant life!

That's one of the great benefits of being born-again...God adds the spiritual dimension of life to our biological existence, by which we are connected to God—the source of life!

Therefore, Christians are able to appreciate, engage in, and enjoy life the way that God intended it to be lived—life in the Spirit.

We see examples of that demonstrated all over the world today where Christians find greater joy in life than non-believers...

Even Christians who are being persecuted for their faith!

For we see and read about how they experience greater joy, contentment and peace even while in prison than their non-believing captors who are free!

Ex. Paul and Silas vs. the Philippian jailer

Ex. Contemporary example from The Insanity of God

Dimitri who was held in a Russian prison for 17 years and greeted every sunrise with a song of worship.

Ap. And this is just a foretaste of what awaits us!

Think about it...the abundant life that you and I as Christians experience today is just a hint of the fulness of the abundant life that awaits us in Eternity!

3) Satan does not have the power to create life

While the Devil wants us to believe that he can create life just like God can, the reality is that everything Satan does including all of the signs & wonders that he and his servants perform...

...are nothing more than deceptions—sleight of hand, smoke and mirrors, or as Paul characterizes them “*lying wonders*” (2Thess. 2:9).

Ex. Pharaoh’s magicians

While they were able to perform counterfeit miracles of the first three signs done by Moses, when God turned dust (non-living matter) into lice (living creatures) we read in Exodus 8:18-19...

“...the magicians so worked with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not. So there were lice on man and beast. Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, “This is the finger of God.””

That is, all of the so-called miracles that Pharoah's magicians had performed up to that point were just counterfeits...

...they were exposed when it came to creating life, they recognized that they were out of their league, for only God has the divine fiat to create life for He is life, and the only Giver of Life!

Ap. This knowledge helps to properly interpret Scripture

Some Bible commentators, even very bright authors, have wrongly claimed that Satan has the power to give life as evidenced they say by the resurrection of the Antichrist from the dead!

They base their claim on the erroneous interpretation of Revelation 13:3, where the apostle John writes...

"And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast."

Notice please that the apostle is clear that the Antichrist isn't actually dead...rather, John writes...

"...as if it (he) had been mortally wounded"

"As if", that is, John is telling us that the future Antichrist will only appear to be dead after what may be an attempted assassination.

Thus, the so-called resurrection of the Man of Sin will be nothing more than a Satanic counterfeit of God's resurrection of the real Christ from the dead.

That's a very important point because the apostle Paul—inspired by the Holy Spirit argues that Jesus' resurrection

from the dead is the confirming sign that He is the Son of God.

Listen to Paul's logic in the letter to the church in Rome where he writes...

“...concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born 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 1:4

The implication of Paul's argument to the believers in Rome, and to us this morning is that...

If Satan can truly raise the dead, then Jesus' resurrection wouldn't prove anything.

Because If Satan can truly raise the Antichrist from the dead, then no one would be able to distinguish the real Christ from the Antichrist.

But Paul tells us that Jesus' resurrection from the dead is the unique confirming sign that He is in fact the very Son of God!

So, we conclude that the future Antichrist will only appear to be dead, and his subsequent resurrection is just fake news.

It will just be a part of Satan's campaign of counterfeit “signs and lying wonders” in the Last Days (2Thess. 2:9) to deceive the wicked.

So, despite what some commentators may say and the Devil wants you to believe the reality is that Satan does not have the power to create or give life...

...only God can give life and raise the dead because He alone is life, and the only giver of life!

The Blessings & Benefits that God is Life

✓ Blessings & Benefits

For us who believe in Jesus, the God Who is life has granted many blessings and benefits including the following.

1) We can have an abundant life now

Jesus told His followers...

"The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly."

John 5:21

As we've already noted life is more than biological, true life is spiritual. Thus, when we become born-again, we gain new life—the abundant life that Jesus promised, which includes...

Relationship with God (John 17:3)

Enlightenment to our mind to understand God and spiritual truth (John 1:4)

Eternal bliss (John 17:3)

Purpose and contentment (Eph. 2:10)

In Christ we are restored to the true life that God intended for us to live...

An animated physical life, along with a vibrant spiritual life because we are now connected to the God Who is life.

For those of us who are born-again the sky should be bluer and the flowers more fragrant.

In Christ we are now able to love others better and experience love more profoundly.

Daily routines should no longer be burdensome because everything we do in Christ has eternal purpose and meaning.

For those who have a relationship with God through Jesus life moves from ordinary to extraordinary!

