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Pastor Jonathan Falwell

Begin to Live Again – It All Starts In The Heart

Scripture: 1 John 1

Summary: Expounding on 1 John 1, Pastor Jonathan Falwell talks about the power that we have in Christ to begin to live again if we consecrate our lives to Him and spend time deepening our relationship with Him, and the only thing that can keep us from accomplishing this is ourselves.

Welcome. First Sunday of the year 2014 and we're going to start talking today about how to begin to live again, how to have your greatest year in 2014. We're not here to talk about how we, as a church, are going to have our greatest year in 2014. I believe firmly that God is going to do that. We have our people, all of us, together; we're praying more; we're more focused on praying for those around us; we have focused on the lost in our community, to reach out to them to impact them with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

I believe without any doubt that God has in store for us at Thomas Road in 2014 things that we can't even imagine what God is going to do. I believe it, and I believe we're going to see it as long as we continue to be people who pray, who seek God's face. What we're talking about in how to begin to live again is how you and I can have our best year in 2014, and today we're going to be talking about how we can do that, and we're going to be talking about what that looks like over the next couple of weeks.

Turn with me in your Bible to the book of 1 John 1. We're going to look at a passage that, in looking at what I believe God would want us to talk about, the things that He would want us to read and focus on and begin talking about how to begin again, there is probably no greater passage in all the Bible than 1 John 1 on how to do that, because it helps us to understand some very important truths, and I'm going to share those with you in just a few moments.

As we begin to talk about how to begin to live again, I started thinking about what we need to talk about. What are the things we need to focus on if we are truly going to experience life like God intended for us to live? I believe without any doubt that the best thing that we should do in a time when we're talking about those things is to start with the most important thing, and that is consecration. It's setting ourselves apart for God's service and God's purposes.

I believe that there are people in this room today that have long since lost the joy of their salvation, have long stopped experiencing all the fullness that God has for you because of

whatever is going on in your life. You have allowed things to creep into your life that are separating you from the joy that God gives, or you've allowed sin to take a place in your life, to get ahold of you, to get a grip on you that has changed the dynamics of your Christian walk and your Christian faith. Today, as you walk with Christ, you have stopped experiencing all of the majesty of who God is. You've stopped experiencing the majesty of God's awesomeness, of what He wants to do in your life.

I thought there was no better way to start our year together today than coming together as a church to the Lord's Table for a time of consecration, of understanding God's purpose and God's plan. But most importantly, of remembering and understanding God's amazing gift, the fact that God sent His Son to this earth to die on the cross for you and me, and we didn't deserve it. He paid a price that we could never have paid. He paid a sin-debt that there was no way in all of our lives, regardless of how long that we live, there was no way we could have ever paid that price, but God paid it for us through His son Jesus Christ.

We want to start this year in understanding that truth, reflecting on that truth, and truly taking a look inside and examining our hearts to make sure, because I promise you there is no way to live life to the fullest, no way to experience joy in life, no way to experience God's plan for your life if there is something inside of your heart that is separating you from all that God has for you, and that is what sin does.

I'm going to ask our deacons and elders to come forward to pass out the elements, and I'm going to read from 1 Corinthians 11 as we take this opportunity this morning to reflect on God's precious gift. In 1 Corinthians 11 27 it says, "Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep."

Verse 30 makes it very clear that there are people today, people in this room today, who are weak and sick and some who have actually died because they come to this place and have thrown it into the face of God, living life the way they want to live it, yet claiming the name of Christ and the blood of Christ as being all that they really need in life.

That passage talks about physical health, and that's important, but it also talks about mental and emotional health as well. "Many among you are weak. Many among you are sick." I'm going to ask you a question. I don't want you to answer me, but does anybody here today feel weak in your Christian walk? Anybody here today has come to the point in your life where you're asking, "What's this thing all about? What's the purpose of life? Why am I even here?"

You see, what happens is oftentimes when we are walking through life, claiming the name of Christ but living totally different, totally walking away from fellowship with Christ and communion with Christ, what happens is we begin to experience weakness and sickness, not only in a physical sense, but in an emotional sense, where we feel discouraged and depressed and drained and sad because we do not have that perfect communion with God.

