



Studies on Being IN CHRIST



*This is a Free Ministries book by Kelly Koshatka
that is meant to draw your heart closer to the
Person of our Lord and Life, Jesus Christ.*

email: kellyreallylovesjesus@yahoo.com

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Heart Learning

Introduction

There is an intimacy and simplicity to knowing the Lord from our place in Christ. From within this relationship we can learn of Christ Who is our life. Even as John the beloved disciple rested on Jesus' bosom, we can also rest in His love as we come to know Jesus. The best "seat" to learn from in the school of Christ is in Jesus Himself, for we have already been raised together with Him and are now seated together in Him (Ephesians 2:6).

A Bosom Relationship With Jesus

"His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me" (Song of Solomon 2:6). This description of the Lord holding His Church in the Song of Solomon sounds far more intimate than a preacher charging people to obey a far away Sovereign. The Shulamite woman in this passage of scripture has much to learn yet, but Solomon is holding her in the bonds of a relationship that will define every stage of her growth.

Where are we seated and from what position do we know the Lord? Have we found the place of His embrace? Do we live there? Do we learn from there? Is it the only place from where we relate to our Beloved? The spiritual environment of acceptance in Christ prepares our hearts to embrace all knowledge only through union.

Learning Christ can only happen from a certain place. John the beloved found that place in the bosom of Jesus. From this picture we can see that learning Christ goes beyond mere instruction into the very essence of relationship, it reaches to the heart.

The Place of Learning

There have been so many pictures of Jesus with John the beloved resting on His bosom that many of us may have taken it for granted. But think about it, in what classroom would you find the disciple lying on the teacher's bosom? It did not seem odd to the other disciples when John would rest on Jesus' bosom, yet this was a

student with the Teacher! Even so, it did not seem out of place in their classroom environment, but appropriate to the spirit in which Jesus taught. We can easily miss the intimacy that Jesus was teaching about a relationship and not a doctrine. The questions that this picture should raise to us is: What position do we learn from? In essence, WHERE do we sit when we learn Christ? What is our relationship with Jesus, the Word of God? It is hard to embrace and retain information about union when we are sitting far away from Him Who is our Life! How can His words make their way into our heart if we yet abide as separate from our Lord?

The other disciples may have felt somewhat out of place as they heard Jesus share and yet felt so foreign and removed from His teaching. They were one place and the Lord was somewhere else. John perceived the importance of “nearness” to Christ as well as receiving the information He shared. In reality the true place of nearness to Christ is “IN Him”, for we have now been raised up and seated together in Christ through His death and resurrection (Ephesians 2:6).

In Bosom

If you look in Paul’s epistles, there are many places where it refers to the position of a believer being “in Christ” in the resurrection. Sometimes our understanding of our place in the Son can seem more doctrinal than relational, more like teaching than a life-union. Just consider understanding our position “in Christ” as the place of being in His bosom, even as John rested on our Lord’s breast. If you go through your Bible and mark the places where “in Christ” is used to define our position, and replace it with “in bosom”, it may help you to realize the intimacy of our place in Christ. I am in no way trying to redefine the scriptural accuracy of the term, “in Christ”, but only pointing out the blessed intimacy that this position speaks of.

From The Bosom Of The Father

Jesus, the Word of God, was sent from His position in the bosom of the Father (John 1:18). His existence was out from a relationship that defined eternity. This relationship of oneness is the way the Son is with the Father. This oneness is represented by His location in the bosom of the Father. The Son’s relationship with the Father is in oneness of being and not agreement of doctrine. Jesus is the beloved Son of His Father. His place in the Father’s bosom shows us the love the Father has for Him.

And now we are accepted in the Beloved, and John the beloved gives us a picture of this intimacy and acceptance in the bosom of Christ.

The Word came from the bosom of the Father and is received by those who dwell in the bosom of the Son. Our relationship with the Lord is based on our position “in” Christ. God put us in His Son so that through oneness we could partake of His nature rather than just knowing things about Him. We may, therefore, consider the great necessity of not just what we are learning but where are we learning it from.

Not An Ascended Master, but Our Ascension

Other religions and belief systems have great ascended masters that are the teachers of many students. These masters teach their students from a distance for each student will have to find his or her own path to ascendancy. Christ is not an ascended master but the Great High Priest who did not ascend alone but carried us in His bosom with Him back to the Father (Ephesians 2:5-6). See the difference? We are not told to find our own path to the above life and spirituality. Through His Cross we became married to Jesus and He brings us into all these things **through union**. If we understood this, then we would not think it odd that the student who was pressing in to know the Lord the most was found resting on His bosom. We would understand that any student who is going to truly know the resurrected Christ MUST learn from the position of in Him, as represented by John on the bosom of Jesus. This student will learn what only those who are in union with Christ can learn.

The Place Of His Voice

There is not just a voice from heaven touching us on earth, but the place of His voice that we must enter into so that we can hear properly. This place resonates with the fullness and clarity of our settled union in Christ. It is a place of rest in love, even as John would find rest on the bosom of the Lord. When God speaks, He speaks from His heart and what He sees. His words proceed out from the place within Himself that is clear and unhindered by the earth and our carnal understandings. His words reverberate with the sweetness and settled-ness of the love union that has been established through Christ’s death and resurrection. We must come to the place of knowing Him by taking our place of rest in Him, reclining on His bosom and then listening to His voice from the place of His voice.

Rest For Our Souls

“Come unto Me all you that are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of Me for I am meek and lowly and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest for your souls” (Matthew. 11:28-29).

As we come unto Jesus we find the Person in Whom all treasures of knowledge are hidden. As we enter into our place of rest in Him, we have found the place where we can partake of all His fullness.

We must recline into His love even as we learn of Him. The Lamb was slain, not just for redemption purposes but that we might also have a place in Him from whence to learn of Him in oneness. Knowing Christ as our dwelling place is like discovering gardens in high places even when our life on earth is yet a barren wasteland and dry wilderness. Does this not speak of the wonder of being accepted IN the Beloved rather than in our own righteousness? There is a place of rest for the weary soul in the bosom of Jesus where those who are in famine and without strength can enter into His fullness. Only when we let go of our self righteous stance and collapse onto His chest will we find rest for our souls. This is the best position to learn in. Blessed are the poor in spirit, the empty and dry, those without their own resources. He will in no wise reject these but rather receive them into the classroom of His heart and teach them of His resources that will be found in them. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst and are empty in themselves, for here... in Christ, is all fullness. He came for the destitute and impoverished. He came for the empty and needy so that He might give them His Life.

Jesus told us that first we must come unto Him and find rest and then learn of Him. We may feel like we need to learn about Jesus so that we can come to Him, but Jesus said that we must come unto Him so that we can properly learn of Him. Our Teacher was slain so that we could learn of Him from the position of love and acceptance in Him. When we recline in His bosom our souls can rest as we learn of Him Who is our Life. His yoke is easy and His burden is light for He fulfills all things in us.

Jesus is meek and lowly for He is the Lamb of God who came to die that we might live. He poured out His Life that we might become filled with that Life. Yet of His fullness we can only receive grace upon grace (John 1:16).. Because the branches (us) have become united to the Vine (Christ), we can partake freely of all the Vine's

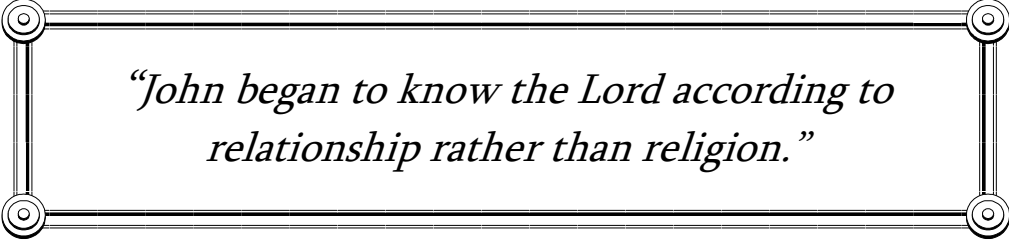
root and fatness. Likewise, because the students have become united to the Teacher in death, burial, and resurrection, we can now freely receive all of His fullness by grace. It is not our wisdom or strength that advances us in God's classroom, but our embrace of Christ as our only Life. In the "school of Christ" the fastest learners will be the weakest in themselves. Those who become filled will be those who came empty. We are not adding information to our resources, but in our weakness His strength is being perfected (matured) in us. We are no longer seeking knowledge but a relationship of oneness that brings forth fruit.

Once again, Jesus brings us unto Himself in life union. His methods of teaching are a bit different. He is not just the teacher but the True Vine. We will have nothing if we do not come into union as branches grafted into the True Vine Himself. We must not just 'study' but find the place of His heart and then simply abide! Only as we abide in the Vine can His words remain in us, for they are held through the bonds of union (John 15:1-7).

Earning The Right To Rest

What a position to learn in! Resting on the bosom of Jesus. We can feel that we must sit up straight and get to work earning the right to know God through vigorous study. We can earn no such right. Jesus died and rose again, sitting down at the right hand of the Father with us in Him. He carried us there, in Himself. He earned the right for us to know Him.

We may have segregated the situation of John's place on the bosom of Jesus to John being special and Jesus' favorite. Maybe John was just the teacher's pet? No, I do not think that God is partial. I believe John simply began perceiving that Jesus' purpose went beyond teaching. John began to know the Lord according to relationship rather than religion. John met Jesus where His heart was. He related to the Lord's heart and found rest there, rather than getting information from a master theologian. We can also see this with the example of Martha and Mary. Martha may have done more "homework" than Mary, but Mary found the place of learning and rested there in her desire to know the Lord (Lk. 10:39-40).



"John began to know the Lord according to relationship rather than religion."

Peter or John

“Now there was leaning on Jesus’ bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake. He then lying on Jesus’ breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it?” (John 13:23-25). “Then Peter, tuning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?” (John 21:20).

At the Last Supper you find John resting on Jesus’ breast while Peter is frantically wondering if he might be the one that betrays Christ. While John is settled concerning his place in the bosom of the Lord, Peter not only wonders about his own acceptance, but his own sanity! Peter finally has to ask John to find out from Jesus who it is that will deny the Lord. Peter knows that John has a relationship with the Lord that he does not have. It becomes clear that John more intimately knows the Lord’s mind than Peter who is running around as separate from the Lord.

The point is not that John is any better than Peter, for we are all accepted in the Beloved. The issue is simply the difference of where we choose to abide in relationship to Jesus. John was relating to Christ by reclining on His bosom, while Peter was yet running around trying to figure out his relationship with the Lord. I would rather be resting on Jesus’ bosom with John than panicking with Peter!

Jesus Wants To Gather Us

In the gospel of Matthew Jesus is found grieving over Jerusalem (Matthew 23:37). He was filled with sorrow but it was not over their sin. He was sad because they were rejecting gathering into the place of the intimacy of being in Him. This expresses the heart of God. He has brought us into His place of intimacy that we might relate to His heart and know Him beyond mere knowledge. Because the Lord’s doctrine is relational and not technical, it required those who wanted to know Him to be gathered into Him even as a mother hen would gather her chicks under her wings and close to her heart. God’s desire is to gather us. His heart reaches beyond teaching for His aim is to reveal in us this relationship of oneness that is ours in Christ.

His cry over Jerusalem was not as a great and distant Master that had come to impart knowledge. His first concern with His people was that they would come and gather into Him, and from that position learn of Him. In John 5:39 Jesus found men

who searched the scriptures for eternal life but would not come into relationship with the Person of Life. They would come unto a book and search but would not come unto a Person and partake, so they could never possess eternal Life.

We Are In His Heart

It comes down to the knowledge that we are in His heart, not in a theological way, but in a love way. We are IN HIS HEART and He relates to us in love as those who are in union with Him. All that He would teach us about this would not be properly understood apart from knowing the spirit of these truths through union. Ask Him questions, not as a student, but as a Bride that is already one with Him and wants to know who she is.

Because we were crucified with Christ and afterwards raised up in Him as the New Creation, our union exists only through Christ as our new Life and identity. In this place of learning we therefore discover our glorious new identity as bone of His bone and the corporate vessel of His fullness.

There is a place of His love and a place of true learning. This place is not at a desk or in a seminary, it is not found kneeling at the side of our bed in prayer. This place is found in the bosom of Jesus. Only in this place, **in Christ**, can we hear His voice clearly and have the Person of truth revealed in us through oneness.

Love From God's Bosom

Bosom love comes from the bosom of God. It calls those who were once outcasts, "Beloved". *"As he saith in Hosea, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved"* (Romans 9:25). Through the death of His Son, God has brought that which was separate into oneness. We are now held in the bonds of oneness in God Himself where our life is hidden with Christ. Consider the depth of this great love, it is the very depth of God's own bosom wherein we are loved and accepted in His Son.

