

Stop Trying to Live the Christian Life by Your Own Strength

~Other Speakers S-Z: Major Ian Thomas:

For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.

Col. 1:29

We come to Christ by faith. We believe that the finished work of Christ on the Cross was for us. Christ's death saves us from the penalty of our sin, his burial delivers us from the power of sin, and his raising to life again overcomes the presence of sin. We are free indeed.

Yet, we continue in the Christian life struggling and striving to live a life of holiness. Frustrated, we read the New Testament's instructions for Christian living and find them impossible to obey. We want to quit, it's all too much and too hard in a world gone mad.

Yet, God has something better for us. He wants us to trust his Son: that very Son who lives in us by the power of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 2:20). The Lord never intended for us to live the Christian life in our own strength. God's intention: allow Christ to live the Christian life in and through us (Col. 2:6). By faith, we trust the only one who has ever successfully lived the Christian life to empower us to say, "no," to sin and "yes," to righteousness (Titus 2:12).

How stupid it would be to buy a car with a powerful engine under the hood and then to spend the rest of your days pushing it! Thwarted and exhausted, you would wish to discard it as a useless thing! Yet to some of you who are Christians, this may be God's word to your heart.

When God redeemed you through the precious blood of His dear Son, He placed, in the language of my illustration, a powerful engine under the hood—nothing less than the resurrection life of God the Son, made over to you in the person of God the Holy Spirit. Then stop pushing! Step in and switch on and expose every hill of circumstance, of opportunity, of temptation, of perplexity—no matter how threatening—to the divine energy that is available.