So this passage says, quite simply, let a man/let a woman examine themselves, take a deep look inside, an honest look inside, and say, “Where am I in my walk with Christ? How am I doing in my walk with Him?”

So today I want to ask you a question. Before we move into 1 John 1, before we begin talking about how to begin to live again, I promise you it’s impossible unless we get this part right, unless we get this part, we take it seriously, taking the opportunity right now to look inside and say, “Am I walking with God the way that I should?”

Let me tell you what needs to happen right now. Consecration. That literally is setting ourselves apart. It means setting ourselves apart from the world. It means setting ourselves apart from sin. It means setting ourselves apart from things in life that harm our relationship with Christ, walls that we build around ourselves where we don’t experience God’s grace, God’s greatness, God’s hope, God’s joy.

In a moment I’m going to ask all of us to take some time to do that. We’ll bow our heads and close our eyes and take a good, hard look at our lives, an honest look, and ask ourselves the question: How am I doing? Where am I in my walk? Because I know there are some people who are experiencing that weakness that the passage talks about. There are some people who feel sick and feel sad, that have lost their joy because they’ve allowed things to come into their lives. They have built walls around themselves and their relationship, that communion with Christ, has suffered greatly because of it.

I’m going to ask Charles to sing a song for us while we, as a church, take time with eyes closed and heads bowed, to do what the passage says. And here’s why we do this, because I think probably that if you are in a place where there is weakness, where there is sadness, where there is discouragement, depression, or where you’ve gotten into a place where you feel like “What is all this about?” my guess is you’ve tried lots of different things to try to figure out a way out, so I thought the best way to start 2014, a brand-new year, is to do it God’s way. Let’s make the decision, the determination, today that we’re going to do it the way the Bible says.

I’m going to be honest with you. When you do it the way God says, when you do it the way that the Word of God shares, first of all, it’s the only way that’s going to work. Second of all, it’s the best way to do it. Third of all, it’s the fastest way to get there. So let’s just take some time right now, with heads bowed and with eyes closed, to take a look inside, examine, evaluate, and say, “Okay, where am I with my walk with God, my fellowship with God, my communion with God?”

I think there needs to be some time of confession, perhaps, where you get honest with yourself and say, “There are things in my life that I know do not belong there, and today as I begin a brand-new year, God, I confess these to you. I’m sorry, God, forgive me.”

The cool thing is, 1 John 1:9 says if we confess our sins, He’s faithful, He’s just, He will forgive us of our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. It’s a promise. It’s something that’s not often offered from us mere humans. When we forgive other people, we forgive, but what God doesn’t differently is He guarantees He forgives, but then He also guarantees that He puts it

behind us, He forgets about it, and we move on. That's hard for us to do, but it's the kind of forgiveness we want, isn't it? So let's take some time as Charles sings to be honest, to look inside and say, "God, today I set myself apart for you."

(Singing: "Jesus Paid It All")

That song very clearly says that Jesus paid it all. Today, as we begin a brand-new year, as we begin a brand-new experience in life, as we begin walking a brand-new journey, it's important to remember that Jesus paid it all, that He did for us what we could not do for ourselves, that we have the gift of experiencing great joy, of life and life to the fullest because of what Jesus has done.

As we come to the Lord's Table this morning, the purpose is to reflect and remember why Jesus did what He did, to remember the suffering, to remember the sacrifice that Jesus made, that He didn't have to do it, that He chose to do so, that He willingly laid down His life, that He willingly was beaten and bruised and battered, that He did all of that for you and me so that we can live life and so that we can have eternal life.

The Scripture tells us in 1 Corinthians 11, in verse 23,

For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

That's the purpose of our lives. That's what we're here to do, to allow people to see and to hear and to know what Jesus has done, the change that He's made in our lives, the transformation that He has made in our lives, by allowing people to see that and to hear that until He returns. That's what God intends for you and me.

Oftentimes we come to the place where we ask ourselves the question: Why am I even here? Well, it's not about you, it's not about me, it's not about us. It's about Jesus, and I thought today as we begin to talk about how to begin to live again, how to have our greatest year in 2014 that we've ever had before, the best place to start is to start with Jesus, to start with Christ. He is the only way that you are going to be able to have your greatest year yet.