If we are held in God's bosom in such love as this, we also out to love one another with this same bosom love. The scriptures exhort us to love in this specific way for it says, *"Beloved, let us love one another"* (I John.4:7). Call each other "beloved" as those who are accepted in Christ together as one. Minister to one another tenderly

in that spirit and relate to one another out from God's own bosom. Can we hold each other in God's love even as He holds us in His bosom in Christ?

In Conclusion

Throughout this booklet we have been discussing John, the disciple who rested on Jesus' bosom. Later in his life, John ministered to and fathered many churches in the Lord. John had a particular name he would use when he wrote to the churches, for he would call them "beloved". John had a specific request of his beloved churches in Christ, for he would always beseech them to love one another. Where did John get this emphasis? I believe he understood this from his abode in the bosom of God.

Beloved, let us learn from our place in the bosom of our Lord Jesus Christ. May we find a life beyond doctrine that stems and flows out from the very heart of Jesus. And finally, at all times and in all things may we love one another out from this place... the bosom of God in Christ.***

Heart Learning Study Questions

1. Write an essay concerning what position we want to learn about Jesus from.
2. Define the difference between learning things from a desk and striving to be the best student as opposed to resting in the bosom of Christ and discovering your identity in Him through the work of His Cross.
3. Are we trying to earn a relationship and stature with Christ through how much we can learn and how “spiritual” we can become, or are we beginning in a position of rest and acceptance, seeking to enter into the fullness of what is already ours and true in His heart? Explain your answer in a two page essay.
4. If we begin in His heart, we shall continue in His heart. If we begin apart from Him in a desk or classroom that is outside of Him, we shall continue as though separate from Him. Explain the importance of beginning our journey to know Jesus from the right position. List at least ten areas in your growth in Christ that you believe will be affected by starting in the right heart condition.
5. Explain how everything we have in the Lord comes through union with the Lord. Further explain how this requires us to abide in Him more than trying to become something for Him apart from Him.
6. What is the difference between gathering information and growing up into a relationship of union and oneness with Christ? Do you believe God is seeking great ministers and outstanding students more than He desires a Body that is filled with His Son’s Life through union?
7. What is the difference between Peter and John at the Last Supper? In what ways were they relating to the Lord different from one another?

8. Write down twenty scriptures that have “in Christ” in them. In each of these scriptures replace the words “in Christ” with “in Bosom”. Comment on five of these scriptures in relationship to how the intimate connotation of “in Bosom” helps to emphasis the love and union aspect of relationship apart from the doctrinal position aspect. Expand your explanation beyond what has already been commented on.
9. Explain the difference between “teacher and student” and “Vine and branch”.
10. How come the fastest learners are those who are weak in themselves?
11. Why must we first come unto Jesus and find rest before we can learn of Him? If we are weary and heavy laden, what must we do according to Matthew 11:28-29?
12. Comment on this sentence; “Martha may have done more homework than Mary, but Mary found the place of learning and rested there in her desire to know the Lord.”
13. What has impacted you most in relationship to “Heart Learning”? If you had to counsel a new believer on how to approach seeking to know the Lord, what advise would you give them?

IN CHRIST

A Place to Live

Part One: The History of the Cloud

Preface

Many of us who are born again have a doctrinal understanding of “our position in Christ”. It is a mystical, spiritual, hidden away place in the heavenly realms where, “I guess I must be because God says that I am”. It means absolutely nothing to many of us while we are alive on the earth “today”. This booklet is dedicated to encouraging the saints to experientially know this place called “IN CHRIST”. The “Cloud” we will be talking about represents God seeking a relationship with man. The specific relationship that God’s heart wants is for man to be able to live in Him so that He can live in man. We will see that “in Christ” is more than a position, it is a relationship.

***“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord
Jesus Christ, Who hath blessed us with all
spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.”***

Ephesians 1:3

***“For God has allowed us to know the secret
of His plan, and it is this: He purposed long
ago in His sovereign will that all human
history should be consummated in Christ,
that everything that exists in heaven or
earth should find its perfection and
fulfillment in Him”***

Ephesians 1:9-11

Introduction

Eternal and the Temporal

“According as He hath chosen us IN HIM before the foundation of the world” (Ephesians 1:4a). “Having made known to unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself” (Ephesians 1:9). “Being predestinated according to the purpose of Him Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will” (Ephesians 1:11b).

Let's begin with the Eternal Godhead before time and before creation. From the foundations of the world the Eternal God's council was to find a way to tabernacle by His very Being and Presence in man. The Godhead's council was brought forth from Their desire to create a realm in which They could dwell and be at home in. At this point we might want to interject that this is God Who is Spirit, Who is so vast that Solomon declared the heaven, neither the heaven of heavens could contain Him (II Chron. 6:18). This Eternal and ever existent Being that is God was desiring to inhabit His own creation. What an awesome thought. Before creation and man even came into existence, an incredible plan was conceived in God Himself to make a way for God to tabernacle in man! (“According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world.”) As we shall later see, the essence of this plan will be found in a place called “in Christ.”

Now let's look forward a little bit into time as we continue looking at the earth's history. We will move forward to the time of Moses. Much has been done at this point. A universe has been flung into existence, and all things in the creation of the earth have been set in order. Adam and Eve have been created and Noah has heard God's voice and been obedient. Abraham and his offspring, the Israelites, have separated themselves unto the Lord for His purposes in the earth. But although all this has occurred, this Eternal God has not yet moved forth into this temporal realm in His actual Presence in a such a way that would be to make His home among them and eventually in them.

To sum up this initial thought we will state that Eternity Himself had not yet stepped outside of His eternal abode and moved forward into the realm of the temporal. God had not yet taken actual steps in the person of His Presence to tabernacle among men. So next we will take a closer look at the first experience Eternity has when He lands on planet Earth.

God's Cloud

(Heaven Comes Down... The Eternal Meets the Temporal)

It should be quite interesting to see what happens when the Eternal Presence of God meets the temporal earth! Let me clarify this point. Certainly at this time God has already had many contacts with earth and with some of the men on it. He had spoken to man, and He had visited this realm in what the scriptures call "the angel of the Lord", to name just a few. But none of these "encounters" signify God Who is Spirit seeking to find a home and resting place on planet Earth. These experiences were more like someone coming to visit than someone moving in. God is about to land on earth in a manner that is more like moving in than visiting. We are about to hear of a close encounter of the God kind!

"Oh My! Mount Sinai!"

"The Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai. Take heed to yourselves, that you go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it. Whosoever toucheth the mount shall surely be put to death. There shall not an hand touch it, but he shall surely be stoned, or shot through;" (Exodus 19:11-13).

Let's enter back into the history of man again at the time when Moses is preparing the people of Israel to meet the living God in Exodus chapter 19. This must have been an exciting time for the people of Israel! The Lord Himself is going to come down in the sight of all of them right on nearby Mount Sinai (v.11). Strangely enough, though, there seems to be an element of fearful preparation for this coming event. They hear stern instructions from Moses to not go anywhere near the mount or else horrible things will happen. What could explain such a phenomenon as they were about to witness? And why should Moses and everyone be so careful and fearful in preparing to meet the Lord Who saved them and led them out of Egypt?

In an attempt to make a clear explanation of that last question, let us divert for a moment to contemplate on a certain thought. When a foreign object enters into your system, your whole body convulses to vomit it out. When two opposing forces meet there can be a violent reaction. When cold air and hot air come together a storm manifests. Well, when the very Presence of the Eternal God Himself actually landed on the earth... the heavens thundered and the earth quaked and all

that came near died. The life of the Eternal God is so foreign and “other” to the realm of this world that for Him to even enter into it brought forth the response of two totally opposite forces meeting with the power of an electrical storm in a battle field. Here we have a powerful picture of what it would be like to “experience the living God” outside of knowing Him in Christ! When God’s Eternal Presence in the cloud came to touch down in this earth on Mount Sinai, the reaction was so violent that nothing could even come near to this landing strip Mount and still live. To get stuck in the middle of heaven touching earth would kill you. It is pretty evident that at this time God had no place here. Although God created this world, He is not of it (Jn. 1: 10-11).

God’s Presence of Life is not welcome in this world’s atmosphere of death. We see here on Mount Sinai a picture of what an awesome thing it is that one day a union would actually happen where God would not only be able to move upon man, but actually be able to live within Him. We can begin to see here at Sinai that we cannot even touch the living God and live, much less become the place that He inhabits. There must be another Mount that we can come to wherein we can dwell in God and He can dwell in us. This spiritual mount is in Christ, for only through, in and by Christ could a union between heaven and earth exist. But we are jumping way ahead now! Let’s return to Mount Sinai in our present discussion.

Back to our Cloud. For the moment His only place of residence was on top of Mount Sinai. This was probably not a very comfortable resting spot for the Lord, yet He had to land somewhere! This was only the beginning of this Glory Cloud’s journey, and we shall see where He ultimately ends up !

That Cloud consisting of God Who is Spirit and from above just decided to stay put on Mount Sinai for awhile. It was probably a bit lonely up there, but He did find a friend, and that was Moses. Moses was the first mortal to feel comfortable in God’s atmosphere. Somehow Moses was able to enter into the Atmosphere of the Cloud and find a precious relationship of face to face communion with the Lord. A similar phenomenon would occur many years after this time when David found immediate access into the Presence of God in the tabernacle named Zion. But Moses was the first temporal being that Eternity’s Cloud felt comfortable hanging out with. The God of the universe is stuck on top of this little mountain waiting to find a home and the only one who comes to visit Him is Moses. Maybe now you can begin to understand why God called Moses His friend.

It must have been a strange time for the children of Israel. God was looking kind of far away and angry over there on Mount Sinai, and yet every time Moses came back from being with Him His face is glowing and he isn't shot through with arrows and stoned. The whole thing must have seemed crazy and confusing to the people in the wilderness. And so when Moses goes on an extended forty day vacation into realms far above the camp, the children of Israel down below start to play, and Moses' brother Aaron even plays with them (Ex. 32).

During Moses' time communing on Mount Sinai, the Lord shares many precious realities with him. He shows Moses the True Tabernacle and gives him the pattern for building. He also shares His Law to be brought down to the people. When Moses comes back from forty days and nights immersed into and sustained by God's own Being; the shock that Moses' system must have experienced when saw the people dancing around the golden calf probably felt a bit like the Cloud did when He first landed on Sinai! The contrast was too much for Moses and the first thing that Eternity's Cloud gave to man in the hands of his friend broke into pieces. Even so, the desire in God's heart to find a home in us was not broken. Moses had seen God's face and knew that this union would one day come forth through God's eternal wisdom and mercy in His Son.

“I Want to Live in His Presence”

“And Moses took the tent and pitched it outside the camp, afar off from the camp, and called it the tabernacle of the congregation. And it came to pass that everyone who sought the Lord went out unto this tent that was pitched outside the camp” (Exodus 33:7).

After this little stunt with the golden calf, the Lord made a comment something like *“I will not go up in the midst of thee; for thou art a stiff-necked people, lest I consume thee in the way”* (Ex. 33:3). Well, as soon as Moses heard that, he packed up His tent and moved it outside the camp. Moses did not want to live in the atmosphere of the earth, he wanted to dwell in the Presence of the Lord all the days of his life. If God said that He wasn't going to dwell in the midst of the camp, then Moses was going to move his tent outside the camp as an open invitation for God to find a place in his tent. And so, God's Cloud looked over from it's landing strip on Mount Sinai, and for the first time saw a location that looked a little bit like home. The place where God felt at home was Moses' tent otherwise known as the Tabernacle of Meeting. Anyone who wanted to get to know the Living God moved on over to spend time at Moses' tent just because the very Presence of God

Himself was there. There was one other man in particular named Joshua who loved the Presence of God and never wanted to leave (v.11). But, Moses loved to worship the Lord by becoming swallowed up of Him in the Eternal Atmosphere of His Life. This was a shadow of the relationship man would have with God one day known as being found in Christ and Christ being found in us. It was more important to Moses that his home be found in God's Presence outside the camp, than finding his life in the earth with the rest of the people.

Here Comes That Cloud Again!

"And it came pass, as Moses entered into the tent, the cloudy pillar descended and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the Lord talked with Moses" (Exodus 33:9).

How inviting it must have been when that Cloud looked over and saw His friend Moses waiting for Him outside of the camp. Here was a man who wanted to dwell *in* the living God. The Cloud slowly and majestically began to descend and stand at the entrance of Moses' tent. This was the first time the Cloud found refuge in the tent of a mortal. This is the true essence of worship, that Christ might be able to inhabit us as we choose to find our life in Him. And that is just what Moses did, he worshipped God by communing in Oneness. In Moses' tent God felt at home. This is what it means when we say that God wants to tabernacle in man, He wants us to come into such a relationship with Himself that we feel at home in Him and He feels at home in us.

