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Seven Signs of Life

1. Movement: Prove You're Not Dead

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Sermon Series Focus

- In biology we learn that there are *seven* processes of life that identify all living organisms. We could also view these as “signposts” to a healthy living organism.
- We're going to use these seven signs as a diagnostic tool for assessing your own spiritual health as a disciple, as well as the overall health of our church.
- Is this an area in my life that needs the Spirit to bring fresh vitality? Is this an area in our church where we need to give attention? What is God saying to me about these seven signs? Where can I (we) use his healing touch?

Seven Signs of Life

1. **Movement: Prove You're Not Dead**
2. Respiration: Breathing God's Breath
3. Sensitivity: Our Spiritual Awareness
4. Growth: The Inevitable Result of Healthy Life
5. Reproduction: Multiplying Life, Creating the Future
6. Excretion: Getting Rid of the Junk
7. Nutrition: A Diet That Makes a Difference

Luke 2:25-27 NIV

²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him.

²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah.

²⁷ Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts.

Luke 2:27-33 NIV

When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, ²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

²⁹ “Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,
you may now dismiss your servant in peace.

³⁰ For my eyes have seen your salvation,

³¹ which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:

³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and the glory of your people Israel.”

³³ The child’s father and mother marveled at what was said about him.

Movement Sustains Organic Life

- From the moment we were created from the dust, human beings have been moving to stay alive
- Movement is an indication of life and usually occurs in response to stimuli; reasons to move abound
- Animals in the wild move when stimulated by outer or inner forces (e.g. threatened, hungry or thirsty, and when migrating in season, etc.)
- Plants exhibit movement through growth, though it is sometimes slow and hard to see



We're Made to Move With the Cosmos

- We are rotating with the earth on its axis at about 1,000 mph
- We revolve with the earth around the sun at about 67,000 mph
- We also move with the solar system around the galaxy at about 178 mps
- And we're moving with the galaxy as it expands with the universe at a rate of 2.1 kilometers per second per megaparsec!



Movement Sustains Spiritual Life

- If we're not moving in our faith (i.e. learning, growing, sharing, risking, repenting, etc.), we develop a spiritual atrophy; we lose our abilities, influence, & effectiveness
- This spiritual plasticity keeps us sensitive to, even intensifying our awareness of, God's voice and leading—increasingly able to discern the Spirit from the flesh
- With continued movement we remain alert and our response time to the Spirit's prompting is fine-tuned
- Movement in our faith ensures individual growth and the building up of the church; everyone is blessed!

Genesis 12:1-3 NIV

¹ The LORD had said to Abram, “Go [move] from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you.

² “I will make you into a great nation,
and I will bless you;
I will make your name great,
and you will be a blessing.

³ I will bless those who bless you,
and whoever curses you I will curse;
and all peoples on earth
will be blessed through you.”

Exodus 14:10-14 NIV

¹⁰ As Pharaoh approached, the Israelites looked up, and there were the Egyptians, marching after them. They were terrified and cried out to the LORD.

¹¹ They said to Moses, “Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? ¹² Didn’t we say to you in Egypt, ‘Leave us alone; let us serve the Egyptians’? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!”

¹³ Moses answered the people, “Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the LORD will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again.

¹⁴ The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still.”

Exodus 14:15-18 NIV

¹⁵ Then the LORD said to Moses, “Why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to move on. ¹⁶ Raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea to divide the water so that the Israelites can go through the sea on dry ground.

¹⁷ I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them. And I will gain glory through Pharaoh and all his army, through his chariots and his horsemen. ¹⁸ The Egyptians will know that I am the LORD when I gain glory through Pharaoh, his chariots and his horsemen.”

Hebrews 10:36-39 NIV

³⁶ You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.

³⁷ For, “In just a little while,
he who is coming will come
and will not delay.”

³⁸ And, “But my righteous one will live by faith.
And I take no pleasure
in the one who shrinks back.”

³⁹ But we do not belong to those who shrink back and are destroyed, but to those who have faith and are saved.

God's Many Methods of Movement

- An inner call to “go” and follow him by faith (trust)
- The reading and hearing of his words through Scripture
- A message revealed in art, beauty, a song or melody
- Stimulates us by an outer force (e.g. loss of job, change in life circumstances, persecution, death, etc.)
- Intervention by a friend, family member, or a stranger
- Individuals willing to believe, step out and take a risk in order to inspire a following to move forward

“A church which pitches its tents without constantly looking out for new horizons, which does not continually strike camp, is being untrue to its calling. . . . [We must] play down our longing for certainty, accept what is risky, and live by improvisation and experiment.”