Now we started on Wednesday with a brand-new year, January 1, and I'm sure there are people that took the opportunity, as most people do, to make some resolutions, to make some decisions, some things that you want to do this year differently. Maybe you created a to-do list; you created a checklist of things that you want to change. Maybe it had something to do with your weight. Maybe you want to lose weight this year. Maybe it had something to do with you want to eat better and get in shape and get healthy physically. Maybe it has to do with relationships, you want to work on relationships and do a better job as a husband or a wife or as a dad or as a child

or as a coworker. You want to do things differently this year. You want to change things up a little bit.

Now a lot of us, most of us, make resolutions, things that we want to do differently each and every year. The problem is that while we make those resolutions, in almost the same breath we also joke about how long this is going to last. You've all heard the joke about how the busiest day of the year for a fitness facility is January 1, 2 and 3, and the best days to go are 4, 5 and 6 and throughout, because after a few days we give up and quit.

We talk about, "I wonder how long this is going to last." "How long are we actually going to be able to do this?" And what often happens is that we forget that the only thing that is keeping us from accomplishing what we set out to accomplish is you. The only thing that is stopping you from actually doing what it is that you want to do is you. The only thing that is keeping you from fulfilling those resolutions is you.

What happens certainly a lot of times in relationships and things like that, is we get to the place where we think all of our problems, all of our challenges, all of our heartaches are in relation to the way people treat us, or maybe the condition we're in, the situation we find ourselves in—whether it's our financial challenge, a job situation, a relationship where the other person is not giving what we believe they need to give and they're not giving 100 percent and they're not doing the things they should do, so what happens is we begin to push off onto others the fact that we're not happy, we push off onto others the fact that we're not experiencing the joy of our salvation. It's their fault.

I want to tell you today, the first thing that we've got to recognize to begin to live life again, to be able to have our greatest year yet, is the only thing that can stop you from living in joy is you. No one can take that away, because that is not a gift that someone else gives you; that is a gift that comes directly from God, and nothing can change that. What changes that is how we deal with it and how we handle it and how we treat it and how we embrace it.

Now don't get me wrong. I know there are situations, there are times—especially in relationship, and a lot of times in a marital relationship—where one of the spouses has done everything wrong. They have done something that has harmed the relationship, they have treated the other person badly, they've done things that obviously have gone against their vows and sinned and created great strife and tribulation in that home, and you say, "That's not my fault. It's their fault."

I get that. I understand that. But let me tell you something: They might have destroyed your marriage, but they can't destroy your joy if you truly understand God's plan for your life. So that's what I want to begin talking about today for the next few weeks, how to begin to live again. How to have a life that is full of joy, how to have a life that is abundant, that is over the top.

I want to read in 1 John 1 a passage that I think is a perfect passage to start talking about this topic. Beginning in verse 1 it says,

We proclaim to you the one who existed from the beginning, whom we have heard and seen. We saw him with our own eyes and touched him with our own hands. He is the Word of life. This one who is life itself was revealed to us, and we have seen him. And now we testify and proclaim to you that he is the one who is eternal life. He was with the Father, and then he was revealed to us. We proclaim to you what we ourselves have actually seen and heard so that you may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We are writing these things so that you may fully share our joy.

How to begin to live again? How to have our greatest year in 2014? We have to recognize that it always starts in the heart. You can never have the greatest year you've ever had, you can never have a year that is full of joy, you can never have a year that is better than any other year you have ever had unless it starts on the inside. There are not situations, there are not issues that are going on in life, there are not things that are going on in your world that create the joy that God intended to create. It only comes from Christ.

And so from this passage I want to share a couple of thoughts, and then we're going to end our service with a time of worship and praise where we lift our hearts and lift our voices to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

We want to begin to talk about how to begin to live again, and the first thing we get from this passage is that life always begins with Christ. Life begins with Him. We understand that life begins at conception, we've talked about that. That's physical life, and that certainly begins at conception. That's why we are adamantly against abortion here at Thomas Road. We preach pro-life, that life begins at conception, life is precious, Psalm 139, there is no question that God knew us before we were ever born, but we've got to understand that life begins with Him.