When God came by the pillar of the Cloud into Moses' tent, the rest of the children of Israel just stood in the doors of their individual tents and worshipped from afar as they watched this incredible relationship between God and Moses (v.10). These people were experiencing an Old Covenant relationship with God. But since Jesus has died and rose again, we can experience a New Covenant relationship with God through Christ. We no longer have to worship from afar because *"now in Christ Jesus we who once were far off are now made near by the blood of Christ"* (Eph. 2:13). The beautiful relationship God the Father has with His Son is no longer something we just watch from a distance or learn about in a book. God has put us in Christ so that we can become swallowed up of the eternal relationship between the Father and His Son. *"And this is the record, that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son"* (I Jn. 5:11). *"And truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son, Jesus Christ."* (I Jn. 1:3). We are no longer outsiders or aliens, but fellow-citizens who now belong to the household of God.

This relationship Moses had with the Presence of God speaks of someone who wants to live in the Atmosphere of God Who is Spirit, of someone who wants to be swallowed up of the place that is God Himself. Moses was hidden in Christ so that he could commune with God. Moses did not feel at home in the camp with the rest of the people, He felt at home where ever the Presence of the Lord was, whether that be on Mount Sinai or in the Tabernacle of Meeting. He wanted his life to be hidden inside of God's Life. Moses did not want to be seen but to be swallowed up of the One by Whom all things consist. This was how Moses worshipped, and yet it was not something that Moses did, but the place where Moses chose to dwell and find his life. What a beautiful picture of someone abiding in Christ. This is not to be understood as an emotional state, or someone feeling the Presence of God in a strong manifest way. I believe that Moses' was saying that He wanted to be found in Christ, not having His own life of emotions and feelings and works and thoughts, but to become hid in and filled with God's life in the place where God is found dwelling. We now understand that the place where God's life is found is in Christ.

Nowhere Else but In Him

“And so it was, when the cloud abode from evening unto the morning, and that the cloud was taken up in the morning, then they journeyed; whether it was by day or by night that the cloud was taken up, they journeyed”(Numbers 9:21).

Moses' inward determination was to know nothing save the all-encompassing reality of God in such a manner that could only be found within the Lord Himself. Wherever the living God was, that was the only place Moses wanted to be. This heart condition made Moses the perfect leader for Israel, for this was God's desire also.

“Whether it were two days, or a month, or a year that the cloud tarried upon the tabernacle, the children of Israel would remain in their tents, but when it was taken up they journeyed”(v.22). To Moses, it was not a matter of what location they were at in the wilderness or how long they had been there. The one all - encompassing and preeminent factor was simply if God was yet among them. Moses cried out to the Lord in Exodus 33:15, *“If Thy Presence go not with me, carry us not up from here!”* This was more important to Moses than deliverance from Egypt, defeating the enemy, or finishing this wilderness journey. If we could but understand the heart that says, “Lord, You alone are my deliverance, my victory, and my land of

promise”, then we would quickly find ourselves leaving the realm of defeat and wandering to find the Lord in His place above it all. Moses knew God wanted to find a home in men. As long as the Cloud seemed happy to find rest over the Tabernacle, then there was no need to move or do anything else, for they were fulfilling their purpose.

Life was not meant to find it’s purpose in winning battles, accomplishing tasks, or even being a good Christian through all of our daily situations. Life was meant to only be found in Christ. We can know this quality of life when we make the decision, like Moses did, to only abide where the Lord abides. If our life is found only where His life is found, then you will choose to set your affections on things above rather than things on the earth (Col. 3:2). Our walk will therefore become ordered by where the Spirit is and when the Spirit is moving rather than our own religious agendas and efforts. In Christ we will live and move and have our being! If we have been born of the Spirit, then we should also choose to walk in the Spirit (Gal. 5:25). Herein we are not referring to the Holy Spirit who teaches us Christ, but the Spirit of Life found in Christ Jesus.

The quality of life you will find in Christ will make you realize that you never really knew what Life was before abiding in Him. All shadows flee away and all temporal issues lose their motivational power as you dwell in the light of His eternal fullness. Moses knew this for he had found the Lord in this way. You too will automatically come to these conclusions if you really do know the Lord this way. THIS PLACE IN CHRIST IS BEAUTIFUL! It is all fullness. It is ever-green, ever-blossoming with life, completely stable and unmoved by anything in heaven or earth. It is the land that flows with milk and honey. It’s river flows from the Source of an endless life. This place is in the Father’s Son in Whom He is always well pleased. If you find these descriptions marvelous, how about crying out for the Holy Spirit to actually open the eyes of your heart so you can see for yourself?

“It’s Too Ethereal For Me!”

Some might consider at this point that a spiritual location such as “in Christ” seems to be too impractical or “spooky”. Consider this: with the efforts of many men in Israel to get the children of Israel out of their wilderness situation, only the men who lived from above were able to get the job done. First, you’ve got Joshua leading the group, a man who spent most of his time hanging out in the Presence of the Lord. Then you have Caleb who, with Joshua, were “of another spirit”. Over

and over again, throughout all the history of God's people, it was those who knew the Lord from above that were able to have the vision and the correct spirit and nature (because of dwelling in Him) to bring forth any real change down here. Someone has to come down with life from the realm of Life to be able to give life to those who dwell on the earth. There are many born again believers who still find their life and existence in the earth and have never truly known their true home in Christ. This message is shared not so that those who hear it can stick it in their doctrine pocket and keep living in the wilderness of this earth, but that they would come away and dwell in Christ too! We are to be as ambassadors coming from a distant land with the good news of life in Christ! We cannot be satisfied until we all grow up into Him in all things (Eph. 4:15).

Others might consider that this place in Christ seems ethereal and unstable in the view of getting caught up in some "ambiguous glory – cloud". Be assured, the scriptures also declare that this place in Christ is as solid as a rock and the surest foundation in the universe. It's the only place that can't be destroyed, stolen from, or touched by man. He is the One by Whom all things consist, the foundation upon which all things were built, and the cornerstone out from whence all others stone were laid. Just remember, the things that were unseen created the things that are seen (Heb. 11:3). Jesus Christ is Lord! The things that we can see are temporal and passing away even now, but the things that are not seen are eternal for they will forever exist as the only true reality (II Cor. 4:18).

God's Blueprint For Union

*"And behold that thou make them after their pattern,
which was shown thee in the mount" (Exodus 25:40, Hebrews 8:5).*

Moses, who communed with God face to face and spent much time with the Lord, probably began to get the impression that God really wanted to be able to dwell in men. We have already discussed the scriptures that declare that even before the earth was formed God had counseled in Himself that this would happen and in turn formed an eternal plan to bring this forth (Eph. 1:3,4,9,11). And so, as Moses communed with God in His Cloud on Mount Sinai, God began to share His heart and purpose for union with man. He began to show Moses how to build the tabernacle in the wilderness according to the True Tabernacle that would one day be raised in the Body of His Son. The greatness of the mystery of how this Eternal God could dwell in men would be revealed in this Tabernacle. To God's heart it

spoke of the mystery that was at that time hidden to men, but was concerning His Son Who would make a New Covenant of Oneness with man and through His death would make of two One in Himself. Each part of the tabernacle's design represented what God's Son would fulfill as He brought man into union with God through His death and resurrection. And so when God would view this tabernacle from above He would see from within His own heart that one day there would be a way for Him to be in union with us through His Son. This tabernacle was a shadow that was the blue-print of God's express plan to be able to make His home in man. God told Moses to go back down to the camp in the wilderness and have the people build this tabernacle, and to be sure to do everything according to the pattern that he had received in the Mount.

The Cloud's Next Destination

"And on the day that the tabernacle was reared up the cloud covered the tabernacle"
(Numbers 9:15a).

While the children of Israel were building the tabernacle in the wilderness, the Presence of God was only appearing on Mount Sinai or in Moses' tent. I am sure that God's Cloud of His Presence was ready to take another step closer to His ultimate purpose of dwelling in us!

Then the day finally arrived! The people had finished building the tabernacle! As soon as that happened, God's Cloud was on the move again! Numbers 9:15 says, *"And on the day that the tabernacle was reared up the cloud covered the tabernacle, namely, the tent of the testimony; and at evening there was upon the tabernacle, as it were, the appearance of fire, until the morning."* God's heart did not want to dwell far away from us in a place we could never reach. He was desiring to inhabit us, and this tabernacle that the Israelite's built represented that one day He would be able to do just that. I am sure God's Presence knew He belonged covering and filling this tabernacle! He was saying, "This is My plan and this is a sign foreshadowing that I will make my home in you and you can make your home in Me!" Can you see how God has so desired for us to dwell in Him so that He could dwell in us? He had from the beginning come forth with such a detailed and wonderful plan so that eventually, in the fullness of time, God could live in man, and man could live in God through Christ! The good news for us now is that this time has already come, and we can know God in this incredible oneness in a location called "In Christ". ***

In Christ A Place To Live

Study Questions

1. Comment on this quote, “Eternity Himself had not yet stepped outside of His eternal abode and moved forward into the realm of the temporal. God had not yet taken actual steps in the person of His Presence to tabernacle among men.”
2. What happened when the very Presence of the Eternal God Himself actually landed on the earth? Where did this landing happen? Was there a true resting place for God on the earth yet?
3. How does the picture at Mt. Sinai help us to understand that we cannot even touch the living God and survive, much less become the place that He inhabits apart from union with Christ in His Cross?
4. Do you think Mount Sinai was a comfortable place for the Presence of God to dwell? Explain your answer.
5. Who was the first mortal to feel comfortable in the Presence of the Living God? Why do you think God called this person His friend?
6. Why did Moses move his tent outside the camp? What did Moses’ tent become and why is it so special?
7. Does God want to dwell far away on some mountain top, or in your tent? How does the Old Testament show us this?
8. Comment on this statement, “Moses’ inward determination was to know nothing save the all-encompassing reality of God in such a manner that could only be found within the Lord Himself.”

9. Write a one page essay commenting on this statement, “Life was not meant to find it’s purpose in winning battles, accomplishing tasks, or even being a good Christian through all of our daily situations. Life was meant to only be found in Christ. We can know this quality of life when we make the decision, like Moses did, to only abide where the Lord abides.”
10. Comment in a one page essay on this statement, “As Moses communed with God in His Cloud on Mount Sinai, God began to share His heart and purpose for union with man. He began to show Moses how to build the tabernacle in the wilderness according to the True Tabernacle that would one day be raised in the Body of His Son”.
11. In what ways can you see how God has so desired for us to dwell in Him so that He could dwell in us?
12. In what ways could the tabernacle in the wilderness be a sign foreshadowing that God would make His home in us and that we can make our home in Him?

“The Victory is One”

(The Fall of Jericho)

Introduction

*“By faith the walls of Jericho fell down,
after they were compassed about seven days” (Heb. 11:30).*

True eternal victory has been won because the Lord Jesus Christ has made us one with Himself through the finished work of His Cross. We were united to Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. His death was our death, His burial was our burial and His triumph over sin and death became ours through union into Christ. This victory is “ONE” because it works only on the basis of union. When we abide in our union with Christ we walk in resurrection reality and find our being in Him rather than the strongholds that may yet appear to be standing. Yet if we think and walk as if we are still separate from Jesus then we will “observe these lying vanities” (Jonah 2:8) and reject the good report that the Land is ours. Defeat is not possible when we maintain our stand in resurrection reality in Christ. Embracing the victory is no longer an undecided battle but a walking in the triumph of the Cross that has made two one. The Lord won all battles when He put away the old creation and raised us up in Himself united into all the riches and abundance of His very being (Eph. 1:3). Our walk will not only be victoriously in Christ, but fragrantly full of His Life as we embrace our union with Christ even in the face of our strongholds.

**When we encompass our strongholds with the
reality that we are one with Jesus... then it will
manifest that they have fallen! Walk in oneness with Jesus and
watch Jericho crumble!**

It's Time To Enter In

In the Book of Joshua, chapter four, the people have passed over the Jordan river. The Cross is becoming the basis of reality for their lives now. They have eaten their victuals and filled up on the Word of that victory (Josh. 1:11). They have passed through the circumcision at Gilgal and are allowing the Word of the Cross to become effectual to the removing of the old in them (Josh. 5:3). They have waited eighty years to come to this time and place where they could finally dwell in the Land that flows with milk and honey. Joshua feels it in the air. It is time to move, and it is equally time to walk in this place as if they owned it. The ground of Canaan was set apart by God to be inhabited by His people. Once on this soil, it was time to possess the land and bring forth fruit.

Joshua is beginning to feel the weight of all of this and as a leader it is his responsibility to properly lead the people and find God's way to approach the situation before them, which at this point was Jericho. Having been with Moses for so long Joshua knew the futility of moving if God's presence was not with them (Ex. 33:15). Jericho was already shut up and afraid, yet the land was not possessed.

Rambo or Resurrection Man

"And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? And the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so" (Josh. 5:13-15).

"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;" (2 Cor. 10: 3-5).

