

"I am crucified with Christ, yet I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me, and the life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loves me and gave His life for me" (Galatians 2:20).

## **Not I, But Christ**

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## NOT I, BUT CHRIST

(Galatians 2:20)

Sylvia Pearce

Martin Luther, the father of the Reformation, once said, "It was God's intention to have a race of christs. Nothing less than this is true holiness and the Gospel in operation. Holiness stands for Christ in you, the fullness of the Holy Spirit, the baptism of the Spirit and identification with Christ in His death and resurrection."

"Life in the Spirit is an adventure, and thrilling, yet at its heart there is a desperate seriousness. Through the cross of Christ, we have received the Spirit of son-ship, and by Him we cry "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself "bears witness with our spirit that we are sons of God, and if sons then heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:15-17). As co-heirs with Christ, God promises us, "joy unspeakable full of glory," "a peace that passes all understanding," and "all sufficiency in all things."

We also have "all the fullness of God," and "reigning in life." We have self-release from bondage into liberty, and an overflow of the rivers of the Spirit. And finally we count temptations and trials as all joy, instead of miseries to be avoided or endured. Though always only the earthen vessels in which the "excellency of the power is of God, and not of us," we count it a privilege to "bear about in our bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus," so that "death works in us, but life in others."

We have this inheritance because all is centered in the one reality, our Lord Jesus Christ,--crucified, risen, and ascended. He now lives this life in His body members, as if it is us. Even though this inheritance is available to all Christians, few experience this quality of life."<sup>1</sup> Most Christians live condemned and frustrated lives, trying to cope with their difficulties and wondering why they can't make Christianity work.

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<sup>1</sup> "Yes, I Am" by Norman Grubb

Christians all over the world are hungry to know the mystery of the gospel, which is "Christ in you the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27). We have a marvelous Savior living in us. However it is a far deeper truth to know that we have an equally total and complete human self containing and expressing our wonderful Savior. It is right here that most Christians get snagged and even stopped. Most of us love and worship the Savior that saved us, but we hate the human self that He saved. There is something definitely wrong with such a contradiction. In Col. 1:27-28, Paul says that he taught and warned every man in all wisdom that he might present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. A perfect Christ in a perfect man! What a revelation!

How could Paul make such a statement about us, when most of the time, there seems to be a condemned and failing me? Here lies the hidden root of our problem. The condemned and failing me is a false independent-self mentality we all inherited at the Fall. This lying mentality, working in us as if it is the truth, is the source of our failure. We are blood bought Christians, saved by grace with Christ living His life in us, yet Satan still deludes us with this lie.

His delusion is in the identity level of our consciousness, where we ask, "Who am I?" We mistakenly think we have a life of our own and should be strong and able to perform by our own resources. Therefore when the Bible says, "Be ye holy as I am holy," we try our best to be so. If we are really honest, we have to admit that we are failing most of the time, and this failure then floods our consciousness with a false condemned image of a failing me. Paul had the same dilemma as we do when he cried out in Romans 7:24, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death."

## **Part II**

In Christ's body death, he set us free from the embodiment of sin. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed,

that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin" (Rom. 6:6-7). "The body of sin" is embodied in an mentality which falsely believes we are independent beings separated from God. This is really Satan's mentality.

Satan declared in Isaiah 14:14, "I will be like the most high God!" He was not trying to be evil, he was trying to be good. He was trying to become just like God, sufficient in himself. Therefore, he brought into being original sin, which is self-sufficient-self, operating as a independent-self. These same lies were put into Adam at the fall and past on to us, as our deadly inheritance.

Satan declares "I will." This is saying that the creation has a separate will apart from the Creator, or a will of his own. Then as he says, "be like," which means that he tries in his own strength to be like the Creator. Satan was the first one of all creation who mistakenly thought that he had a life of his own, and tried to be good by imitating God. This made him a counterfeit god, a liar, and a deceiver.

These satanic lies were imparted to us at the Fall and remain hidden deep in our consciousness. Even as a Christians we carry them around as grave clothes from the past. Don't we Christians say, "I will try to be like Christ." What we really mean is that we love Christ for saving us, and we want to have his self-giving love manifested in our character. These desires are absolutely right, but we think that we must perform these desires in our own strength. Here lies our problem. We do not and cannot have the power apart from "the divine nature" of Christ in us. For the human is not a producer, or performer. It is a simple **receiver**.

