

# ***"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me" Part II***

*For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection ~ Romans 6:5 (NKJV)*

In part I of this series "I have been crucified with Christ", I came down pretty hard on willful and known sin. The tone of the message, as it related to this particular issues of willful sin was undeniably harsh, and rightfully so. You will never get a pass from me regarding this issue and I will in no way apologize for a harsh exposition on the matter. However, I don't want you to get the ideal that the Lord is up there in Heaven ready to punish us for every mistake we make. On the contrary, the mercy of our God is exceeding, and significantly beyond our ability to comprehend it. The following verses in Psalms 103 gives us a glimpse into his mercy and compassion.

***Psalms 103:8-18*** The LORD is compassionate and merciful, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. 9 He will not constantly accuse us, nor remain angry forever. 10 He does not punish us for all our sins; he does not deal harshly with us, as we deserve. 11 For his unfailing love toward ***those who fear him*** is as great as the height of the heavens above the earth. 12 He has removed our sins as far from us as the east is from the west. 13 The LORD is like a father ***to his children***, tender and compassionate ***to those who fear him***. 14 For he knows how weak we are; he remembers we are only dust. 15 Our days on earth are like grass; like wildflowers, we bloom and die. 16 The wind blows, and we are gone— as though we had never been here. 17 But the love of the LORD remains forever ***with those who fear him***. His salvation extends to the children's children 18 ***of those who are faithful to his covenant, of those who obey his commandments!*** (NLT)

The crucial point however, is that the Lord is like a Father to ***His children***. He is tender and compassionate to ***those who fear Him***. The love of the Lord remains forever with ***those who fear Him***. His salvation extends to the children of ***those who are faithful***, and ***obey His covenant and commandments***.

I just want those who are under the sound of my voice, and those who will read this study, to be in the select category of individuals who are faithful and obey, and are fearful.

***Dying to self is not an option, this is something that must be, and has already happened to the believer:***

Although we were not physically presented at the Cross of Christ, the substitutionary work of Jesus reckons His death as our own death and His resurrection as our own resurrection. Mental reasoning of this fact will absolutely escape us. However, in spiritual life, in the realm of the spirit this fact is inseparable. Thus the scriptures says; *"For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection"*.

It is so very critical for us to have died, in order that we may live and produce the fruits of the spirit. The key point to understand is that we cannot improve our flesh to the point of it becoming acceptable to God. Our life and flesh is poisoned at its core, and will never produce anything that God accepts. The whole design of redemption is to have God create a new creation out of the old. God's work is not to improve our flesh, it is to kill the flesh.

**Job 14:4** Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? No one!

**Job 25:4** How then can man be righteous before God? Or how can he be pure who is born of a woman?

**Isaiah 64:6** ...we are all like an unclean thing, And all our righteousness are like filthy rags ...

At the risk of being redundant, the task at hand is not to make the flesh into something God will accept, but to create a new man altogether!

**John 12:24-25** Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. 25 He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

If you absolutely love your current worldly life, to the point that you refuse to be united to Christ, because you fear that you will have to give up something that is pleasurable to you for the moment, you can by all means continue to live such a life, but only for the moment. After your life has expired, which in reality, only last for a fleeting second in relation to eternity, the judgment is at hand. At that time, if you are not united with Christ, you will lose the life you so cherished for all eternity and be forever lost.

Remember what was written in Psalms 103:15 "Our days on earth are like grass; like wildflowers, we bloom and die. 16 The wind blows, and we are gone— as though we had never been here".

**v.5a** *For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death.*

Now we again ask the question, since Christ died over two thousand years ago, how could I have died and be united with His death, and been crucified with Him over two thousand years ago. The Holy Scriptures gives us an amazing revelation into this truth, found in the explanation of tithes given to us in the book of Hebrew.

**Hebrews 7:9-10** One might even say that Levi, who collects the tenth, paid the tenth through Abraham, 10 because when Melchizedek met Abraham, *Levi was still in the body of his ancestor.* (NIV)

In order for us to apply this analogy to our situation, we must have an understanding of what God's word teaches us in the following verses, as it relates to us being **IN** Christ Jesus.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 1:9** who has saved us and called *us* with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us ***in Christ Jesus before time began.***

**Ephesians 1:4** ...He chose us ***in Him before the foundation of the world,*** that we should be holy and without blame...