If you've started reading the Bible with us this year, maybe you made a commitment to read through the Word of God and started on our devotional reading plan that we started on January 1, we started with Genesis 1. How did it start? In the beginning. We've read through those passages. It says, "In the beginning." We've got to understand that life begins with Him. Look what it says in verse 2 of this passage, "This one who is life itself." Think about those words. "This one [Christ] who is life itself."

When you look at that word *life* in the Greek language, it's the word *zoe*, which is the idea of absolute fullness. Let me ask you a question: Anybody here today that you would love for it to be said of your life that you lived it to the absolute fullest? All of you should be raising a hand. Nobody wants to live halfway. We all want to have life to the full. We want to live absolute fullness in life. That is what our desire is. That is what our heart is. Let me tell you some good news: That is what God's heart is, too!

Think about that. The God of the universe, the God who, as we read in Genesis 1, created the entire world, who created everything, who in the beginning created the heavens and the earth, the God with that much power, you know what His heart is? You know what His desire for you is? His desire is for you to have absolute fullness in life. Life over the top. John 10:10 talks about that. That's who our God is. That's what our God wants to do.

And this passage says that if you're going to do that, you've got to remember the one who is life itself. It all starts with Him. It begins with Christ. It begins with who He is, understanding it has nothing to do with us, it has nothing to do with our situation, it has nothing to do with our circumstances, it has nothing to do with our talents or abilities. It has nothing to do with any of that. It has everything to do with Him. We put on the back wall of this church many, many years ago, back in 2007, that statement, "Not I but Christ."

Now a lot of people think I got that passage from Galatians 2:20, which is where it is found, and you may have read that passage and a lot of people think that's where it came from. That's not where God gave me those four words. God gave me those four words out of 2 Corinthians 3:5. I was reading that passage in the days following my dad's death, and in going through some very emotional, very difficult times, and we as a church traveled that journey together. Many of you who were here understand what I'm talking about.

I read that passage that says this in an important and powerful way, "We do not think for a minute that we are sufficient of ourselves to do anything, but our sufficiency is in Christ." You know what that means? Without Him, you can't do anything; with Him, there is nothing you can't do. Isn't that a great thing to think about? Isn't that a great thing to embrace and to experience? That's why we put those words up there, so that we—me, you, all of us—will always remember it has nothing to do with us, but when we understand who Jesus is, when we understand what Christ has done, it changes our lives, it changes everything, and there is nothing that is too hard for Him. We can experience life in abundant fullness, that *zoe* kind of life. That is the kind of life we're talking about today.

How can we begin to live again? Number one, we have to recognize that life begins with Him. Second, we have to recognize that you cannot truly live until you've experienced the gift that God can give you. In other words, it all starts with salvation. Look at the second part of verse 2, "He is the one who is eternal life."

John 14:6 says that Jesus is the way, the truth, and what? The life. No man comes to the Father except through Him. There is no way to truly experience life the way that God intended for us to live it; there is no way to truly experience life to the fullest; there is no way to experience life in abundant fullness; there is no way to experience life with amazing, incredible, overwhelming joy unless it starts in the heart of the believer.

Now listen, that's a message that wouldn't be popular in Hollywood. It's not a message that would be popular in other religions. It's not a message that would be popular with people who don't believe in God, who don't claim Christ as their Lord and Savior. That would not be a message that would be popular with them. They would say, "What are you talking about, 'You can't really live until you've experienced salvation'? How can you say that? I've got money and I've got power and I've got fame. People like me. How can you say that I can't truly live until I've experienced salvation?"

Here is what I would say. My answer would be that you might be able to experience life, but you are experiencing life the way the world defines it, not the way that God defines it. And there is a huge difference. The world finds joy in money. The world finds joy in power. The world finds

joy in fame. The world finds joy in status. The world finds joy in doing things that they think are fun. The world finds joy in stuff. The world finds joy in all of this.

Let me tell you: Joy is only found in Christ. The emptiest people in the world are the people that have all the money in the world but don't have Christ. The saddest people in the world, the ones who have everything and yet they are sitting there alone because they know there is an emptiness that is there.