The Bible clearly defines **the human** as temples, slaves, vessels, branches, and wives. None of these bible types have the capacity to perform in and of themselves. They only contain, and express the life of another. Therefore, we humans have the one simple function of receiving and spontaneously expressing the life of the one who indwells us. The Old Testament symbols were shadows

of New Testament realities. An example of this is in 1 Cor. 3:16, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" Now what is the function of a **temple**? The temple in the Old Testament was the building that housed the Holy-of-Holies, which contained the Shekinah-Glory. It was not the glory itself, but it was the container for the Glory.

The Bible calls us **slaves**. "Being then made free from sin, you became the slaves of righteousness" (Rom. 6:18). What is the function of a slave? A slave has no freedom or life of his own, for he is bound to his master. He must do what his master tells him to do. II Peter says, "for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage." The human has never been what we think of as an independently free agent. We have always been in bondage to our master, either Satan or Christ.

The Bible also calls us **vessels**. "That he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy" (Rom. 9:23). What is the function of a vessel? A vessel is designed to simply be available to contain liquid. The cup isn't the coffee, and the coffee isn't the cup.

The Bible calls us **branches**. What is the function of a branch? John 15:1-4 says that Christ is the vine, we are the branches, and without Him we can do nothing. It's obvious that a branch apart from the vine can not produce fruit, yet we Christians falsely think that we can produce good works apart from the Holy Spirit. We also think that we can produce good works with God's help. This too is a delusion as well. God can't help us be the vine, we are the branches. A branch simple rest in the fact that it is a channel by which the vine produces the fruit.

We are "dead to the law by the body of Christ; that you should be **married** to another even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God". We are dead to the old law-bound way of operation so that we come

alive to our union with Christ who produces His fruits through us. This reflects natural marriage, "the two become one flesh" producing children. A good illustration is this: A piece of iron on fire. The iron never becomes the fire and the fire never becomes the iron, but they are both interpenetrated in each another forming one burning piece of iron. Likewise, the human created form never becomes the Creator, and the Creator never becomes the human form, yet they are joined together as unified opposites. This is oneness!

### Part III

Now what about Paul's dilemma, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?" The light came to Paul when he saw that the human is not the producer of good or evil. The human is a neutral being, and not self-producing. This self-sufficient energy is "**sin that dwelleth in me**" as Paul clearly brings out in Rom.7:17. Indwelling sin is Satan in our flesh manifesting himself in a myriad of self-centered forms: self-sufficiency, self-effort, self-righteousness, and self-hatred, self interest...self, self, self.

It is, me believing and operating as if I have a life of my own....my own power, my own strength, my own righteousness, and my own needy independent-self. The human has a life, but not a life of its own. We have never been an independent-self, or a just me. We have always been indwelt by a deity nature, either Christ or Satan. This lie about the human self was put into mankind at the fall and continues to dominate mankind's consciousness until we are, by God's grace, awakened to Satan's insidious hold on us.

The outer law is God schoolmaster to drive us to see the manifestations of the hidden culprit, Satan causing us to believe in ourselves. The demands of the outer law in Romans 7 bring out Paul's hidden sin which is self-effort--that is, any activity based on self-sufficiency. Self-effort based on self-sufficiency is the hidden

root sin of the believer in Romans 7. Independent-self is the flesh trying to be good by its own flesh power. but is really Satan in disguise.

The good news is that the cross has put Satan out. He has no rights to our humanity. Through the cross our humanity is set free from Satan's dominion, and as Romans 6:13 says, we are "instruments of righteousness." Paul saw that our striving to become righteous is an evil form of self-righteousness. Instead of striving to become, he saw that the only way the human functions is simply, by faith. By faith, Paul agreed with God, "Christ is my life and my righteousness." Paul as well as ourselves are saved by faith alone, and now we see that we are sanctified by faith alone as well.

Paul's problem was never his precious human self; his problem was Satan disguised as Paul making him think that he was an independent, separate self. Likewise, we are set free when we see that our real problem **is not us**, but Satan's strivings in us (Rom.7:17). Equally, the solution **is not us**, but is Christ's resurrection power in us (Phil 3:10).

