

The Christian's Position "In Christ"

Lesson # 4 – Christ is in Us

In lesson #3, we finished our 2 part study of **us in Christ**. In this fourth lesson, we study a second aspect of our "Union with Christ", namely that Christ is in us. This sounds strange and alien to us, because our minds have yet to become conformed to the truth of God's word. Let's move forward and look at God's word, and discuss, and pray, and meditate on these truths.

I. Christ is "In Us" During Our Lives Now:

We are going to be looking at John chapter 15, verse 5. This dialogue begins with Christ washing the disciples feet in John chapter 13 and continues up through this current passage. The context for this entire passage is that Jesus here is ministering to and teaching His inner circle of disciples in private, with private truth that He does not teach to the crowds of disciples in the open.

We cannot in this class today read this whole context, but I will teach this passage in the light of the full context. I would suggest that you spend some time this week, reading from John 13:1 through John 15:11 to see the context of this first passage of study tonight.

Side Comment: (Speaking of John 15:1-10) "Here is but one example of the principle, that for the saint of God, the Scriptures are a storehouse of incredible jewels just waiting to be picked up and gloriously examined. In this examination we become discerning Jewelers who can readily spot the glory of our God in the various colors, transparencies, facets, and reflected and refracted light of each individual jewel of God's truth. Dare we in any way ignore this field of jewels?" *Ray Weedon*

John 15:1-11 *"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. ²"Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit. ³"You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. ⁴"Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. ⁵"I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. ⁶"If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned. ⁷"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸"My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples. ⁹"Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. ¹⁰" If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. ¹¹"These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.*

Verse

Comments

- 1 Christ is the vine, the source of life and of fruit. The Father is the sovereign over the vine and its fruit.
- 2a We outward followers/disciples are the branches. The Father removes those who do not bear fruit.
- 2b The branches that bear fruit will be pruned to be more productive in fruit bearing.
- 3 The disciple who abides in Christ's word is clean and productive. The other branches are not.
- 4 We are to abide in Christ and **He will abide in us**. As branches, we cannot produce fruit on our own. This is ridiculously impossible and foolish! Our spiritual power and effectiveness

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comes from abiding in the vine. It does not come independently from our own commitment to service.

- 5 Christ reiterates this truth. "*Apart from Me you can do nothing*"! (of spiritual value)
- 6 Any who follow Jesus that does not abide in Him and He in them, are "tares" to be cast aside and burnt in Hell.
- 7 Anyone who abides in Christ, has Christ's words abiding in them is connected to the promises, and blessings, and the power of God. We saints are connected through the beautiful, holy, broken body of Christ which has satisfied God's wrath towards us.
- 8 God is glorified in the bearing of much fruit by those who abide in Christ.
- 9 The Father loves the Son. In the exact same way, Christ has loved those of us. Therefore, abide in this love that Christ has set upon us. We are secure in Christ because of this eternal union we have with Christ the vine.
- 10 We obey Christ because we love Christ. We love Christ, because He first loved us and made us into branches of His very body, the vine, the source of life and truth and all spiritual fruit.
- 11 In Christ, we are the source of Christ's joy. Because of His joy in us, we are filled with complete or perfect joy. What more could we ask? Where is room for depression or discouragement?

We do not just stand with Christ. We do not just serve Christ. We do not just accept Christ. No, rather our life is sustained by Christ. Without the vine, we are just dead kindling. It is in gaining our new life, giving sustenance from the vine, that we bear fruit to the glory of God.

Gal 2:19-21 *For through the Law I died to the Law, so that I might live to God. ²⁰I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me. ²¹I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly.*

Verse

Comments

- 20 My old self no longer lives, but now that I am "in Christ", it is Christ that lives in me. I have become His representative here on this earth. I no longer represent my own views, ideas, and actions. I am truly His ambassador representing the Kingdom of God to a world dead and without hope.
- 21 This life that I now live in my flesh, I live by my faith in Christ. I do not just "have faith". Rather I live by faith. Christ lives in this world through me.

What conclusion is there about how I view my earthly life? Think deeply.

John 14:15-23 *"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. ¹⁶I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; ¹⁷that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you. ¹⁸I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you will see Me; because I live, you will live also. ²⁰In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. ²¹He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves*

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Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him." ²²Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, "Lord, what then has happened that You are going to disclose Yourself to us and not to the world?" ²³Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him.

<u>Verse</u>	<u>Comments</u>
17a	Here is a clear and unequivocal statement that the lost man cannot come to God apart from the Holy Spirit of God acting first. They cannot because they have been blinded by their own sin nature and have no desire to see the things of God. (Read John 6:26-71 and meditate thoroughly)
17b	Jesus' disciples, the ones the Father has given to Him can know this Holy Spirit, because He abides with you and in you.
20	Indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God, the believer can know this mystery, namely that Christ is in the Father and the believer is in Christ, and <u>Christ is in the believer.</u> In Christ, we have been adopted into the Triune God-Head. (We are <u>not</u> part of the divinity!) We are truly adopted into the inner family of God. God has truly reached out and made a people for Himself.
23	A sign of being "in Christ" is that we will keep His word. Because of our position "in Christ", the Father will love us and the Father and the Son will come to us and abide with us.

