

The Definition  
of God's Life

*In him was **life** and the **life** was the light of men.*

*John 1.4*

## Definition of God's Life

*“In the end, it's not the years in your life  
that count...”*

## Definition of God's Life

*“In the end, it’s not the years in your life that count...but the life in your years.”*

~Abraham Lincoln

Definition of God's Life

*“I really just want God's will for my life.”*

Why should this also be adjusted?

Definition of God's Life

*“I really just want God's will for my life.”*

*Is life mine?...do I own it?*

1 Cor 6.19-20...do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God?

*You are not your own*,  
for *you were bought* with a price.

## Definition of God's Life

*“I really just want God's will for my life.”*

Claiming ownership of something that's not mine is dangerous at best and destructive at worst.

## Definition of God's Life

*“I really just want God's will for my life.”*

“I didn't sign up for this.”

“I feel like God has let me down.”

“What about me – what about what I want?”

Definition of God's Life

*“I really just want God's will for my life.”*

It's a Wonderful Life

George Bailey's 2<sup>nd</sup> prayer:

*“I want to live again!”*

He realized his life was not meant to be his own...



## Definition of God's Life

Rather than wanting God's will for my life,  
what is needed is God's life for my will.

But by turning it around, we create a need  
to define our terms...

We need a functional and practical definition  
of God's Life.

## Definition of God's Life

Let's start with the opposite  
of life...

1. What is death?
2. Should it be feared?

Definition of God's Life

1. What is death?

Not annihilation but separation.



Cease to exist



Disconnection

(Jonathan)

## Definition of God's Life

# 2. Should death be feared?

PIPPIN: I didn't think it would end this way.

GANDALF: End? No, the journey doesn't end here. Death is just another path, one that we all must take. The grey rain-curtain of this world rolls back, and all turns to silver glass, and then you see it.

PIPPIN: What? Gandalf? See what?

GANDALF: White shores, and beyond, a far green country under a swift sunrise.

PIPPIN: Well, that isn't so bad.

GANDALF: No. No, it isn't."

Definition of God's Life

2. Should death be feared? - NO

1. Those in Christ have already died

Rom 6.1-11... What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who **died** to sin still **live** in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his **death**?

## Definition of God's Life

# 2. Should death be feared? - NO

## 1. Those in Christ have already died

We were buried therefore with him by baptism into **death**, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the **dead** by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of **life**. For if we have been united with him in a **death** like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a **resurrection** like his.

## Definition of God's Life

# 2. Should death be feared? - NO

## 1. Those in Christ have already died

We know that our old self was **crucified** with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has **died** has been set free from sin. Now if we have **died** with Christ, we believe that we will also **live** with him.

## Definition of God's Life

# 2. Should death be feared? - NO

## 1. Those in Christ have already died

We know that Christ, being raised from the **dead**, will never **die** again; **death** no longer has dominion over him. For the **death** he **died** he **died** to sin, once for all, but the **life** he **lives** he **lives** to God. So you also must consider yourselves **dead** to sin and **alive** to God in Christ Jesus.



Definition of God's Life

2. Should death be feared? - NO

2. Death is promotion into God's presence

2 Cor 5.7-9... for we walk by faith, not by sight.  
Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be  
away from the body and at home with the Lord.

So whether we are at home or away,  
we make it our aim to please him.

## Definition of God's Life

# 2. Should death be feared? - NO

## 2. Death is promotion into God's presence

Phil 1.21-23... For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better.

## Definition of God's Life

# 2. Should death be feared? - NO

## 3. The sting of death has been removed

1 Cor 15.54-57... When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written:

“Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? **O death, where is your sting?**”

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.

But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory  
through our Lord Jesus Christ.

*(mowing)*

## Definition of God's Life

2. Should death be feared? - NO

4. Jesus was forsaken by the Father so we would not

Mark 15.33-34... And when the sixth hour had come, **there was darkness over the whole land** until the ninth hour.

And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, **"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"**

Definition of God's Life

What if the physical death of Christ  
completely pales in comparison  
to the spiritual death  
of being forsaken by His Father.  
(*separation not annihilation*)

## Definition of God's Life

Heb 2.9...But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

Definition of God's Life

Gerrit Dawson – Raising Adam

In this final descent, the Son of God completed his downward journey into the human condition of isolation from God.

He reached the farthest extent of his humiliation as the suffering Savior.

For Jesus reached the extreme limit of our estrangement from God.

Definition of God's Life

Gerrit Dawson – Raising Adam

He came for us. He would not be without us.

Jesus went down, even to the depths,  
in order to lift us up in renewed communion  
with the Triune God.

He took **our death** to give us **his life**.

For at its core, the descent means:  
Jesus descended fully into our death so that  
**he might raise us fully into his life.**



Definition of God's Life

So, if death is

*separation* and  
*forsakenness*,

what could express the opposite of this?