**2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians 2:13** ... God ***from the beginning chose you for salvation...***

As a result, using the same example given to us in Hebrews 7 regarding Levi being represented when Abraham paid the tithe to Melchizedek ( it actually states that Levi paid the tithe through Abraham) In other words, when Adam sinned, all sinned because all were represented in Adam, because we were present in his loins (in his seed if you will). Likewise, when Christ was judged at the Cross, all who are in Christ Jesus were represented at the cross as well, in other words we likewise were present in Christ Jesus just as Levi was present in Abraham.

Armed with this understanding, we can better understand the concept regarding the following scriptures.

**Romans 5:12, 17, 19** Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned, 17 For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ. (NIV) 19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5:14-15** ... we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. 15 And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. (NIV)

Which leads us the second part of Paul's thesis in verse five. (The first part was "*we have been united together in the likeness of His death*" remember)!

***v.5b certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection.***

Alas, now we come to the point when our newness of life starts to unfold before us. Now, we begin to comprehend a totally new principle of life that we failed to discover in the past. Now, we can understand what the Scriptures means by "*it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me*". This is the dual truth of the cross we spoke of in last week's study. The first truth is our being delivered from the penalty of sin, and the power of sin, and that our sins are forgiven. The second truth is that we have been resurrected to a new life in Christ Jesus.

To better understand what Paul is talking about in this segment of verse five, we first must understand what took place at the fall of man when Adam and Eve committed the first sin. Before the fall, man was a spiritual being, possessing a body, with a soul (thoughts, emotions, senses, desires, etc). Their communion with God was through their spirit, and God was at the center of their existence. You can say that they had a God consciousness and not a self-

consciousness, to the extent that they were not even ashamed of their nakedness. However, after the fall, God detached His Spirit from the spirit of man. As a result, man became only self-conscious and no longer was able to commune with God, because the only way man could ever have a relationship with God was through the spirit, i.e. His Spirit interacting with and influencing man's spirit. The spirit within man became dead to the Spirit realm of God, thus becoming dead to all spiritual life.

Conversely, at the very moment we surrender our lives to Jesus Christ, and accept His free gift of salvation, we receive *the life of Jesus Christ*. In other words, we exchange our lives for His life, or we gave up our life so He can live His life through us, or He lives in us to take the place of what we were. This is the objective here, this is redemption's design, this is what Paul was referring to when he said in *Galatians 2:20* "it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me".

Consequently, our spirit became alive to God, and now able to commune with His Holy Spirit, resulting in the believer being able to discern spiritual things whereas before, spiritual things were mere foolishness to him.

*1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 2:9-14* But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him." 10 But God has *revealed them to us through His Spirit*. For the *Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God*. 11 For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. 12 Now *we have received*, not the spirit of the world, but *the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God*. 13 These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 14 *But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned*.

At this point in our study, we should have a very good understanding of the following verses that have been repeatedly mentioned for good reasons. My goal is for you to understand absolutely what Paul is saying when he says:

*2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5:17* Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

And if we truly are new creations (which we are), what type of people should we be, what are the things we should be thinking about, what should we be seeking?

*Colossians 3:1-3* If then you *were raised with Christ*, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 *For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God*.

Remember previously in verse four, we examined what Paul meant when he said "*we were buried with Him through baptism into death*". We said that the burial signifies the final act of death. It's when the dead are removed from the face of the earth permanently, never to return to

the land of the living. However, the believer is resurrected with a new life in Christ Jesus, and I want to take a moment to explore what that means, and the power therein.

**John 15:5** "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for *without Me you can do nothing*."

In order to illustrate this verse, let's use the glove as an example given to us by Major W. Ian Thomas in his book *The Saving Life of Christ*, "I may say to a glove, "Glove, pick up this Bible," and yet, somehow, the glove cannot do it. It has got a thumb and fingers, the shape and form of a hand, and yet it is unable to do the thing I command it to do. You may say, "Well, of course not. You have never told the glove how!" But I may preach to and instruct that glove until my patience is exhausted, but the glove, try as it will, still cannot pick up that Bible. Yet I have a glove at home that has picked up my Bible dozens of times-but never once before I put my hand into it! As soon, however, as my hand comes into that glove, the glove becomes as strong as my hand. Everything possible to my hand becomes possible to that glove-but only in the measure in which the hand is in the glove".