Turning his eyes from his situation, the children of Israel, and the walls of Jericho, Joshua lifts up his eyes and discovers the Captain of the host of the Lord is standing there with His sword drawn, ready to possess. Joshua immediately asks, “Whose side are you on?” It is the question of a man going into a battle not sure if he is going to win. It is not the question of a man who has already entered into rest. These are not the thoughts of someone who is abiding in the finished reality of a union that will permeate all regions of the dry earth he is standing on. Joshua falls down and worships but quickly gets up and asks the Lord another carnal question, “What would be a good battle plan for the conquest of Jericho, what advice can you give me?”

In the Lord’s answer, rather than imparting a great military strategy, Joshua is instructed to take his shoes off! This is probably not the answer that he was expecting! Joshua was ready for battle but in effect God said, “Take your army boots off! Prepare yourself to walk not as a soldier but as a bride. This is not a battlefield, this is holy ground that has been set apart for Christ and the Church where Jesus and His Bride will dwell together in a oneness that will be established and fruitful. Our weapons are not carnal and we do not set one foot on enemy soil. Rather we have spiritual weapons that are mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds. I do not want you to be consumed with Jericho, but clothe yourself in Me. Your victory is the reality that you are already in Me and separate from the old. If you approach this situation as separate from Me hoping to win My love and acceptance by defeating Jericho, then you have already lost.”

So many Christians are dressed in combat gear ready to beat up the enemy rather than separating themselves to Christ and the finished work of His Cross that has already overcome all foes. In that viewpoint and heart condition we would be putting on our wedding garments rather than lacing up our army boots. We can make ourselves ready by becoming clothed with the reality that we are married to the Victor Himself and by preparing ourselves to walk in that union. As we abide in Him, the evil One touches us not (I Jn. 5:18). As we abide in Him, He abides in us.

If our victory is to win a temporal battle that will make us feel better or cause our situation to look better, then we have already lost. As we comprehend that we ARE ONE with Jesus then we will know that we already HAVE WON! Therefore, we must allow His victory to renew our minds, fill our hearts, and form the way we walk in the Land. THEN the old must relinquish to the new IN us and Jesus Who is the true Joshua can finally possess His Bride that is already raised in Him as one.

Heavenly Strategy

“And the Lord said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour. And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days. And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets” (Joshua 6:2-4).

At this point the Lord starts talking strategy, even wisdom that is from above. The Captain of the Lord's host first tells Joshua to see that all of Jericho, even its mighty men and king, are given into their hand. It is very important that before we start moving into action we first see the completed victory of the Cross (Eph. 1:19-23). Before we can walk properly we must first enter into His rest. Next Joshua is instructed to have the people encompass the city. It is important to notice what is happening here. There is to be no contact with Jericho, no hand to hand combat or even a touching of its walls. Rather they are instructed to envelop this stronghold much like light would envelop darkness. The power of influence would overcome what has already been defeated. They are bringing the influence of the Life of Jesus as they surround the fortified walls with the faith and spirit of those who are in union with the Living God. They are encompassing this city with God's city, the New Jerusalem from above that bears within her the glory of God (Rev. 21:2,10-11). The Lamb Himself is the light of this city and He shines out of it. As they walk in this way around the walls it is apparent that they are joined and filled to overflowing with the Life of Another. As they walk they are flowing over the land with the savor of the knowledge that they are in union with Christ. In this way they can permeate all regions of the land with the fragrant Life of Christ.

Let the priest's declare the reality that they are raised in Christ with the sound of the trumpet, that God has gone up with a shout and ascended as head of the resurrected new man. Let the very Ark of God Himself that is in them be carried and surround the old city that has no life. Have the men of war that are skillful with the sword bear the word of God that is spirit and life. These men can divide lies from truth, shadows from reality and the old from the new. They will speak forth the Word of confession in faith and life. The “battle plan” was for them to encompass this old fortress with living union until its old walls were saturated, permeated and over strained with the constant presentation and influence of the resurrected new man.

As we look at this procession of Israelites surrounding Jericho in such a manner may we turn our eyes to now see the fulfillment that has come in the resurrected Body of Christ. In that viewpoint we do not see an external ark but the indwelling Christ in His people. Rather than trumpets and swords we now hear the voice of those who declare Christ and Him crucified sounding forth the good news that we have been raised in Christ as one new man. This new man walks as the vehicle that carries the Life of Jesus.

Holy Feet

“Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses” (Josh. 1:3). “And command ye them, saying, Take you hence out of the midst of Jordan, out of the place where the priests' feet stood firm, twelve stones, and ye shall carry them over with you, and leave them in the lodging place, where ye shall lodge this night”. And Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests which bare the ark of the covenant stood: and they are there unto this day.” And it came to pass, when the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord were come up out of the midst of Jordan, and the soles of the priests' feet were lifted up unto the dry land, that the waters of Jordan returned unto their place, and flowed over all his banks, as they did before” (Josh. 4:3,9,18).

The same feet that held the Ark in the Jordan and saw it flood its own banks are the feet now walking the dirt around Jericho's walls carrying the same Ark. The same work of the Cross that caused Jordan to fall back will also cause these walls to fall down. It is the same feet that walked carrying the Presence of the Lord in the Ark with them that caused passage for the people through the Jordan. Remember that the Jordan would not roll back until the soles of the priest's feet were lifted up to the dry ground (Josh. 4:18). As long as their feet were standing on that ground, the Jordan could not return to its place. It is in this same spirit we hear the words of the Lord that tell us that everywhere we put our feet we possess. It becomes obvious that it is not just any feet that will do this, but feet that have separated unto the Lord in a manner and walk that brings the very Life and Presence of the Lord to where ever their feet touch. The Captain of the Lord's host said this is holy ground. The feet that walk this ground should be holy, which simply means separated unto the Lord. These priests carrying the Ark represent people who have separated themselves and their walk unto God in a way that will bring the influences of His Life

everywhere their feet touch. They are not caught up in the old inhabitants of the Land, they are captivated by the heart of Jesus and caught up in His desire to inhabit us and therefore possess the Land through us by His Life.

The issue that is first in God's heart is not the enemy but the reality of having a Bride and Body that will bear His presence in the earth, and fill the earth with this glorious union. The heart of His Bride is not towards guidance through various battles in the earth, but to proceed from her position in Him, bearing the mind and nature of Christ that will bring light and Life into any situation or conflict. The richness of the resources of His Life in us will fill the land. The falling down of strongholds that are already defeated is just an automatic effect of God's people beginning to walk in their union with Christ as His Body and Bride.

First Fruits of the Entire Land

Jericho is the first example of true possession in the land standing as the first fruits unto God of the spirit in which all the Land would be taken. In that sense it represents the entire harvest. Here in Jericho the Captain of the host shares the heart of what is required to truly possess every inch of Canaan... "WITHNESS". When the Lord said, "*Be strong and courageous for the Lord thy God is WITH you*", He was not referring to "with us" in the sense of two people walking together and helping each other out. This "WITH" is in the sense of John 1:1 where the Word was With God and Was God. They are "with" because they are one. It is God's definition of "WITH" that should become our definition. If God relates to us in His Son, then He will speak to us in that way. If we are dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, then never again should we resurrect the old in our minds that would say we have an identity that is separate from Jesus. Let it be settled in us that this fight is a good fight of faith (ITim.6:12). The spirit of this faith is in those who have become persuaded and embraced resurrection reality enough to confess that they are one with Jesus and Jericho has ALREADY fallen (Heb. 11:13). It is now only a matter of manifesting what is ALREADY true. If we can walk into the land in that mind and heart condition, then truly the giants will be bread for us.

Quit Attacking the Walls!

Hand to hand combat with Jericho is insanity! Certainly the Lord Himself will become our victory as we acknowledge in faith what He has accomplished through the

work of His Cross. Our new identity in Christ, when received and walked in, will cause all that is of the old to lose its foundations and strength in us. We are now becoming rooted and grounded into another reality: our place and identity in Christ and His place in us. These old strongholds will fall on their own because the real has now come IN THE PEOPLE. Because the old has no more place in the heart and mind of the believer it can no longer co-exist in the land of their heart. The Lord told them to simply WALK around the city in this spirit and full of this reality. He did not tell them to throw stones at the walls or to start hammering and blasting away at it in an effort to destroy it. GOD has already destroyed the old creation. He crucified it, He fought the battle, and He won the battle. God told us to use all of our strength to love Him, not to battle the enemy. As we love God by embracing our union with Christ in an active way, then strongholds will lose their hold in our hearts and minds as Christ fills all and in all.

Every time we grab the pick axe to try and put a dent into that old issue that we can't seem to overcome we are using a carnal weapon that cannot bring down strongholds. By fighting like that we are acknowledging that this giant is still very real and intimidating to us. We are acting like it is so much in our reality that we need to tear it down so it will go away. These are carnal, fleshly and earth minded weapons. We are fighting the enemy on its ground and the enemy has power to intimidate and paralyze us with fear when we meet and acknowledge it THERE. We must not set one foot on enemy soil, but remain captivated and filled with resurrection reality, finding our only footing in Christ. On Christ the solid Rock we can stand, even having done all else.

This is more than just a way to walk, it is a relationship that defines our way of living. Consider someone who has so been with the Lord that their eyes see Jesus and their minds are full of the Word of God. Their heart is saturated with His Spirit so much so that their cup is overflowing with His Life. Everywhere they go the presence of God goes in and through them. Everything they touch drips with the essence that it is the touch of Jesus for this person is one with Him in a living, breathing, walking, and moving way. As this person approaches Jericho, instead of acknowledging it, touching it, and battling it they simply walk around it bringing the powerful influence of the reality that they are married, filled, free, and above its influence. They are only influenced by the One Who is their Life. They walk around the stronghold in this way over and over again for seven days signifying completion, (until it is complete). As they walk they are singing the songs of Zion,

speaking the wonderful words of life that confess His work is true and believed. They carry the Ark of His presence in them bringing the present reality that God Himself is with them for He is alive within. As they walk they spread His fragrance, shine His light, emit His savor and reflect His glory! They release His Spirit and His living words for seven days, never really noticing Jericho or caught up in it at all. They are caught up in the Jerusalem that is from above, and are coming down bearing His fullness, bringing the influence of that place into Canaan where it can become established in the earth. Trust me, Jericho is about to fall, it cannot stand in the midst of this for very long. No one will have to even touch Jericho for it is utterly rejected and therefore evicted. It has no more place for Someone else has possessed the area where it once stood for so long. This is the victory of a marriage and the victory of newness of life. This is declaring the victory of being made one in the Son through His Cross.

“With The Sound of the Trumpet”

*“And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when the people hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall **ascend up** every man straight before him” (Josh. 6:5).*

“God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a rams horn” (Psa. 47:5).

“And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God.” “And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.” “And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul” (Acts 4:24, 31, 32).

If our method is not God's method then we are wasting our time and energy. It is not shouting louder or longer that makes walls fall down, but the manifestation of Christ in His Body that pushes back the enemy. Spiritual darkness cannot withstand Christ as Life in His Body. It is one thing to talk about the Life of Jesus in His Body, but it is another thing for a people to walk filled with His Life as One New Man. This is not just another method to deal with things, but the very manifestation of what the resurrection of Jesus Christ has brought forth in His Body. In this sense, may our weapons be spiritual and mighty.

The Land's Purpose

This land was made to be inhabited, not just looked at, believed in, or even declared. It was set apart with the specific purpose of the union which is in Christ to fill and permeate every corner and inch of ground until it truly is inhabited by God Himself through His people. He is magnified as Life down here in and through us. This relationship of oneness is established and fruitful on this ground. The old Jericho falls as the New Jerusalem rises up (Josh. 6:5b).

The possession of the land is a byproduct of an ongoing relationship of oneness that has debilitating influence to all the old in the land. They are possessing Jericho by a walk in the Lord that has lifted their awareness out from the earth and themselves into the plenteousness of Christ. In this way they are crowding out the enemy. Not in great military triumphs where they gradually push back the enemy lines. They are suffocating the enemy with the deadly fumes of the sweet savor of Christ. They are blinding Jericho with the light of His life that is shining out from them. They are removing the city's mobility by not acknowledging them nor being intimidated or stirred up by its "presence". In them, there is no more Jericho. The constant awareness of that city down here is replaced with the glory of living as the New Jerusalem from above. Their constant awareness is now that they are one with the Lord and ever abiding as His city, His wife (Rev. 21:23).

My Need is For You, not Deliverance

A heart that begins to see the real will cry out to see Jesus and not for deliverance from Jericho. Such a one might pray, "Lord, I don't need deliverance from Jericho, I NEED YOU. To walk with You, to talk and commune in You from the position and peace of being joined and one spirit. I need to proceed with You in Your spirit and mind. I need Your viewpoint to renew my mind and replace old concepts and identities. I need You in greater depth and fullness. I need You, Joshua, to possess my heart so I can properly possess this land. I seek not deliverance from Jericho. I seek to touch the hem of Your garment and not my issue of blood. I will cleave and hold fast to You until my change comes and it is no longer I but Christ living in me. Lord, wash me, clothe me, ignite me, and consume me until all that comes forth from me is your essence permeating every place that I put my foot. In this way I too will remove my shoes and acknowledge that this is holy ground. When I walk in this way, my weapons are spiritual and mighty to the flattening of the fortified walls of Jericho, and the earth will become a place where resurrection reality can manifest through the people of God. Lord, what I need is You."