Definition of God's Life

Good choices:

Relationship

Communion

Integration

Inseparability

Connection

Definition of God's Life

Best Choice:

Intimate Knowledge

John 17.3... And this is eternal life,  
that they know you, the only true God,  
and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

Definition of God's Life

John 14.15-17

I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

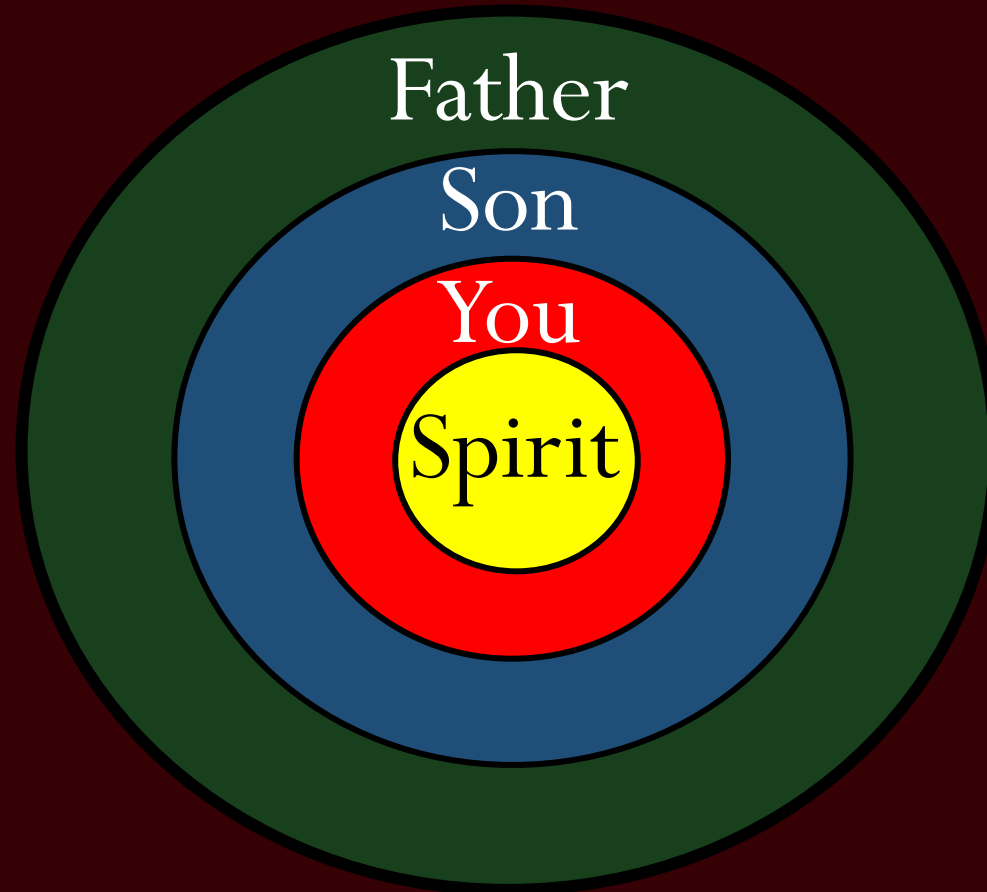
Definition of God's Life

John 14.18-20

I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.

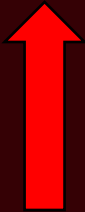
Definition of God's Life



I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you

Definition of God's Life

Knowledge Continuum



Casual  
Surface  
Superficial  
Cursory

How do we  
move from  
left to right?



Extensive  
Deep  
Comprehensive  
Intimate

Definition of God's Life

Knowledge Continuum

Biblical Analogies:

- A son knowing his father
- A wife knowing her husband
- A subject knowing his king
- A sheep knowing its shepherd



Definition of God's Life

# Knowledge Continuum

All four analogies point to a relation  
in which the knower 'looks up'  
to the one known, and the latter takes  
responsibility for the welfare of the former.

~J.I. Packer – Knowing God

Definition of God's Life

Knowledge Continuum

This is part of the biblical concept of knowing God, that those who know Him – that is, those by whom He allows Himself to be known – are **loved and cared for by Him.**