Hans Küng, *The Church as the People of God*

What Happens When We Move In Response to Jesus?

- It becomes easier to leave your old life/ways behind.
(Matt 9:9 – Matthew leaves his old job for an adventure)
- You're able to receive vision and see with new eyes.
(Matt 9:27 – Blind men move toward Jesus & are healed)
- You get to be a part of life change in others.
(Mark 1:17 – Jesus says follow and become fishers...)
- We will be making disciples through the church.
(Matt 28:19 – Jesus tells us to multiply & grow his following)

“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them,
and they follow me.

Jesus, Jn. 10:27 NIV

John 12:25-26 NLT

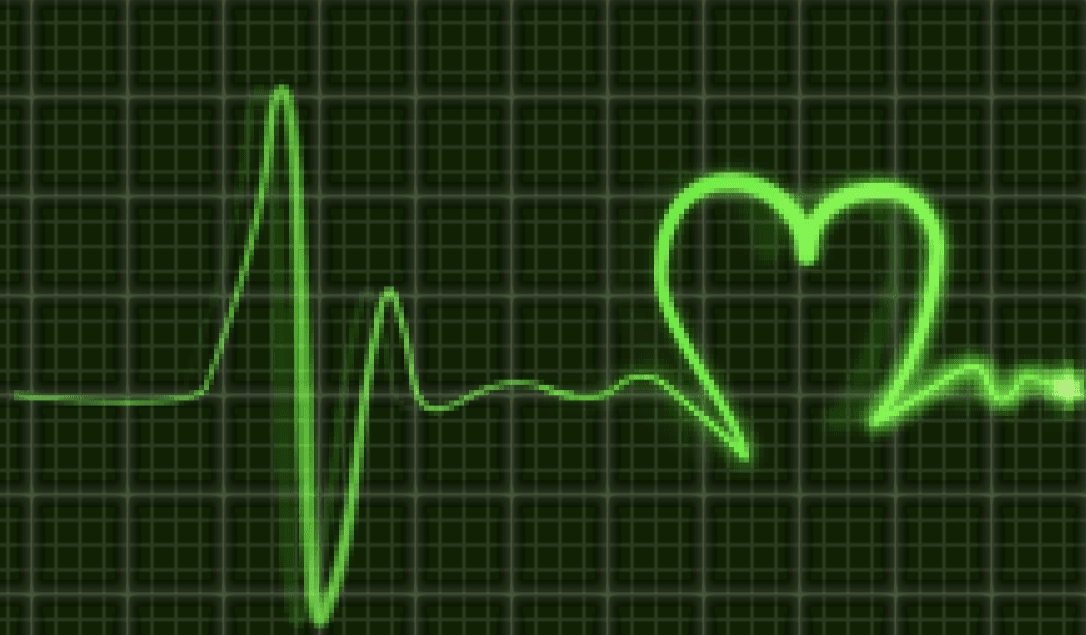
²⁵ Those who love their life in this world will lose it. Those who care nothing for their life in this world will keep it for eternity. ²⁶ Anyone who wants to serve me must follow me, because my servants must be where I am. And the Father will honor anyone who serves me.

Are You Moving? Prove You're Not Dead

- Being busy is not necessarily healthy movement; life-giving movement is the sort that blesses. Is your movement growing you and others?
- Are you positioning yourself to hear the voice of God so that he might direct your paths? If so, what is he saying? What are you going to do about it?
- Are you responding to the Holy Spirit's stimulants? Are you resisting the outer forces or are you letting God use them to grow you and move you forward?
- The alive disciple and church is always on the move. When is the last time you/we acted on faith in response to God?

Galatians 6:7-9 MSG

“What a person plants, he will harvest. The person who plants selfishness, ignoring the needs of others—ignoring God!—harvests a crop of weeds. All he’ll have to show for his life is weeds! But the one who plants in response to God, letting God’s Spirit do the growth work in him, harvests a crop of real life, eternal life. So let’s not allow ourselves to get fatigued doing good. At the right time we will harvest a good crop if we don’t give up, or quit.”



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Sermon audio & slides in PDF can be downloaded at:
www.christiansburgmennonite.org