It Requires Humility

You have to be humble enough to walk with the Lord instead of the issues surrounding Jericho. This requires our hearts to turn from the situations around us to the Lord Himself. Such a heart acknowledges that the real need is for more of Jesus and not just answers on how to deal with tough situations. Rather than asking the Lord for light on how to handle the issue at hand, we can embrace the Lord Himself as the Light that will fill us with His Life. Once our eyes see Jesus above all else, then we will truly understand how to proceed in all circumstances. When we have Christ as our Light then we will walk through these valleys filled with the savor of His Life.

As we “surround” all things through expressing God’s love, then hearts will melt, relationships will heal, and wounds can be mended. Casting stones of condemnation because someone is wrong or even working through issues to find out who and what is right is not as effective as allowing the love of Jesus to surround the situation with forgiveness and mercy. In these practical situations that happen to us all, we can choose a carnal method to deal with them, or we can allow Christ to order how we walk. Once again, for someone to walk as spiritual in these things they must love Jesus more than their personal issues within the situation. Many times there is strong temptation to start seeing these problems based on an earthly viewpoint rather than through the eyes of Jesus. Yet we have overcome this realm for we have been raised out of it and made partakers of the Divine Nature so that we can proceed with His Divine method!

Love Casts Out

Strength to overcome does not cast out fear and unbelief – love casts out fear. Jericho is a huge and fortified city ONLY if it is our reality. If we live in Christ then our focus is on our union into His Life and not on defeating our old life. We, therefore, abide in His Life rather than the issues that relate to our old life down on the earth and in Jericho. It is then that Jericho begins to weaken and ultimately fall. The knowledge of good and evil tries to draw our attention and identification to focus upon the issues in Jericho, but to abide there will only entangle us deeper into Jericho and strengthen its walls. We are not to “eat of that tree” and partake of the knowledge of good and evil. We are to know ourselves and one another in Christ. We are to have the mind of Christ that overcomes death with Life. Jericho has

already “lost its sting”. We simply manifest that by walking in the spirit rather than walking in the flesh. We no longer are motivated by what we see in the earth as we seek after what is true in the spirit (Rom. 8:5-6). When we get caught up in resurrection reality then we will be able to walk around Jericho properly. We must accept that we are crucified with Christ and that now we can walk in newness of Life.

It is a faith that works by love. Christ loved us and gave Himself for us so that we could walk in newness of Life. Through His death He has overcome every obstacle that would seek to block or hinder His Life from possessing every inch of our hearts. Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ (Rom. 8:38-39)!

More Than Conquerors

“Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us” (Rom. 8:37).

God has made us more than conquerors; He has made us His Bride. Our focus, therefore, is not overcoming the enemy, but coming away to Christ as our Life and place of refuge. We rise above our battles as we choose to dwell in the realm of glorious union in Christ. Once that relationship and way of existing becomes established in us and fills us, then we bring that environment back down to our “Jericho’s” through a lifestyle and walk that speaks of someone who has become more than just a conqueror.

The victory that we believe in and walk in came through *“Him Who loved us and gave Himself for us”* (Gal. 2:20). The essence of the Lord in His death is more akin to a husband towards His wife than a great war captain towards his men.

The Song of Songs is Being Sung

At times we might want to avoid the Book of Joshua because it brings up uncomfortable issues that deal with standing against the enemy causing us to turn to the Song of Solomon to feel close to the Lord and His love. But it here around the walls of Jericho that you can also hear the Song of Solomon being sung: *“How much better is your love than wine, and the fragrance of your oils than all kinds of spices. Honey and milk are under your tongue, and the fragrance of your garments is like the fragrance of Lebanon”* (Song of Songs 4:10-11). Here the Beloved is describing His victorious warrior, His Bride. She looks much like those marching around Jericho.

They are more caught up in the Lord than the wine of overpowering Jericho in their own strength. They bear the presence and therefore fragrance of the Lord as they carry the ark. They use the sword skillfully and speak of the Land as a place that flows with union, milk and honey. They are clothed in Christ and walking in Him rather than in their old identity that is buried under the Jordan and removed at Gilgal. Who and what can stand in the presence of the living reality of the Bride and Body of Christ that is filled with His Life? It is the manifestation of the victory of the ages.

Another Giant Killer

Many years later we see that for the most part, Israel has lost the spirit that was found in Joshua and the people who walked around the walls of Jericho. The mighty men of Israel are intimidated and afraid of the giant Goliath. They did not know that God had given them the Land, that the victory was already theirs, and that this Philistine was uncircumcised and therefore unfit to set one unholy foot in this holy land. David did not put on Saul's armor, neither did he conform to the general attitude of Israel. He walked up to the giant just like Caleb must have approached the sons of Anak years earlier and stated the obvious facts "*Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?*". He took what was literally part of the land, five smooth stones, even like the 12 that were still standing in Gilgal as a memorial. He held them and then released them. The reality of God's victory and God's place of habitation would surely and immediately slay any giant when applied to the situation in a living faith. The giants are simply bread for those of the same spirit that Joshua, Caleb, and David had.

David was of the heart and mind of those who possessed the land. He had a real relationship with the Lord that "flowed with milk and honey" and could fill the land with the essence of one who walked in union with the Living God. We expect the land to magically possess itself rather than us walking on this ground in a state that is so filled with life that it can root and flourish wherever our foot is put. Until Christ is no longer a place outside of us, but a relationship with a Person that fills us and spills from us, the Land, though set apart for God, will be filled with wild beasts and uncircumcised heathen. Once again, all these victories and all this faith was emanating from a relationship of oneness that first filled the individual and then possessed the external enemies and circumstances.

Not Religion but the Temple of God

We were created to be inhabited by the Living God, and to carry ourselves as the temple that bears the Presence of His Person. We weren't created to sing and dance while doing a ritual march as we carry around religious objects. When our mind is renewed to the truth as it is in Jesus, then everything we do, including our approach to the enemy, will proceed and be ordered from our place of union with Christ.

As the temple of the living God, these people are a manifestation of the altar and those who have embraced it and passed through it. For these people to walk fragrantly around Jericho and emit the savor of Christ they must have inwardly embraced the work of the Cross. A fragrant and constant release of Christ as Life cannot occur without the altar. Only those who will yield to the constant inward work of the Cross will be able to walk in such a way. To truly follow the Lamb we must pick up our Cross daily.

Conclusion

It is possible for us to come to the Lord with the problems and situations in our lives and ask for a plan that will give us the victory over these things. In essence, we are walking up to the throne room with carnal shoes on. We are speaking as if we are separate from Him and unaware of His resurrection victory. We act as if we are down on earth fighting for Him and His people while He is up there somewhere shouting down orders so that we can be cunning enough to win. But this is not the case. We are always on holy ground for we are always one with Jesus if we have been born again. Our approach both to God and the situations in our lives should be on the basis of oneness, the finished work of His Cross, and the power of His resurrection Life within.***

The Victory Is ONE

Study Questions

1. Write a one page essay commenting on this statement, “The victory is one/ won because it only works on the basis of union”.
2. Write a one page essay commenting on this statement, “Embracing the victory is no longer an undecided battle but a walking in the triumph of the Cross that has made two one”.
3. So many Christians are dressed in combat gear ready to beat up the enemy rather than separating themselves to Christ and the finished work of His Cross. In what ways can we put down our carnal weapons and embrace spiritual reality that will lead us into true overcoming?
4. In what ways does this statement help describe what abiding in Christ is, “As they walk they are flowing over the land with the savor of the knowledge that they are in union with Christ”?
5. Is the essence of the warfare described in this chapter more on the lines of “doing” or “being”. Explain your answer in detail.
6. The spirit of faith is in those who have become persuaded and embraced resurrection reality enough to confess that they are one with Jesus and Jericho has ALREADY fallen (Heb. 11:13). It is now only a matter of manifesting what is ALREADY true. If we can walk in that mind and heart condition, then truly the giants will be bread for us and strongholds will come down. How can these principles be applied to specific strongholds in your own life? Ask the Lord to show you specific personal areas where these spiritual weapons can begin to bring victory. Write down a chart that both describes the stronghold and applies the spiritual weapon. Pray over these areas and ask the Holy Spirit to show a way to begin to walk in some of the things you are learning in this chapter.

7. Explain this statement, “Every time we grab the pick axe to try and put a dent into that old issue that we can’t seem to overcome we are using a carnal weapon that cannot bring down strongholds”. If possession of the land is a by-product of an ongoing relationship of oneness that has debilitating influence to all the old in the land, then should our focus be on our issues or on our oneness with the risen Son?
8. In what ways can this statement speak to us concerning the condition of heart that is necessary for defeating strongholds; “You have to be humble enough to walk with the Lord instead of the issues surrounding Jericho” ?
9. Write a one page essay commenting on this quote, “God has made us more than conquerors; He has made us His Bride. Our focus, therefore, is not on overcoming the enemy, but coming away to Christ as our Life and place of refuge. We rise above our battles as we choose to dwell in the realm of glorious union in Christ. “
10. Our approach both to God and the situations in our lives should be on the basis of oneness, the finished work of His Cross, and the power of His resurrection Life within. Comment on some practical ways you can apply this reality to areas in your walk and daily life.

Cleaning Up The House

Help!! My House Is A Mess!

How many of us can feel depressed and overwhelmed at times by looking at ourselves and seeing what a mess we are? I know I can relate to that experience! Surely we all know what it is like to greatly desire to bring God glory and bless Him while at the same time staring at insurmountable obstacles in ourselves? At such times we may agree with the old hymn that says God can save a wretch like me, but wonder if He can be glorified through a wreck like me. There are seasons where our lives in the earth can look and feel like a train wreck. Situations, relationships, and inner turmoil that seem unsolvable can drive us to despair. Yet even then, our heart for the Lord will not let go of Jesus or stop hoping that somehow He will be glorified despite our sad condition in the earth. Sometimes we can feel like collapsing in the middle of our messy situations out of sheer frustration and exhaustion. At these times the only solution we may see is simply to pull ourselves up and start cleaning the mess. Yet there is another way and that is what this article is all about.

Determined To Clean My House

In the effort to get rid of our problems and please the Lord, we may begin the process of cleaning ourselves up. Thoughts may come such as, "If I really love the Lord than I will get rid of this problem." With all our heart and strength we may begin to scrub at every dirty mess trying to wash away the spots and blemishes with our own efforts (Ephesians 5:26-27). We may attempt to put things in proper godly order and organize all the unsorted situations. We get busy shining up the walls trying to make ourselves better and better with every stroke. Without realizing it our entire focus can become consumed with ourselves even though it is with the desire to please God. These efforts do not come from a heart that doesn't care about God but from someone who deeply cares and desires to bless Him. Even though that is the case, our attention is more aware of ourselves when we do this than the Lord we love.

My Personal Experience

At this point I would like to interject a personal note. I had recently re-dedicated myself to clean and organize my home. I scrubbed the floors and tried to clean in the hidden corners and crevices. Then I set about to put everything in its proper place and truly organize things. By the end of this time I felt really good about my house. In an odd way, I even began feeling proud about how clean my house was. Now I could boast in my clean and organized office. While I was sitting there feeling really good about my progress, I watched as a huge roach crawled out from under my couch! How could this be? My house was too clean and organized to have a roach!!! I had done my best and yet there was still this horrible creature crawling around inside my clean home. Although I had done my best, there must have been hidden places and areas where the roach was able to get in and survive! Very simply, no matter how clean my house became, I could still have a roach problem. It could never be perfect.

While my personal experience is just an example in the physical realm, I began to question and consider my way of dealing with “a messy house” in the Lord. Do I believe cleanliness is next to godliness? Can I clean and organize my way to glory? What is true organization to God? Is righteousness the result of human effort? How can I remove every roach when my home has places they hide in, and how can I remove bad attitudes when they inhabit that which is fleshly (carnal)? I began to realize that cleaning myself up was a ceaseless job with no end. God is not satisfied with my organized Christian lifestyle if it is full of roaches!!! God is not impressed with my “proper actions” when they are performed in attitudes that are contrary to the nature of the Lamb. Very specifically, God is not satisfied with anything short of His Son. My house may look clean in my eyes, but is it clean in God’s eyes, and does it bring Him pleasure? My walls may be white but my heart is deceitfully wicked beyond what I can even know! This can feel like a hopeless cause. How does the Lord deal with filthy messes and disorder in His house?