~J.I. Packer – Knowing God

Definition of God's Life

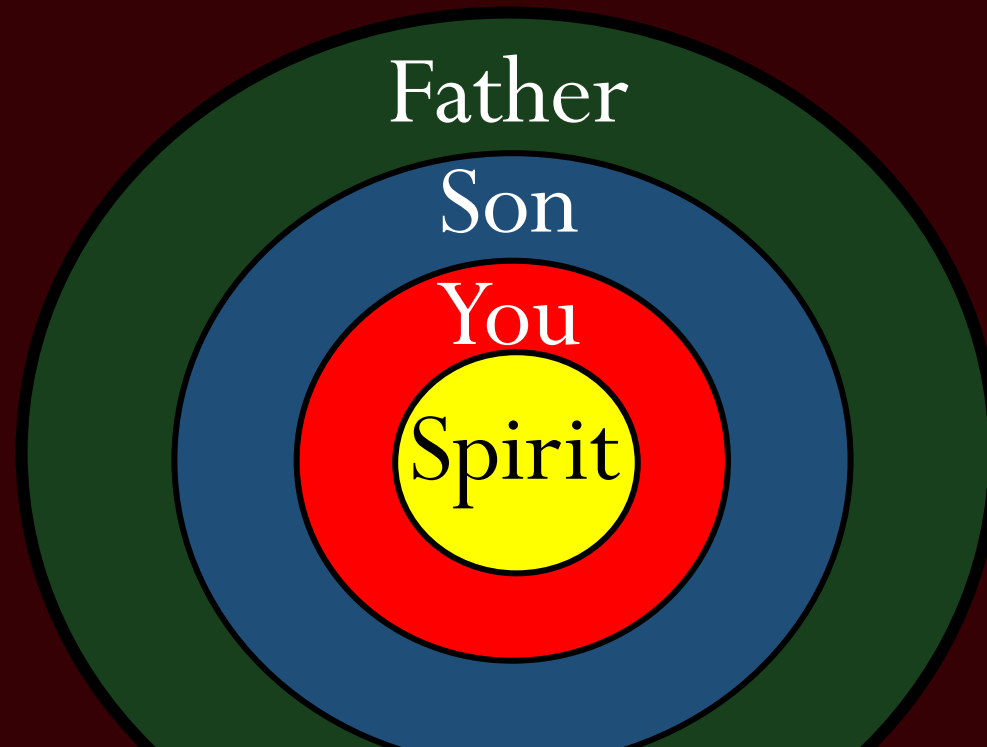
Knowledge Continuum

The quality and extent of our knowledge of them depends **more on them than on us**.

Our knowing them is more directly the result of their allowing us to know them than our attempting to get to know them.

~J.I. Packer – Knowing God

## Definition of God's Life



How well does God allow us to know Him?  
Can you think of a more intimate place to know God?

Definition of God's Life

# Knowledge Continuum



We move from a superficial knowledge to a more comprehensive and intimate knowledge by **asking** and **pleading** for God to reveal His *divine life* to us - through the Holy Spirit.

## Definition of God's Life

# God's Life:

The *ability* to:

- Know (John 17.3)
- Believe (John 3.16)
- Love (1 John 4.7-12)
- Shine Light (Matthew 5.16)
- Glorify God (1 Cor. 10.31)

*God has infinite  
ability to do all  
these things...  
and because He  
lives in us, so do we!*

Definition of God's Life

*“What is needed is God's life for my will.”*

Almost there...

One question first:

What was God doing before creation?

## Definition of God's Life

*“What is needed is God's life for my will.”*

Always remember... God was “alive”  
before He created life.

So the primary identity of God must  
be deeper than merely “Creator”...



Definition of God's Life

*“What is needed is God's life for my will.”*

Father, Son and Spirit  
have loved for all eternity!  
God is love...there has never been a time  
when God has not loved.

Definition of God's Life

*Definition of God's Life:*

intimate knowledge of the divine love  
eternally shared between Father, Son and Spirit

## Definition of God's Life

What does the Bible say about God's Life?

Life is *in* the Father and the Son

John 5.26... For as the Father has life in himself,  
so he has granted the Son also  
to have life in himself.

## Definition of God's Life

What does the Bible say about God's Life?

It's *why* Jesus came!

John 10.10... The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

## Definition of God's Life

What does the Bible say about God's Life?

It's a function of *knowing* God

John 17.3... And this is eternal life,  
that they *know you*, the only true God,  
and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

*(Bert, do you know me?)*

## Definition of God's Life

What does the Bible say about God's Life?

It's *given* by the Spirit

2 Cor. 3.5-6...our sufficiency is from God,  
who has made us sufficient to be ministers of a  
new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit.  
For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

## Definition of God's Life

What does the Bible say about God's Life?

We should *know* we have it

1 John 5.13...I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.

## Definition of God's Life

What does the Bible say about God's Life?

It comes by *believing* in Christ

John 20.31 ...but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.



## Definition of God's Life

What does the Bible say about God's Life?

It requires *metaphors* to understand

John 3... *New Birth*

## Definition of God's Life

What does the Bible say about God's Life?

It requires *metaphors* to understand

John 4...*Living Water*

## Definition of God's Life

What does the Bible say about God's Life?

It requires *metaphors* to understand

John 6... *Bread of Life*

## Definition of God's Life

What does the Bible say about God's Life?

It creates *light* in men

John 1.4... In him was life, and the life  
was the light of men.

Definition of God's Life

*Definition of God's Life:*

intimate **knowledge** of the **divine love**  
eternally shared between Father, Son and Spirit

What effect would this definition have  
on wanting **God's life for our wills?**

Definition of God's Life

Questions for discussion:

How is desiring God's will for your life  
very different than  
desiring God's life for your will?

What are some practical applications  
for you personally?