A glove by itself is powerless to do anything, it can't even "lift a finger" if you will. The glove by itself can't execute any commands given it while it's separated from its source of ability, its source of might, its source of control, which in this case is the hand being inserted into the glove. You can explain the command to the glove as long as you like, with no results. You can encourage the glove until you turn blue in the face, but the glove still will not respond, and execute the command given it. The glove cannot execute any command given to it, unless the hand is in the glove, that's the only way. Likewise, Jesus is telling us "*without Me you can do nothing*".

Conversely, Jesus is also revealing to us, the reality of our lives *In Him*. Major Thomas further goes on to write "That is what it is to have Christ, by His Spirit, dwelling within your redeemed humanity. You are the glove, Christ is the Hand! Everything that is possible to Him becomes possible to you".

Now, you might ask the questions, what is possible to us through Him. The answer to this question is in the following verse;

**Philippians 4:13** I can do *all* things through Christ who strengthens me.

Christ within us means that we have everything we need to live a life of godliness. There is not one missing element that will prohibit us from living a life of righteousness and holiness.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 1:3-4** His divine power has *given us everything we need* for life and godliness *through our knowledge* of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. 4 Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. (NIV)

**Matthew 28:18-20** And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them

in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

**Luke 10:16-17,19** He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me." 17 ... "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." 19 Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

What does this knowledge allow us to do? What should be the effect on our lives being equipped with this understanding? How is this applicable to our lives now? The answer is also found in the following verse.

**Titus 2:12-13** It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, 13 while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. (NIV)

I believe the lack of understanding on the part of the believer, as it relates to our being resurrected to new life in Jesus Christ, leads to tragic defeat. Individual Christians who fail to identify with this newness of life in Christ, tends to continue to live a life that's dominated by the old man who was crucified. The life of Jesus, does in fact reside within them, however, the old man in Adam remains their fundamental nature of life.

Additionally, Major Thomas wrote "Christ lives within you, but you live in self-imposed poverty, under the influences of a defeated foe the flesh, which Christ took with Him into the grave. You are just like the children of Israel who lived for forty years (in the wilderness) plagued by the memories and the subtle influences of an enemy whom God buried.

There is nothing quite so pathetic as a Christian who has been vested with "all the fullness of the Godhead in Christ, and to whom has been made available all the unlimited resources of Heaven, yet who in ignorance, or in defiance to this fact, scratches out a mere existence in the meager resources which he brings with him from the old man, with no sense of direction or purpose-for he will not take what God has given.

This believer, is the one who has received the Holy Spirit and all the fullness of Christ, yet ignores His presence and struggles to live the Christian life as though Christ were not there. He is the one who constantly begs and pleads for all that God has already given him but which he will not take. He is the one who will not step out by faith upon the glorious fact that Christ is his life and therefore his victory".

It is my opinion however, that most believers fall into this category due to ignorance and not defiance. I have to reiterate that this is only my meager opinion, and is not a fact based upon scientific data. I feel this way because, the fact that Christ lives in us and through us was a mystery and was "***hidden from the ages and from generations***". Although, the Holy Spirit has revealed this mystery to the church by Paul, it remains largely mysterious to most believers today.

*Colossians 1:26-28* The mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. 27 To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: *which is Christ in you*, the hope of glory 28 Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

Dear Heavenly Father, I pray that you would give enlightenment to your children, so we can understand the newness of life you have given us through Christ Jesus. We have been so "self-centered throughout our entire lives, we hardly know how to be anything different. Please transform us by the renewing of our minds into the image of your Son as the old man in Adam is crucified and buried with Christ, never to return again. Thank you Father, for the mercy and compassion you have given us, and by Your might, allow us to walk down the path of Your righteousness in Christ Jesus. Amen!