Jesus Cleans House

Let us look in the scriptures where Jesus is found “cleaning” His Father’s house (John 2:14-21). Notice that Jesus was not setting the earthly form of that temple in order, but rather He was running through it with a whip. Jesus was not trying to clean or re-order the temple. He was responding to the fact that this temple was not glorifying His Father. Jesus was asked what sign of authority He could show them

that gave Him the right to do this (John 2:18). The proof and sign that Jesus gave to them was, “Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up”. Jesus here was speaking of the temple of His Body” (John 2:21). The hope He set before us in these scriptures is in His death, burial and resurrection. We can look away from messy houses unto the Body of His resurrection and find true glory.

Not Home Improvement

Jesus did not come down and try to straighten everything up in the earth. Remember, the world has one way of dealing with problems and the Cross of Christ has another. Jesus knew that the old nature was crooked and could never truly bring the Father pleasure. The hope He gave us was that He would raise up a new temple that would be His very own Body, and therefore glorify the Father. It is to this hope that we must look! God didn’t pick up the old creation from its shambles, dust it off and command it to clean itself up. God isn’t in the business of reconstruction but resurrection. Let’s put it plainly... GOD LOVES HIS SON!!! The cleanest most organized temple on planet earth still isn’t Jesus. Our goal and passion should be to become filled with the life of Christ for we are His Body and Temple. Jesus said He would raise up a temple in Himself that would be His very own Body. Rather than helping us up from the ashes of our earth lives, God raised us up in His Son as a new creation that is bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh. When we see the Father’s heart for His Son we will no longer be motivated to make ourselves acceptable but seek to find our acceptance in the Beloved (Eph, 2:6). We must look away from ourselves unto Jesus! He is not our helper but the Head of His risen Body! Our place is to be found in Christ and His place is to be found in us as new Life!

Home improvement shows are popular in the United States, but the Church does not need a home improvement show. We need our eyes opened to see who we are in Christ. God told Ezekiel to “show the house to the house” (Ezekiel 43:10). We must lift up our eyes away from ourselves in the earth to truly see who we are. If our eyes remain fixed upon our old identity, then we will never know the joy of what God has done in Christ and who He has made us in His Son.

That which is flesh is flesh, and that which is spirit is spirit (John 3:6). God did not take fallen man and try to clean him up. God crucified the old man with Christ. God did not organize the old creation to look like the new, he destroyed it. Our hope is not in self improvement but in a whole new identity as members of the risen

Son. The old Adamic nature is set apart for destruction, not correction. No matter how ordered I try to make my flesh after the pattern of the heavenly Son, that first man is not the house the Father is looking for (I Corinthians 15:47). That is why I am crucified with Christ rather than improved with Him. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither does corruption inherit incorruption.

Look Now Toward Heaven

Although the earth may lie in ruins, the New Jerusalem which is from above can never suffer loss. When we fix our eyes upon who we are together in Christ, we can have hope, faith and even love where once there was only fear and division. What we cannot do, God has already done in His Son. What we are striving to become we have already been raised up as through union into Christ. Our goal is no longer to become something, but to enter into what God has already made us in Christ. What we are, we are by the grace of God who has accepted us in the Beloved. We can find rest in His work and know that we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand. Instead of weeping over our lack the barren can rejoice in hope! We are not in bondage to our lack, but united to Christ in His fullness. We access that fullness through faith and not works. Rather than becoming agents of our own righteousness we are as branches that partake of all the root and fatness of the True Vine Himself.

Instead of looking into our cleaning closet for the answer, we must look into heavenly places in Christ Jesus and see that a glorious union has already taken place. All of the richness and vastness of His resources are ours through union (Ephesians 1:3). We are the children of promise for we are born out from that realm of plenty. We are born from above (John 3:3). We must lift up our eyes like Abraham did, and see all the fullness of the heavens and know that so shall our Seed be, which Seed is Christ (Genesis 15:5). Our true identity is found above in Christ, and the Seed of all that fullness dwells within by Christ and will bring forth by promise. Having begun in the spirit let us not now try to make ourselves perfect by the flesh (Gal. 3:4). If we truly walk in the Spirit and sow to the Spirit, than the fruit will follow.

True Zeal For The Father's House

As a bride we need to be zealous to embrace our identity in Christ above our messy earth life. In John 15:4 Jesus tells us that if we abide in Him than He will abide in us. We can be clothed upon with true holiness as we put off the old man

and his deeds, and put on Christ. Consider that even if our lives in the earth outwardly seem fine and decent, true zeal will consume someone to cast off the best of the flesh to be found in Christ alone. A mindset of accepting that which is not the Son needs to be driven out. All flesh needs to be set apart for destruction and not reconstruction, for the cross has put away the old. Why rebuild what God has already thrown down? The only House that will stand is the one that is raised up in His Son. Until we have found the House that God alone has built in His Son and abide there, we build in vain. All true manifestation of spiritual life and fruit can only come through union into the Son and not the labors of our flesh. As that which is from above finds appearance in the earth, than we are not building something for God but being the vehicles for His expression through union.

The Order of the Law

When Paul shared along these lines he was accused of just letting sin abound. Yet remember, Paul emphasized the need for tutors and governors while the heir was yet a child. But these things were only temporary until the Seed which is Christ came forth. They must never replace our true hope of glory, which is Christ in us. The law becomes a schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. There is a time for us all when we are kept under the law, shut up unto the faith that afterwards will be revealed. Yet the law can not give life, and only the Life of Christ will fulfill its righteous demands. That is why our hearts eventually must turn away from our own resources and face towards the Lord. In that heart condition we are not rebelling against the law, but allowing it to turn our hearts towards Jesus that we might be changed. It is important that we do not despise the order that the law gives during the time period of waiting for the Seed. It keeps us while we wait for the spirit of adoption. Then, in the time appointed of the Father; the house that was once ordered by tutors and governors will be filled with the Spirit of the Son. At that time we will no longer be serving an external law but fulfilling it by Christ within as our hearts cry out Abba Father (Galatians 4 1-7). All creation groans waiting for this manifestation of the sons of God! We will no longer be servants but sons by Christ. Moses (who brought the law) was a faithful servant in all his house, but Christ is the fulfillment as a Son over His own house, whose house we are! (Heb. 3:4-6) May we never be satisfied with the order and cleanliness that a tutor or governor brings when our purpose and eternal destiny is to be filled with the Son. These schoolmasters must point us to the true purpose of the house, Christ as our Life!

The Order of the House

There is a House that brings the Father pleasure. There is a Temple that produces pure and continual worship by its very essence and nature. There is “sameness of kind” in this Temple rather than flesh striving to act properly. “Sameness of kind” refers to the nature of the Son filling the Temple of His Body rather than the foreign element of man’s flesh trying to produce something. This Temple glorifies the Father, for it is the Body of His Son. Christ is all and in all here for He fills this Temple. Only by Him can we please God. Our best efforts will still bring failure for only the Son pleases the Father.

A body, as a temple, reflects whoever it belongs to. Therefore, the order of the House which is the risen Son emanates from His own being. What we once labored in the flesh to produce will now come forth by nature, for we are His Body. Because Christ is filling the Temple of His own Body, no man stands to minister in his own strength, but all are overshadowed by the glory of the One Who is the Life. When we see Him in His Temple, we will see that we are not the One and fall down in our own wretchedness (Isaiah 6). Only One fills this place, and His presence orders all things. No man will clean this Temple, only the Son will fill it full of true holiness, which is God alone. We will stop trying to clean the wrong house and be swallowed up of the one true habitation of God, which is the risen Son. As our eyes see the glory of God in His Temple, we will not be strengthened for service, but weakened unto death. Then our emphasis will be Christ as our Life, the Son Who fills His own House. He will walk in us, and we will know it was the Son and not our own strength and effort. No flesh shall glory in His presence, for he that glories shall glory in the Lord alone (I Cor. 1:29-31).

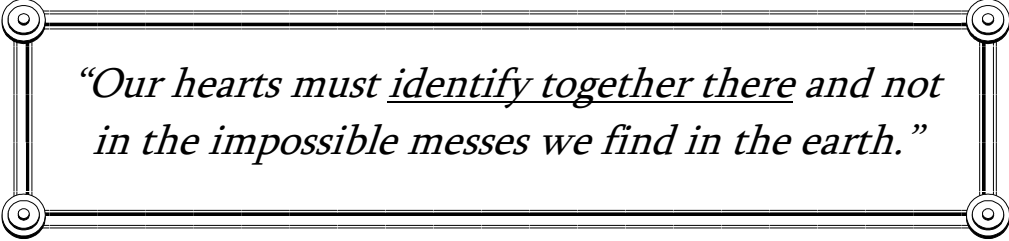
Hopeless Situations or Hope In Resurrection?

Remember in John 2:14-21 where Jesus said that He would raise the temple up in three days? Three days! This astonished the people around Him for it had taken 46 years for them to build it. Let’s think about this in practical everyday terms that relate to our lives right now. A temple is built up of many bricks that have come together as a habitation (Ephesians 2:21-22). The Body of Christ is made up of many members that share one Life. In the functioning of the temple on earth there can be many problems. There can be division, irreconcilable differences, problems and issues. Jesus found people using the house of God for merchandizing. There are countless situations that in our eyes can seem either hopeless or that will take years and years to work out in the earth. Like the tower of Babel, we want to build up

something that will reach the heavens, but that is not how God works. Jesus knew that what He was looking for and dying for was not a cleaned up earthly temple built by the efforts of man. Jesus was going to raise up in Himself the Bride and habitation that He had longed for. It wasn't going to take Him 46 six years to come down here and work with us through every issue and problem. It was going to take Him three days,... one to crucify the old earthly form, one to bury it away forever, and one to raise up in Himself a whole new creation. After those three days were accomplished He sat down for the work was finished. As we sit down and abide in that reality, then eventually we will be able to also walk and stand in it!

The Togetherness Of It

Ephesians 2:6 says that He has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Romans chapter six tells us that we have been planted together in the in the likeness of His death, and together raised up from the dead. What we couldn't and still can't manage to build and make work together, God has already done for us in His Son. In other words, this temple took only three days to build, not a lifetime of human effort. Our eyes must see the temple God loves. Our hearts must identify together there and not in the impossible messes we find in the earth. God did not clean up the messy old earth temple, He has raised up a new one in Himself. Christ is not divided. The Jerusalem that is from above is at peace, full of the Prince of peace. Look up to her for she is the mother of us all (Galatians 3:26). Find your completion and rest as you embrace your identity as one with the Risen Christ and with His members. We are children of the free! We are born after the Spirit and not by the labors of the flesh. The Jerusalem which is above is not in bondage, she shines with His glory and is tempered together in His love. As we look up and see this glorious risen temple the barren will rejoice and receive grace and enter into His rest. Sometimes we can clean and search in the wrong house looking for our lost coin rather than lifting up our eyes to behold the risen Lord. His raised Body is the work of God and we can dwell above in the reality of that work. Our eyes will no longer see seven churches on the earth each with different issues, but one Lamb's wife from above bearing the glory of God.



“Our hearts must identify together there and not in the impossible messes we find in the earth.”

Conclusion

We have now come to Zion (Hebrews 12:22)! Right this moment by faith we can turn our hearts to identify in her and be free from bondage to self improvement. We can find our unity there. We can find our order in the Son. His Spirit will fill us and all things will flow by Life. It is already finished and now it is ours to simply access by faith! We seek a city whose foundation and maker is God and not the work of our own hands. We can leave the shambles of our best attempts to enter into the Land of Promise, a heavenly city that is ours by faith. Be persuaded of this identity and embrace your heavenly citizenship by faith. Look up and believe and eventually you will see the glory of God manifest. Drink in from that fullness, partake of that provision, and embrace with faith every word from God's heart concerning our identity in the risen Son.

May our hearts be encouraged and our eyes lifted up to behold the beauty of the Lord in His temple. When we have a question, may we enquire for the answers in His risen temple (Psalm 27:4). His way is in His sanctuary, not in our situations (Psalm 77:13). Here we will find rest for our souls in the middle of strife in the earth. Practical solutions and true holiness come from a walk in the Spirit that sows life and peace into otherwise impossible turmoil. May the Father be glorified through His Son and may the bride from above bless the Lamb her husband!***

Cleaning Up The House

Study Questions

1. In the effort to get rid of our problems and please the Lord, we may begin the process of cleaning ourselves up. Do you believe we can clean ourselves up for God?
2. Do you believe cleanliness is next to godliness? Can you clean and organize your way to glory? What is true organization to God? Is righteousness the result of human effort?
3. In what way did Jesus clean His Father's house in John 2:14-21? What does that mean to you in relationship to you being the house where Jesus dwells now?
4. Write a one page essay commenting on this statement, "The world has one way of dealing with problems and the Cross of Christ has another".
5. Does the Church need a home improvement seminar or the Cross? Explain your answer in detail.
6. Rather than becoming agents of our own righteousness we are as branches that partake of all the root and fatness of the True Vine Himself. If you believe this statement, how will it affect the ways in which you seek to please God?
7. As a bride we need to be zealous to embrace our identity in Christ above our messy earth life. How can love for Jesus motivate us to truly adorn ourselves for Him properly?
8. If all flesh is set apart for destruction and not reconstruction, than why do so many Christians work on making their flesh more godly?