Rom 8:5-11 *For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. ⁶For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, ⁷because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, ⁸and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. ⁹However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. ¹⁰If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness. ¹¹But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.*

<u>Verse</u>	<u>Comments</u>
5	The lost man lives in accordance with the passions of the flesh and willingly set his mind on the things of the flesh.
7	The mind set on the flesh is at enmity with God. A mind like this does not want to subject itself to God. A mind set on the flesh cannot please or relate to the One True God of Scripture.
8	Those who have a mind subject to the flesh cannot please God. Their mind is depraved in all of its capacities.
9	If we have been born again, if we have been indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God, we are not "in the flesh". But check yourself. If you are not indwelt by the Holy Spirit, you are still lost. Seek God's grace and be saved.
11	This same Holy Spirit of God raised Jesus Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies because His Spirit dwells in you.

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Col 1:25-29 *Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, ²⁶that is, the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, ²⁷to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. ²⁸We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. ²⁹For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.*

Verse

Comments

- 25 Here is the mission and purpose of the church, to carry out the preaching/teaching of the Word of God that the saints may be edified (discipled).
- 26 The gospel is a mystery to the natural mind of man. He cannot understand it or receive it until God acts in power and in Grace through the illuminating and regenerating power of the Holy Spirit. This mystery has been throughout history, but has now been revealed to His saints.
- 27a God willed to make known the riches of the glory of this mystery even among the Gentiles.
- 27b This mystery *is Christ in you, the hope of glory.* This mystery is a sovereign work of God. We are privileged to be His ambassadors to a lost and dying world proclaiming Christ and His mighty redemptive work to all lost men and women.

We see in verses 28 & 29 that the church (the body of Christ, the saints) are to proclaim Christ to every man and teach every man and teach with all wisdom so that we may present every man complete in Christ.

This is not saying that every man will be saved, but rather that our responsibility is to call all men to Christ with the gospel of Christ. Our labor and striving is not in accordance with our flesh alone, but in accordance with the power of the Holy Spirit with each of His saints.

2 Cor 13:4-5 *For indeed He was crucified because of weakness, yet He lives because of the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, yet we will live with Him because of the power of God directed toward you. ⁵Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you — unless indeed you fail the test?*

Verse

Comments

- 4 The fact that we are weak in Christ, means that we depend solely on the power of God carried to us by the indwelling Holy Spirit of God for our strength. We have none in the flesh.
- 5a We are to test ourselves that we are in the faith. Intellectual assent coupled with an emotional response of regret about our wickedness is not in and of itself salvation. Salvation must include the indwelling of the Holy Spirit of God, cementing our union with Christ. It causes a regeneration of the heart and is accompanied by the sense experience of spiritual sight (we were spiritually blind before hand). We must examine

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our faith to assure ourselves that it is not a man made faith of the flesh. It must be a faith informed by the Spirit of God in union with Christ.

- 5b When we are born spiritually, we have "Christ in us" sealed unto salvation by the Spirit of God.

II. Conclusion:

Most New Testament verses regarding this "Union with Christ" focus on our being in Christ. I hope this lesson presents you with enough Scriptural evidence to convince you that it is equally true that Christ is in us. There is power in the Christian faith. This faith becomes evident in our lives when we come to know and understand this glorious doctrine of "Union with Christ" and to understand the scope of this doctrine, namely:

- We are in Christ;
- Christ is in His saints;
- The Father is in the Son; and
- The Son is in the Father.

Question: How and why should our knowledge of this "Union with Christ" affect our relationship with our brothers and sisters in Christ?

Some Important Quotes:

"One of the objections sometimes raised to the doctrine of Substitutionary atonement and forensic justification is that virtue simply cannot be transferred from one person to another. What should be born in mind, however, is that this is not so external a matter as it is sometimes regarded. For Christ and the believer do not stand at arm's length from one another, so that when God looks squarely at the believer, He cannot also see Christ with His righteousness but only pretends to. Rather, Christ and the believer have been brought into such a unity that Christ's spiritual assets, as it were, and the spiritual liabilities and assets of the believer are merged. Thus, when looking at the believer, God the Father does not see him or her alone. He sees the believer together with Christ, and in the act of justification justifies both of them together. It is as if God says, "They are righteous!" He declares what is actually true of the believer which has come to pass through God's constituting the believer one with Christ. This union is like that of a couple who, when they marry, merge their assets and liabilities. With their property held in joint tenancy, the assets of the one can wipe out the liabilities of the other, leaving a positive net balance. **Millard Erickson;** *Christian Theology* (1 Volume edition) p. 958

A robust doctrine of union with Christ provides the best antidote to antinomianism. Both justification and sanctification are blessings given to all Christians (1 Cor 1:30). To sever one blessing from the other is, to use John Calvin's words, to sever Christ. The Christian who is justified must necessarily be sanctified because of union with Christ. But these applied benefits must never eclipse the person of Christ. Christ's person is a greater gift to His people than His benefits. Union with Christ helps believers to keep this salient fact in mind. We do not merely receive from Christ, but, more importantly, we belong to Him. Our identify is "in Him", so much so that our understanding of the Christian life has strong corollaries with Christ's own life of faith and obedience to the Father.

Dr. Mark Jones; from *Tabletalk magazine of December, 2013;* p. 67