2) Death does not have the final say

Since the Garden of Eden Death has ruled over the Sons of Adam. Every person conceived with the exception of Enoch and Elijah have succumb to Death's icy grip.

People are powerless against so great a foe.

Wealth, medicine, the greatest surgeons, and the best health care cannot delay death forever—death always has the final say.

However, when Jesus rose from the dead, He gained victory over Death and the Grave, and not just for Himself but also for all who trust in Him!

So, Death no longer has the final word in our lives because Jesus shook loose the chains of Death and unlocked the door of the Grave.

We see evidence of that victory in John's description of Jesus in the 1st chapter of the Revelation where the glorified Christ declared...

“I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.
Revelation 1:18

Jesus' point is that He who has the keys has the power and authority to free us from the hold of Death and the Grave...

...and as such Jesus will not allow either Death or the Grave to hold the bodies and souls of the saints, which is exactly what Paul tells us in 1Corinthians 15!

“For our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies...thank God! He gives us victory over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ.” ~ 1Corinthians 15:54 & 57

Finally, we read in the Revelation that a time is coming at the end of Millennial Kingdom when God will forever do away with both Death and Grave!

Listen to how John describes that final judgment of our greatest foes when they are brought before the White Throne of Jesus...

“Then death and the grave were thrown into the lake of fire.” ~ Revelation 20:14

Because God is life, Death will not have the final say about our existence, rather it is God Who alone has power to give life, and to restore life to His beloved people.

Ap. We can live without fear of death

Because God is the giver of life, and the sustainer of life...death does not have the authority to take us whenever he pleases...

Rather, those who have been redeemed by the Lamb of God are imperishable until we have finished our course.

Death can threaten, shake its boney fist at us, and try to scare us into submission, but the reality is that Death has been rendered powerless by Jesus' resurrection.

The takeaway is that we can go about life without the fear of death, for we no longer have to worry about random violence, or the latest virus stalking the planet...

...because Death has no authority over those who belong to Jesus!

Ex. Paul in Corinth ~ Acts 18:9-11

“Now the Lord spoke to Paul in the night by a vision, “Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city.” And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.”

Paul's fear in the wicked city of Corinth melted away with the promise of Jesus—the One Who had conquered death.

So, Death does not have the final say...God does!

And what is God's final word on the question of death?

That brings us to the 3rd benefit we experience because God is life, and that is...

3) Jesus gives us everlasting life

To those who believe in Jesus, God has promised not only victory over death...

But also, eternal life, life which transcends death and the grave!

Jesus said...

“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.” ~ John 10:27-28

That is, as we’ve already seen God is the source of life, and not just the life we experience now on earth...

But Jesus tells us that He is the source and the giver of eternal life—life imperishable...

...life lived in the Eternal City described in Revelation 21-22.

That Eternal City where the apostle John tells us that our names are written in the Book of Life and where we have free and unrestricted access to the...

River of Life (Rev. 22:1), from which we will drink deeply of its pure and unpolluted waters, with a taste unequalled by the finest beverage on earth, and able to quench our thirst for righteousness.

Tree of Life (Rev. 22:2), which had been taken from us when Adam sinned, but in Heaven is restored to the saints who will once again have access to its fruit—fruit that will provide the capacity to enjoy all of Heaven’s blessings.

The King of life (Rev. 22:3-5), Who will no longer be hidden from us by the veil that separates the material world from Heaven, but there in Eternity we will see His face (Rev. 22:4) and gaze upon His perfect beauty!

All of this and more God has planned for us to enjoy in the City of Eternal Live and is available because God is Life!

Close

√ God is Life

For those of you who are Christians I pray that you are encouraged by the revelation that God is Life...

And that you fully embrace the abundant life that He has made available for you today while you look ahead longingly for the eternal life waiting for you in Heaven.

If you aren’t experiencing that abundant life, then avail yourself of the intercessors who will be up front after service.

Let them pray for you to begin to experience and enjoy the abundant life that Jesus promised His disciples.

√ A word of caution

All of us, both believers and unbelievers must remember that God is not only the source of life and the giver of life, but He is also the sustainer to life. As such, He is...

“...the God who holds your breath in His hand.”

Daniel 5:23

That is, it is God who determines whether we live another moment or not.

For the believer the exhortation is to guard our lives against continued willful sin, sin for which God might judge us and bring us home as He did with Ananias and Sapphira.

For the unbeliever the warning is to not resist the sweet call of the Holy Spirit to receive Jesus as your Savior lest you find yourself under the same judgment as did the ancient Babylonian king Belshazzar.

Today is the day of repentance and salvation.