9. Sometimes we can clean and search in the wrong house looking rather than lifting up our eyes to behold the risen Lord. What is the true House that God sees and how was this House “cleaned”?
10. When we have a question, should we enquire for the answers in His risen temple or in our temporal realm (Psalm 27:4)?
11. His way is in His sanctuary, not in our situations (Psalm 77:13). If this is true, than how can we find our way when there is turmoil and confusion in the earth?
12. In what ways do you see the love and grace of God in putting us in Christ?

Earth The Great Burial Ground

Introduction

One day as I was driving down the road, the Holy Spirit began to share with my heart concerning a view of the earth as it relates to the Cross of Christ. Quite simply, I saw the earth as a big burial ground rather than the land of promise! In my own personal walk I was crying out to the Lord for freedom not just in certain areas, but from me!!! I knew that I had heard all the answers and needed to look no further than the Cross. But somehow I was not applying those answers effectively. And so the things in this booklet came from what the Lord shared with me during that time. I know it is only the Holy Spirit Who can make any of this real to someone's heart, for the scriptures clearly share these things with the perfection of Divine Inspiration.

The Necessity of a Ruth-Heart

There is a journey we must make that requires a certain heart determination. This is a journey of identification called the renewing of the mind. It is the process of leaving the old man dead and buried so that we might join unto our new risen Husband and be fruitful. The story of Ruth gives us a clear picture of this process and the heart that is behind it.

Three women left the country of Moab mourning the deaths of their husbands. Two of the women had opportunity to return and find rest in the house of their dead husbands. Both of these women cried and affectionately pledged to continue forward into the house of bread (Bethlehem) with their mother-in-law who was of the house of Israel, rather than return to the house of their dead husbands. Twice they cried out and wept over this situation. One young woman even kissed her mother-in-law, but still ended up returning to her dead husband's house. Only Ruth, a Moabitess herself, would cleave and not let go of her new identity and the woman who would lead her into it. This is her pledge and heart determination, *"Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgedst I will lodge; they people shall be my people, and thy God my God. **Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried....** The Lord do so to me and more also if ought but death part thee and me"* (Ruth 1:16-17). In their journey Naomi and Ruth are bound together in the Cross, they walk in a covenant of death and burial as they cleave to an identity that can only be found in Christ.

It is important to notice that all three of these women had dead husbands. All three of them were on a journey to the Land of Promise to find bread that could appease their hunger, for Moab was in famine. Yet with all these things being true, one of these women was still able to return to the home of her dead husband. The element that was missing in this woman (named Orpah) was that she did not cleave to Naomi (her mother-in-law) in both death and burial. Naomi, an Israelite of the tribe of Judah, represented the people of God. Because Orpah was related to Naomi, Orpah had an opportunity to embrace a new identity in the Land of Promise. Like Orpah, we can relate passionately to the thought of entering into our new life, and yet without cleaving to the Cross we will still return to the house of our dead husband. This holds great significance to those of us today who want to enter into the fullness of Christ and leave the old man behind. Even though the old man is dead and the Land of Promise is ours, there is a journey we must make in the renewing of our minds. We must bury our old identity in the death of Christ where we were crucified. There comes a time when we must fully put away from our heart and identity the old man who is dead. If we do not, even though he is dead, we cannot journey forward. A complete and utter end to the old has come through the Cross of Christ, and we must embrace that.

I begin this booklet with this story to show the kind of heart determination that will be necessary for someone to really make a break with the old man. Obviously weeping and crying and making strong commitments did not prevent one young woman from returning to the house of her dead husband. Only Ruth, was able to make the full transition out of her old life and into her new life of fruitfulness in the Land of Promise. She embraced the work of the Cross in both death and burial. Ruth left her dead husband and his place in Moab. She would not dwell in his realm any longer. This story is an example for us. It helps define how we must reckon the old man dead and leave the earth as our dwelling place. It shows us not just the doctrine of reckoning our old man dead, but the “drama” surrounding the daily decisions we must make to not return to our old identity. We must steadfastly cleave to the Word of the Cross that declares the old man is crucified with Christ. We must “stay the course” like Ruth did. She would not let go and would not turn back. The work of the Cross must become that precious to us. If it is just powerful teaching that moves us to tears, then we are still in danger of responding like Orpah and returning once again to the old man’s realm of death. In our journey and walk in Christ, every step of the way must be filled with “cleaving to the Cross of Christ” where our old man was crucified and buried.

Ruth so lost her old identity that she was no longer under the curse that prohibited a Moabite from entering the congregation until the tenth generation (Deut. 23:3). We know that Ruth was accepted in her generation, for she was the great-grandmother of King David. This could only happen because in her heart she was not a Moabite anymore. She had left her old identity dead and buried in Moab and was made one with Boaz, becoming a mother in the house of Israel. The same is true concerning our relationship with Christ. We are no longer of the flesh and the old man but have been joined to the risen Christ and now we bring forth fruit unto God by Him (Romans 7:4).

We cannot identify with our dead husband and still bring forth fruit unto God (Rom. 7:3). We must leave him buried in Moab and find our new life in Boaz (in Christ). If the land of our dead husband still lives in our hearts, then we will eventually loosen our faith-grip on the work of the Cross and find ourselves returning to our old life. Our determination to embrace the Cross must extend beyond the altar call at a church service and motivate every step of our journey. Every place we put our feet must be filled with “Ruth Heart” that will find no life outside of Boaz. In that sense, the earth will no longer be the place of “finding our life” but of reckoning the old life dead and buried until Boaz (Christ) appears and we become established in Him and fruitful. Thus, the earth becomes the place of losing the old identity and reckoning it dead and buried in Christ.

A Time To Disappear

“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: Likewise reckon you also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:3,4a,11).

There is a time for appearing and a time for disappearing, but what does that mean? To understand what that means could save us a lot of confusion. It is not time for us to “appear” in our heart identity when it is our flesh that is manifesting. When the old life presents itself before us and manifests through us, that is the time to disappear by reckoning that old man dead because he was crucified with Christ (Rom. 6:6). Bury him out of your sight! Realize that our old life was not only crucified but buried with Christ (Rom. 6:4). The burial is meant to put that dead corpse away forever. When that fleshly man appears in our attitudes and responses, we are not supposed to kill him again or identify with him, we are to reckon him dead and bury him out of the realm of our identity. In the Old Testament you would

become defiled if you touched a dead corpse. Putting it plainly, don't touch the old man by identifying with him!! When he appears, you disappear and hide your identity in Christ alone while reckoning the whole mess of the old life dead and buried with Christ.

Until Christ appears we have not yet found our appearing (Col. 3:4). Only when Christ appears in us as He is unveiled to be our Life do we identify with what is appearing! Until Christ is revealed in us we do not really know who we are in the new creation. We will tend to identify with our old nature until we begin to comprehend and embrace the work of the Cross. This process of embracing our new identity as one with Jesus must begin even before Christ is revealed in us and before His fruit manifests through us. Our journey to "Boaz" cannot even begin until we make the heart determination to reckon our old man dead.

Remain In Burial

The word "appear" in the scriptures also means "manifest". When it is our flesh that is "appearing or manifesting" we must know that this nature is not our new identity in Christ. During this time period before Christ comes forth in manifestation we must yet abide in Him and remain identified only in His life. But how do we do that when outwardly all we see is our old nature manifesting everywhere? Well, that is the time to "disappear". I am not talking about joining a monastery in the mountains and taking a vow of silence, but I am referring to the way of proceeding before Christ manifestly comes forth through us. Colossians 3:4 says, *"When the Life of the risen body of Christ appears, then we discover our identity is with Him in glorious oneness."* Until that life appears we have not yet fully discovered our identity. Until that identity is fully apprehended through the unveiling of Christ as our life, we must function through faith in the operation of God that has cut off the old man (Col. 2:12). At this point in time the earth is not the place of manifesting Christ but of burying our old identity. It is time to disappear in our identification and be hid in Christ until He who is our life appears (Col. 3:3).

"When the Life of the risen body of Christ appears, then we discover our identity is with Him in glorious oneness (Col. 3:4)."

Rock of Ages Cleft For Me, I Will Hide Myself in Thee

Jesus Christ, the Rock of our identity, was slain so that we could hide ourselves in Him. Our refuge in Christ is solid and sure, for we are settled in His heart. Through His death God put away our old life, and in His resurrection God made us one with Himself in newness of Life. We can abide in the refuge of the cleft Rock of the Crucified Christ through the worst storm of our flesh. From our position of safety in Him we can endure the harshest of trials and personal lack without once having to leave our identity as one with Jesus. We cannot afford to come out of the Stronghold of Jesus to identify with our old self-life under any circumstance. God's Son made Himself our hiding place. In Him we find refuge from a life that is separate from Jesus. Our new identity is sealed in the bosom of the risen Christ. Nothing can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ. He makes all things new by becoming the newness of all things. It is our part only to abide in Him and receive the word of His heart that declares our new identity as one with Himself. In the darkness of our own barrenness we have blessed comfort in knowing that we are sealed in total acceptance as one with the risen Son.

Knowing THIS!

*"Knowing THIS, that our old man is
crucified with Him" (Rom. 6:6a).*

There is a whole bunch of stuff we can know all about and become distracted with. For example, we can know just how much the old sin nature still manifests through us. We can know just how horrible we feel about our condition at times. We can know how desperate and without hope we are in the flesh. But the bible exhorts us to specifically know THIS; that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed. We are not to know and identify with how much the old man appears in our daily experience, but rather we are to actively and through the power of the Holy Spirit KNOW that the old man is crucified with Christ (Rom. 6:6). If we spent all our time knowing THIS, then we would not waste our time identifying with a dead corpse that must be reckoned as such. We must embrace Christ and Him crucified rather than our own wretchedness! Only Christ delivers us from the body of sin and death (Rom. 7:24-25). "Knowing" is a continual awareness of our death with Christ in such a way that will constantly affect our identity. It goes beyond head knowledge and reaches into our heart identity.

We Come Forth When He Comes Forth

It can be tempting at times to come forth before Christ comes forth. What good would Lazarus have been if he wandered out from his tomb before the Resurrection Himself commanded him to come forth? It would have been a stinky odor of flesh rather than a sweet savor of Christ! We must keep all that is of the old in burial until the Resurrection Himself brings us forth in newness of life.

There is intimacy of heart in abiding by faith with Christ in His death and burial. We love the Lord and should be WITH Him at all times, whether that be in death, burial, or resurrection. Our joy is in knowing that we are abiding as one with Him in all things. Even when the flowers have not yet appeared on the earth, there is always a garden in the heart of Jesus wherein we can find acceptance and love through all seasons.

Know That You Are Planted Into His Death

“For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection” (Romans 6:5).

“Mortify, therefore, your members which are upon the earth...” (Col. 3:5).

Through active faith in the finished work of the Cross we must plant all of the old into the death of Christ and bury it there. This has already happened in Christ, but we must submit our mind and circumstances to that reality by exercising our faith in the Cross of Christ. We must submit every contrary thing to the knowledge of God (II Cor. 10:5). Rather than identifying with the flesh, we must put it in its proper place... dead in Christ. In this way we are reckoning the old man as dead rather than identifying with him. This is also referred to as the process of **mortifying** our flesh. Colossians 3:5 says, *“Put to death (not just deny) your earth body, which manifests it’s union with the old. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth.”* We are not to deny, ignore, over-power or wrestle with the old man, rather we are to put him in his place.. dead with Christ. Only by delivering all these things up to the death of Christ can we put off the old man and his deeds. In this sense, only by embracing the Cross in this very specific and active way can we put off the old man and put on the new. This could be likened unto a caterpillar putting off its old crawling body to put on the new form that is translated into a glorious heavenly being. The caterpillar does this by remaining wrapped up in a place of death (cocoon) rather than trying to bring forth change through self-effort in himself.

It is of the utmost importance that we stay planted in His death. We must plant every contrary thought and sinful deed into His death, for they are only the fruit of the old man who was put away at Calvary. We must not uproot ourselves from abiding in this death every time our flesh appears. It is vitally important that we become so rooted and grounded into our death with Him that we cannot be moved from our faith in that death under any circumstance. It is needful that we grow into the knowledge that we are crucified with Christ that we might put off the old man and put on the new (Col. 3:10). It is important that we allow our faith to become established, and not spoil it by judging ourselves outside of the work of the Cross. Through faith in the operation of God we can believe that we were buried with Him in baptism wherein we are also risen with Him (Col. 2:12).

“Put Off” not “Put Up With”

“Put off the old man with his deeds , and put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him” (Col. 3:9b-10).

