

DEATH AND LIFE

BY E. V. Baker

"If ye then be risen with Christ." - Col. 3

You will notice in this chapter two words emphasized, death and life. If we are risen then we must have life. Those two thoughts run all through the scheme of redemption. Life is of two kinds, natural and supernatural; but the latter is not derived from the former. It is not reformation, but a new birth.

First, in this spiritual life we mount on wings. A caterpillar has a comfortable existence probably, but not a lofty time. But it winds itself a cocoon, and dies, as it were, and rises after a little, a beautiful creature that lives on rose leaves. It is altogether a different thing. A caterpillar seeing a butterfly might feel a stirring within, a longing to be like this brilliant creature; might even crawl up into a hush and struggle to fly. But it would only fall back in despair. Then if it was told "You can be like this, but you must just die, you must give up eating leaves," it would probably say, "I can't do this, they are necessary to my life and I can't die."

At these watering places I see principally caterpillar-life. It must be abject slavery. It is even worse than living on leaves. If you talk to these people about dying in order to live, even though they are restless and unsatisfied, they will probably tell you, "Then I don't want it, I can't give up this and that." Well, you can live on the caterpillar plane if you so elect; but you can never rise on wings but through death. Some, however, do try to put themselves to death. That is, they say they do, but you will observe they never touch the vital spot. The center of some life is in one place, and in others, in another, but the true vital point in each is self. As soon as you are trying to be good of yourself you are keeping self alive. As soon as you find you can't, God comes in and slays self for you. Just yield yourself, say to Jesus this afternoon, "I am a candidate for death, and for life." And when you get life, you will find your existence transformed, and every relation lifted into a higher plane. You won't want to live on leaves any more. A diver is encased in a suit of armor when he goes into the water, and there is a rubber tube connecting him with the upper air through which he breathes. So the Christian must be connected with God. If there is a break in the tubing, the dangerous element gets in. Beloved, that is why you are so weak. You are not breathing altogether the pure air from above. There is a break somewhere. Christians as well as sinners are exposed to trials. But no

Christian can suffer as a sinner if he lives in the divine atmosphere. God's life is at your disposal, you can claim it if you will.

This life on wings cannot be described any more than a butterfly can explain it to a caterpillar. No soul ever knows real liberty till it knows it in the Holy Ghost. And all the tastes and feelings undergo a change. You find you don't love certain things anymore, you just love Jesus so much. His life crowds out the old life. Test Him at all points after you have tested Him in one, and believe that you will die at any and all points. Let us not speculate nor reason, but just take it simply and believe. Just say; "I depend upon You, dear Lord, to bring me through" and He will surely do it. Don't keep the Lord waiting either. I pray that this afternoon decisions will be made for death and for life. May the Lord add His blessing to these words, and enable us to rise on wings through death to life everlasting!

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