It is Satan's voice in us saying, "I am not good enough," or "I should try harder to improve myself." Both are lies. What we don't understand is that Satan speaks to us in first person—it is Satan's voice in us saying, "I am not good enough," "I", "I", "I". Our problem is that we have an "I" problem because we are identifying ourselves as a separate "I", **not** joined to Christ. **This is a lie! Jesus died so that the Spirit of Christ could join Himself to us, thereby setting you free from this delusion (Gal. 2:20).**

How do we untangle a lie? By simply replacing the lie with the truth. **If we speak the truth, the lie will untangle itself.** If we try to untangle it, it will entangle us. By the leap of faith, we declare that what God says about us is absolutely true. God's word says in Col. 3:3-4 that we are dead, and Christ is our life. God's word says,

we are the righteousness of Christ...it says we are saints...it says we are justified...and we are sanctified...all by the simple leap of faith.

Paul was not just Paul, he was Christ living in Paul's form (Gal. 2:20). Galatians also says that the wrong use of our flesh was crucified with Christ (5:24). The whole purpose of the cross was to "destroy the works of the devil"(I John 3:8). And as we see in the Hebrews letter, Christ accomplished that work at Calvary: "through death Christ might **destroy him** that had the power of death, **that is, the devil**, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bandage"(2:14).

The Cross totally delivers us from Satan's insidious lies that falsely hold us in captivity. II Cor.5:21 declares that God "hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." At the cross Christ died as us ("made sin.") Therefore, in that death, the satanic nature went out of our bodies forever. In his risen body, representing us, Christ raised us up with His own nature of holiness! Christ replaced Satan in us. **Therefore the Gospel is an exchange of gods**—from Satan in us, (John 8:44) to Christ in us (Col. 1:27).

**The blood satisfied God, while the body death satisfies us.** Col. 1:20 says that we are reconciled by Christ's **blood**, but in verse 22 Paul brings out the second work of the cross. "In the **body** of His flesh, He might present you holy, unblameable and unproveable in His sight." It is one thing to know we are forgiven by faith in His precious blood, but it is far more to know that **we** are holy, total, and complete.

That satanic, independent life of our own was crucified with Christ 2000 years ago, and by faith, we are joined to Christ in his resurrection. "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself to me"(Gal. 2:20). Christ is our peace, Christ is our strength, Christ is our joy, and

Christ is our life. For peace, strength, joy and life are the attributes of a person, and Christians contain that person., for that person is Christ Himself.

#### Part IV

A radical replacement takes place in our spirit centers, for we are exchanging the deluded-self for a resurrected Christ/self. **It is an exchange of identities.** There often is a **crisis period** while this miracle is taking place. Why? Because a **"separate-me"** is the only self that I have ever known or operated from." As God breaks down and shatters our self delusions, we often break down as well. It is God's grace that breaks us down, and grace that builds us up again in the reality of Christ, our true resurrected Christ/self. Believer, take heart, God knows what He is doing, and He **alone** will bring you through.

We are "being conformed into the image of the Son, and being "transformed by the renewing of our minds." It is likened to a butterfly coming out of an cocoon. Do not touch this process, it is God's work, just stand fast in the truth. For, "faithful is he that calleth you, he also will do it."

The Cross of Christ has already set us free from self condemnation (Rom.8:1), and made us partakers of the "divine nature" (II Peter 1:3-4). And by a simple word of faith, embracing these precious promises, we can all enter into this promised oneness. There is nothing left for us to do except just believe these promises by faith. "Be followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises" (Heb. 6:12).

Self-acceptance will replace self-condemnation as we leap by faith into the truth that we are **"whole, complete, and lacking nothing"** (James 1:4). Miraculously, we begin to accept ourselves, just like we are, and not try to change ourselves. We accept our negatives instead of trying to conquer them, knowing they are the

essential background, and a golden opportunity for faith. We learn first to accept the negative pulls and then we learn to exchange or replace them by faith for the true Spirit realities and experience the released life of Christ. This exchanged life is ours as a reality by the power of the Spirit transforming us into the image of the Son from Glory to Glory.

All the things we have hated about ourselves and considered liabilities now become our greatest assets. As we walk in the Spirit of who we really are, the Spirit transmutes our humanity into an expression of righteousness, or Spirit right-use-ness. And the perfect oneness that Jesus prophetically declared in John 17, "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made **perfected in oneness**," bursts into being as a living reality in us today.

Then, our problems become an opportunity for faith as we laugh at impossibilities and shout, "It shall be done." "The endless problems and frustrations in life, including personality clashes, are seen to be the necessary negatives by which He, the Positive, can reveal Himself; and we enjoy the process with Him. We move right on to the simplicity and constant use of the "word of faith" in our prayer life, and to the highest of all, the life of intercession, in which we are given a privileged and effective place in meeting the world's needs."