There might be someone that walked into this room today that might be in that situation. There might be someone who walked into this room today and you've never experienced the gift of salvation. I want you to know and I want you to understand it's the first Sunday of the new year, let's start it right, let's start it real. Let's get honest.

Let me tell you something: You are a sinner. I am a sinner. We are all sinners. We've all fallen short of the glory of God. There is nothing that we could ever do that we would be able to deserve a relationship with Christ. There is no way that we could do anything, ever, that could give us that opportunity to deserve Him. But even though we are sinners and even though we have done everything we can to destroy any potential for relationship, and even though there is nothing that we can do to ever earn that right, God loves you anyway, and God's desire for you is to get to know you and build a relationship with you and to strengthen that relationship with you, and He sent His Son Jesus to die for you.

And even though Romans 6:23 tells us that we deserve eternal separation from God, that we deserve to forever be away from Him, it says, "But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord," God sent you and me a gift that we can't even imagine, and if we will accept it and embrace it and receive it, that is where joy is found. And I pray that if you have never experienced that joy that you would make today the day where you say, "I want that. I want to experience salvation, life to the fullest."

We have to understand that life doesn't really happen, you can't truly live until you've experienced that gift. But the third thing—and I think this is where most of us live—is this: Joy in life is only possible through fellowship with God. And this is, I think, where a lot of us blow it. I think a lot of us miss the boat with regards to our walk with God. We understand this thing called life. We understand that in the beginning God created. We understand John 1, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." We understand that and embrace that. We've accepted Christ as our Lord and Savior.

But what's happens is we begin walking our own journey, and pretty soon the fellowship with Him begins to suffer, and then we wonder why we're sad and we wonder why we feel empty. We wonder why we feel like life is just going through the motions and punching the clock. There's no real purpose and meaning. Certainly we are not living life to the fullest. It's because oftentimes we walk along and live our own life and pretty soon we get so far away from Him that the joy is gone. That happens a lot.

Look what it says in verses 3 and 4, "We proclaim to you what we ourselves have actually seen and heard so that you may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and

with his Son, Jesus Christ. We are writing these things so that you may fully share our joy.” There is no way to fully share the joy that God intended to give unless we have fellowship with the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. There is no way. It’s impossible. It’s not going to happen.

I’ve used this illustration before. It’s a perfect way to explain what I’m talking about here. Twenty-one years ago I walked into a church in Oakland, California, and after the music began to play the back doors opened and my wife, Sherri, walked down that center aisle. She was gorgeous, beautiful, incredible. That was an amazing moment. A wedding. She walked down to that altar and my dad was standing on the stage, and during that time there was some music and candle lighting, and we said vows to one another, we gave rings to each other and all that stuff.

I don’t remember anything. I remember the kiss and I remember when we walked out, because I knew that as we walked out of that room that I had a wife. I had fellowship with her. Genesis, it was for me. I now have a person that is my wife. That was amazing. But if I’d walked out of that room and made the decision, “I don’t think I’m going to talk to her much anymore. I don’t want that relationship to grow anymore. We’re married. I’m wearing the ring. It’s all good. She’s there. Let her clean the house and cook and take care of things and I’ll do my thing. We’re married.”

Do you think that would be a good marriage if that’s what I’d decided twenty-one years ago? Number one, we probably wouldn’t still be married, or number two, I’d be dead. It wouldn’t be a good marriage by any stretch of the imagination, because when you come to that place when you walk out of that room as husband and wife, you are embarking on a journey; you haven’t arrived.

And so for the last twenty-one years we’ve gotten to know each other better and I’ve gotten to know that me expecting her to clean the house and do all the dishes and cook the food and all is not a good plan to say out loud. We’ve gotten closer, we’ve grown better and our relationship is stronger and God has blessed us with four amazing, incredible children, and God has grown our home, and it’s an incredible experience. You know why? Because we made the determination that day that we were going to grow our relationship stronger and stronger and stronger each and every day. Why don’t we do that with our relationship with Christ?