We are not supposed to crawl through life, year after year, putting up with the old man and his deeds. The day must come for each of us where we make a determination to reckon the old man dead, and plant every thought and deed into the death of Christ, leaving it buried there. In this sense we are entering into mortification, the process of putting off the old man to put on the new. Once again, this is what the caterpillar has chosen to do when he weaves his cocoon. Once we embrace this path, which is the path the Cross will take us, then we can abide in hope knowing that we will not be ashamed for the Spirit of God will shed His love abroad in our hearts (Rom. 5:5).

Until Christ our Life appears, we need to remain wrapped up in His death like a caterpillar in its cocoon! Our identity is wrapped up in the life we have received through heart-fully embracing the Cross. Our deadness, which is of the old man (the body of sin), is hidden with Christ in His death and burial. Our life is securely hid with Christ in God. Our life is preserved in Christ where thief cannot steal nor rust can eat it away. Our death is settled and sealed in the death of Christ. No sin or circumstance can change that the old man was crucified in Him. Now it is time to walk in this reality and apply it by faith to every aspect of our existence. If we don't, or only do so half-heartedly, we will live a life of frustration. Thank God that true growth does not come from facts learned in a classroom, but from an actually metamorphosis deep within where the old is put off and Christ Himself is formed in us!

We will feel helpless, hopeless and unable to do anything until resurrection life springs forth and wings appear, but we must know that we can wrap up in “burial cloths” and abide hidden in His death until Christ comes forth and we find our appearing in Him Who is our Life.

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“For Our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who shall change our lowly body, that it may be fashioned like His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself” (Phil. 3:21).

The whole earth is a burial ground until Christ manifests. It is a massive ball of dirt meant to bury the old man in. It is the place of hiding death. It is the place of putting away the old. It is not the place of finding our identity or laying up our treasures. We are not to find habitation here ever or to draw life from roots grown down into earthly soil. Our citizenship is in heaven. Our place of life and source of Life is from above in Christ. Until the earth becomes the place to manifest His life for others, we must not touch it or make covenants with it.

We must know that we have been planted into His death. All the old creation was planted into the death of Christ. Our roots into this old creation go no deeper than the old man that was crucified and put away forever. If you are crucified with Christ, then you have lost all vitality to draw out from the earth as a source. The only source the earth becomes is a place of planting the old man into Christ’s death every time that he appears here as our identity or source. On the earth, things manifest constantly, for the earth is a place of manifestation in many ways. But until it is Christ that is manifesting on earth as He is in heavenly places, we need to bury everything that is not His appearing into the death of Christ. The earth is the place where our sinful fruit appears and so it is here that we must choose to bury it all in Christ’s death.

The place of burial is not the place of resurrection. The body that was sown is not the same as the body that is raised. The first man is of the earth, earthy; but the second man is the Lord from heaven (I Cor. 15). The place of losing our life is not the place to find our life, but some love their lives in this world. We are not looking to find our life down here but actively seeking to lose our life down here so that we might find it in Christ. Our citizenship is in heaven in Christ and no longer found in the earth. Our flesh needs to be wrapped in burial cloths rather than adorned and ministered unto. The Cross happened but it must be applied through our active faith on a daily and constant level.

The Spirit of The Bride In Burial

*“Set your affections on things above, for you are dead
and your life is hid with Christ in God” (Col. 3:3).*

The earth is where we lose our life to bring forth His. The earth is for burial, not for finding our life. We only find our life IN CHRIST above the earth. Yet only those that love Him (Lamb's wife) will find Him, for only they will look in the RIGHT PLACE. They will know where to look because their affections are set above the earth and not ON it. The Bride will love His appearing and find her life in Him because she does not need to appear with her portion down here. The temporal is not her realm of treasure, therefore she does not search the temporal realm of the earth for her treasures. She searches the House from above to find her lost coin (Lk. 15:8-9). Only in Jesus does she find all that she holds as precious. He is what is valuable to her and nothing else.

The Bride knows where to look to find Him (above). She knows where to look to find herself (in His appearing). She knows where not to find herself (in the body of death) but to allow the earth to facilitate her burial. Rather than making unions with dirt in the earth, (the Bride is not dirt but bone of His bone), she buries the dirt-man and hides in Christ's death whenever that man appears. She builds only on the Rock of the risen Christ. What does she build there? Her identity. She lays up all her treasures in Him alone.

The Bride heart makes the earth a cocoon, not a home. She does not walk here (like the caterpillar), she dies here, and is buried to this realm. Her appearance manifests only when she transforms as the creature from above that she is in God's heart in the resurrection. She is separated from the earth and joined to Christ from above. She walks as a sojourner on the earth.

The spirit of the Bride redeems the earth from absolute corruption. She has Life because she has died to this place and brought above Life down here. In Christ to her is a place where her affections are set. Because her heart has a place in Him she is free to leave the earth and allow death to work in all areas.



*“To the Bride, in Christ is the place
where her affections are set.”*

Death Rejected Until Treasure Is In Heaven

Hezekiah was one of Israel's best kings. He did so much to help the people of God and restore the Lord's honor in the Land. This man was responsible for bringing a conduit of water into the stronghold of Jerusalem so that even under the condition of a siege, their water would be sure (II Kings 20:20). In so many respects, this man was used powerfully by God. Yet at the end of his days when it was time for him to die... he wanted to remain alive. His motivation to continue living was not evil as some would define evil, yet because he wanted to live Hezekiah opened the door for the Babylonian captivity and brought forth one the most wicked kings to ever rule in Israel (Is. 39:6, II Kings 21:2). All of this because Hezekiah still loved his life in the earth. He had treasure down here. This is made evident through the scriptures where immediately after fifteen more years of life were granted he was found showing all his treasures in the house of God to the Babylonians (Is. 39:1-2).

Whether it be as small as a stone or as holy as a vessel from the temple, we are not to become attached to the earth or find our treasure here. If we do, even in the things of God like Hezekiah did, we will not find our place in the resurrection for fear of losing our place in the things of God in the earth. How can we truly bury something that still appears in our heart? The smallest pebble will become as a millstone around our neck if it begins to capture our affections. And yet the earth will become as light as the weight of a pebble if it no longer is where our treasure is found.

Walk As A Good Soldier

"Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affair of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (II Tim. 2:3-4).

We become entangled in the old life, the one that was crucified and put away in Christ's death and burial. We feel bound to the earth and our own frailties because the soul of man is constantly aware of himself. We can become overwhelmed with our needs, emotions and weaknesses, but we must learn to die to them as a soldier that is carrying his weapon – the Cross. We must apply this weapon to our souls and the old man daily, never "leaving home" without it. We will either die to self or die in battle. As we cleave to this sword by embracing the preaching of the Cross, then by faith we will stand for God in the face of the enemy of our own flesh, fear and

shame. We must detach, not in the sense of passivity, but by allowing the circumcision of Christ to detach us from the old man. This is not the work of the flesh, but faith working as it reckons on the finished work of the operation of God that was made without the hands of human effort. We must become armed for battle, not in the sense of overcoming sin and death, but in the reality of dealing with the old man in true knowledge and according to the victory of the Cross.

All of us will face the entangling forces of our own lives in this world. We must learn to hate our life in this world and set our affections on things above where our life is hid with Christ in God, for we are dead. We are not alive unto our flesh and the old man, we are crucified with Christ and alive unto God through Him. We must arm our mind with the reality of this and relate to the old as that which is crucified and put away forever through the Cross of Christ. Some may have great plans and visions of Kingdom expansion, but there will not be any governmental increase of Christ without the Cross overtaking all of the old that yet remains in our identity and heart. There must be a deeper application of the Cross in our lives. We must allow the second circumcision to do its work and yield to a sharp knife that can get the job done. The preaching of the Cross is the power of God to them that believe, and the Word of God is like a sharp knife able to cut asunder the old that the new may come forth. If we are dead and our Life is now Christ, then it is time to awaken from all slumber unto the reality of what is true in Him and should therefore be true in us as the very vehicle of His Life.

It is not that we in ourselves are strong, but that we choose to cleave to the finished work of the Cross, even as Ruth was found cleaving to Naomi. David had a mighty man named Eleazar the son of Dodo (II Sam. 23:9). This man cleaved to his sword as Philistine after Philistine attacked him. (A Philistine represents the flesh.) He defied the Philistine army by not letting go of the work of the Cross but wielding it as the mighty overcoming sword that it becomes in the hands of anyone who will hold it by faith and apply it to every piece of flesh that comes its way. He was much like his King, David, who also used His sword and cut off the head of Goliath, another Philistine who tried to defy the armies of the living God.

We must not drop our sword! **We may grow weary and at times have no more strength to swing... but hold on to it, cleave to it and never let go of the reality that you are crucified with Christ!** Being mighty in battle is simply the good fight of faith in what the operation of God has already accomplished. Our triumph is in the Lord and in His victory we must, even after having done all, stand.

In Conclusion

The final thought that I would like to present in this booklet is simply this: Where is our heart? Wherever our heart is, our treasure will be there also. We cannot let go of a life we still love. We will never surrender our old life to the work of the Cross if we are secretly holding onto it somewhere. For all the wonderful and powerful truths concerning reckoning, knowing, and mortifying to work they must be first mixed with faith that functions by love.

If our hearts are not fully in the place of separating all things unto God through His Cross, then we have the dearness of the Holy Spirit who will draw us and lift up Christ in such a way that will captivate our hearts. He longs to draw us so that we can run, even like Ruth did. We will then be good soldiers unable to become snared by the entanglements of this life. We will run the race without weights drawing us back down to the old life. We will be liberated unto our heavenly identity so that we might fully embrace the glorious new life that is even now completely ours in Christ.***

Scriptural References

Romans 6:3-6 *“And do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? For we are buried together with Him by baptism into death, that as Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin may be destroyed, to the end that we may serve sin no longer.”*

Colossians 2:11-12 *“In Whom also you are circumcised with circumcision not made by hand, in despoiling of the body of the flesh, but in the circumcision of Christ. Buried with Him in baptism, in Whom also you are risen again by the faith of the operation of God, Who hath raised Him up from among the dead.”*

Colossians 3:1-5 *“If however you have risen with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, enthroned at God's right hand. Give your minds to the things that are above, not to the things that are on the earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ appears--He is our true Life--then you also will appear with Him in glory. Therefore put to death your earthward inclinations.”*

Romans 7:2-4 *“For the married woman to the living husband has been bound by the law, and if the husband may die, she hath been free from the law of the husband; so then, the husband being alive, an adulteress she may be called if she may become another man's; and if the husband may die, she is free from the law, so as not to be an adulteress, having become another man's. So that, my brethren, ye also were made dead to the law through the body of the Christ, for your becoming another's, who out of the dead was raised up, that we might bear fruit to God.”*

Personal Translation of Scriptural References

Re-write your own paraphrase of these scriptures that helps you to understand and explain what they are saying in relation to the things you are learning.

Romans 6:3-6

Colossians 2:11-12

Colossians 3:1-5

Romans 7:2-4

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Study Questions

1. In what ways does embracing the Cross require a certain heart condition and not just agreeing with a doctrinal truth?
2. Write a one page essay commenting on this statement; “In their journey Naomi and Ruth are bound together in the Cross, they walk in a covenant of death and burial as they cleave to an identity that can only be found in Christ”.
3. Is it possible to emotionally respond to the preaching of the Cross while actually refusing to follow in the way of Cross? How does Orpah reveal this possibility to us? In what ways can we miss opportunities of growing in the Lord by responding like Orpah to the Cross in our lives?
4. Explain this statement in a one page essay; “Like Orpah, we can relate passionately to the thought of entering into our new life, and yet without cleaving to the Cross we will still return to the house of our dead husband”
5. Write a one page essay on the purpose and need for burial.
6. Explain this statement, “Our journey to “Boaz” cannot even begin until we make the heart determination to reckon our old man dead”.
7. Write a two paragraph comment on this statement, “We cannot afford to come out of the Stronghold of Jesus to identify with our old self-life under any circumstance”.
8. According to Romans 6:6, what is it that we are supposed to know?
9. Write a one page essay on this statement, ““Knowing” is a continual awareness of our death with Christ in such a way that will constantly affect our identity. It goes beyond head knowledge and reaches into our heart identity”.

10. Why is it important to keep all that is of the old in burial until the Resurrection Himself brings us forth in newness of life?
11. Explain what the caterpillar weaving a cocoon is a picture of. In practical terms, what heart determinations has this caterpillar come to in order to choose this path? In what ways does this speak to our hearts and condition in relationship to the work of the Cross in our lives?
12. How can we truly bury something that still appears in our heart? What was King Hezekiah's sin? How did it effect the future generations?
13. In what ways can we cleave to the finished work of the Cross? According to Second Timothy, what are some characteristics of a good soldier?
14. Write a two page essay explaining what this statement means to you, "We may grow weary and at times have no more strength to swing... but we must hold on to it, cleave to and never let go of the reality that we are crucified with Christ".
15. Summarize the ways in which you are beginning to understand that burial is an important and necessary part of the work of the cross in our lives.

