

God knows, for sure, if you and I are really alive. If we are, we will each lovingly follow Him.

*“If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema [cursed] Maranatha [our Lord cometh].” (1Corinthians 16:22)*

Do you have life which has turned you away from sin to follow your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ?

APPLE TREES

DEAD OR ALIVE?

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(editing by Kathy Boynton)

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Several years ago, Kathy and I planted an apple orchard. During the winter, dead and living trees often looked alike. They were all bare, without leaves or fruit. A casual observer might assume that since they were all in the same orchard, they were all alive. However, springtime brought about an obvious difference. Living trees would begin to sprout blossoms and leaves. The dead trees did not.

The effort expended by a tree to produce leaves and fruit is not what made the tree alive. Rather God, Himself, had placed and maintained life, therein, by His power. Leaves and fruit were evidences, not causes, of life. Even if we couldn't tell the difference between dead and living trees, springtime made the differences obvious.

Jesus clearly told His disciples that their spiritual life, as Christians, came from their intimate connection to Himself.

*"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing."* (John 15:5)

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Many religious systems teach, and their followers believe, that eternal life is earned by the things we do. However, we never saw a dead apple branch that could get up off the ground and graft itself into a living tree in order to gain life. Scripture makes it clear that, in the spiritual sense, people cannot do this either. Jesus made this clear to His followers.

*"And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father."* (John 6:65)

Implanting of life in a previously dead heart is always the work of the Holy Spirit. However, it is a work that shall inevitably produce evidence. Those who have been saved by grace through faith in the work of Christ shall, indeed, follow Christ.

*"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:"* (John 10:27)

*"For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."* (James 2:26)

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