If I had made the decision that I wasn’t going to grow in a relationship with my wife when we got married, I’d be looking for reasons not to go home. I’d be working later, I’d be wanting to go and hang out with friends, rather than go home. I’d try to figure out ways to go play golf instead of spending time with the family. I’d try to find people I could hang out with rather than have to go into that house because that house would not be a house that was full of joy, would it?

The same thing is true in our Christian life. When our fellowship, our relationship is not growing stronger in Christ, it is not a place where there is a lot of joy, so we try to find excuses that will keep us from spending time with God. We might not admit that, but it’s true. What happens is we get to the place where we wake up on a Sunday morning and it’s 31 degrees and rain is falling that might turn to ice and there might be a slick spot, so we stay in bed.

Or maybe it’s 80 degrees outside and sunny and beautiful and we say, “I’m going to go play golf, because it’s a beautiful day. I went to church last week.”

We go home at night and, “I’m tired. I don’t have time to read my Bible. I don’t have time to pray. I’m exhausted.” We go to bed. And pretty soon we find every excuse in the book, every reason that we can come up with to not spend time with God.

The reason we do that is because we have trained ourselves that our relationship with Him is not very good, and because our relationship with Him is not very good and not very strong, we don’t want to spend a lot of time there, and then we wonder why we walk through life and say, “What is all this about? Where is the joy of following Christ?”

Here’s the deal: The only person that can keep you from experiencing that joy—pop quiz—is who? It’s us. So today we’ve got to understand it starts inside. You can’t begin to live again until you, in the heart, begin to get that fellowship right with God. We’ve got to understand that when we are sure that our relationship with Christ is strong and getting to know Him better, what happens is when we get to know Him better, we get to know ourselves better. We begin to look at ourselves in a different way.

We get to know ourselves better, and when we get to know ourselves better what happens is we begin to look at other people differently; we begin to see them with God’s eyes and we begin to look at them differently and know them better. And when we get to know them better because we’ve gotten to know ourselves better and we’ve gotten to know God better, what happens is we get to know joy better and God begins to do a work in our life and our relationships and our friendships and our home that we could never have even imagined. But it all starts in the heart.

So the question I have for you today is, we read it in Genesis 1, “In the beginning” what? God. Today, we talk about how to begin to live again, we’ve got to start there. In the beginning, right out of the gate, first thing, it’s all about Him.

In a moment we’re going to stand and sing, a time of invitation. We’re going to open this altar, because I think there are some people here today that say, “Yeah, I want to begin to live with you. Yeah, I want to find joy. Yeah, I want to experience joy to the fullest. I want to experience abundant fullness. I want life over the top. That’s what I want.” It starts when you get on your knees before a holy God and say, “God, I’m sorry for where I’ve been and I make the commitment today that I’m going to build my relationship with you.” So we’re going to open the altar and maybe you need to come and kneel here.

[Praying] God, I pray for every person gathered in this room. Regardless of where they are in life, regardless of the mountaintops or the valleys, regardless of experiences and tragedies and sorry and grief, regardless of all of those things, God, I know your desire is to bring joy, to give life to the fullest, and so Lord I ask you to speak to our hearts, to the hearts of the men, women and young people in this room. Allow them to make that commitment that “I’m going to do it right.”

(Singing: “From the Inside Out”)

Lord, we thank you that from the inside you do a work in us. Because of what Jesus has done on the cross, because of the empty tomb, that you desire to do a work in us that changes us and

transforms us, that draws us closer to you, that allows us to live life according to your plan, according to your principles, according to your Word. So God I pray today that we will make that commitment that we want to live that kind of life, a life that is drawn to you, a life that is seeking you, a life that is running after you, of understanding and experiencing the power, the presence that you give.

Lord, that's who we want to be. Help us to have that desire each and every day, that in 2014 we will rise up as a people fully committed, fully passionate in our walk with you, in our fellowship with you, and as a result that you give us the opportunity to change our world with the Gospel. That's who we want to be and that's what we want to do. We want to begin to live again, the way that you intend. God, help us to do that today.

Keywords: consecration, joy, new beginnings, 1 John 1, relationship with Christ, living life to the fullest, fellowship with God, Not I but Christ, salvation