

OUR UNION WITH CHRIST

By Mike Forest

"But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." (1 Cor. 6:17).

One of the most essential truths for the child of God to grasp and to hold on to by faith is the union of the believer to Christ. It is no longer me living the Christian life, but it is Christ in me, who is now living His life in me and through me.

One of the reasons that many of us are so frustrated in our Christian experience is that we are trying to live the Christian life in the power of the flesh. The flesh and the self life can never live up to the standard that the Word of God has set before us. It seems as if the standard has been set too high, and that it is impossible for us to live this life.

The truth of the matter is that it is indeed impossible for us to live this life out of ourselves, but what is impossible with men is possible with God. Jesus Christ is the only one that has ever lived the Christian life in perfection, and this truth has not changed. Only Christ in us can live the Christian life. This means that I have to be removed so that Christ can live His life in me.

"I am crucified with Christ and it is no longer I that lives, but it is Christ that lives in me." (Gal.2:20). It is imperative that we see the truth of our identification with Christ in His death. When Christ went to the cross not only did He bear our sin, but the whole Adamic race died in Christ. We were crucified with Christ. We were in Him and His death was our death. We cannot crucify ourselves. The flesh can never cast out the flesh. "**Knowing this that our old man has been crucified with Him.**" (Romans 6:6). Deliverance from the self life only comes through death. We have been made one with Christ in His death.

Not only were we crucified and buried with Christ, but we were made alive in Him. "**And you hath He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins.**" (Eph.2:1). The resurrection of Christ was our resurrection also. Not only have we been given a new life in Christ, but we have been raised up with Him and made to sit in heavenly places in Christ. "**But God who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us. Even when we were dead in sins, hath made us alive together with Christ. And has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.**" (Eph.2:5,6).

The great truths of our identification with Christ in His death and resurrection have not only put an end to the sin question, but have also put an end to the question of the self life. It is no longer I, but Christ.

It is no longer I that is on the throne, but Christ now is in sovereign control of my life. The Christian life cannot be split up into me doing my own thing and giving a part of my life, part of my time, part of my attention to Christ. The Christian life is Christ. He is the

head and we are the body. We have been made bone of His bone. It is Christ that is now on the throne of our hearts. He is the one that is in charge and is calling the shots. It is no longer two separate lives that are being lived, but it is one life, "His life."

"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church." (Eph. 5:31,32). Christ and the Church are one. The Church is the fullness of Christ.

"For as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ." (1Cor.12:12).

We can no longer live the Christian life in independence from Christ, anymore than one member of our body is independent of the other members. Christ is our very life. It is in Him that we live, and move, and have our being.

"I am the vine and you are the branches. He that abides in me and I in Him, the same brings forth much fruit, for without me you can do nothing." (John 15:5). We have been grafted into Christ, and our very life is dependent upon abiding in Christ and partaking of the continuous supply of life that is ours through our union with Christ.

God's purpose for every child of God is that we would be conformed into the image and likeness of His Son. This does not mean that we are to strive within ourselves to be more like Jesus. Remember, self has already been given the death blow, for "I have been crucified with Christ." The reason that we can be conformed to the very image and likeness of Jesus is because we have been made partakers of the divine nature. (1Peter 1:4).

The prayer that Jesus prayed before He was crucified was not only for those men that were the disciples of Jesus, but for the Church was this prayer prayed.

"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also that shall believe in me through their word. That they all may be one, as thou Father are in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou has sent me. And the glory that thou has given me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one. I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, that the world may know that thou has sent me, and has loved them as thou has loved me." (John 17:20-23).

In His Love,
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THE SIMPLICITY OF CHRIST

By Doug Fortune

“But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your MINDS should be corrupted from the SIMPLICITY that is in Christ.”(2 Cor.11:3).

I believe we need to back up to 2Cor.10:3-5 to gain the context for the above verse. And in reality, the context for these well known verses about pulling down strongholds, etc. is concerning the spiritual authority of the apostle to execute this warfare. I'm NOT saying that believers who are not apostles can't execute this warfare, but apostles are particularly graced for it. The issue at hand is the MIND being corrupted from the SIMPLICITY in Christ by false apostles. Don't worry, God isn't saying you have to be a simpleton... THAT was actually the problem because the people were believing false apostles! The word translated simplicity is haplotes in Greek, and means SINGLENES; it is derived from haplous, meaning FOLDED TOGETHER or single, Paul is saying that we are to be folded together or single IN Christ. Wasn't this the very prayer of Jesus in John 17:21 “...so that they may all be ONE just as You, Father are in Me and I in You, that they also may be ONE IN US... I IN THEM and YOU IN ME...”. Consider 1Cor.6:17, “But the person who is united to the Lord becomes ONE SPIRIT with Him...” and 1Cor.12:12-13, “...just as the body is a UNITY and yet has many parts, and all the parts though many, form only ONE body, SO IT IS WITH CHRIST... For by ONE SPIRIT we were all baptized into ONE BODY, and all made to drink of ONE SPIRIT...”. THIS is the simplicity or singleness IN CHRIST... becoming ONE with Him.

I realize that there are many good, well intentioned Christians who probably shudder at those words, ‘becoming ONE with Christ’, thinking them to be blasphemous, but according to Paul (in the very next verse after speaking of this simplicity) to preach anything else is to “...preach another Jesus than the One we preached....receive a different spirit from the Spirit you are received...”(2 Cor.11:4). The reason this idea of ONENESS with Christ may be offensive to some is because of religious strongholds of the mind, arguments and high things that exalt themselves against the true KNOWLEDGE of God (2 Cor.10:5). The word translated knowledge there is gnosis in Greek; it comes from the word ginosko which means to know, feel perceive, understand, and also in the Hebrew mind it was often used as a term referring to the intimacy of a husband and wife, “Adam KNEW Eve and she conceived’... the idea of the ONENESS of a husband and wife, the two become ONE flesh.

Unfortunately most of our modern dispensationalists have taken the marriage supper of the Lamb in Rev.19 and pushed it off into some future time robbing us of the present fulfillment, when in reality that is what we just read about in 1Cor.12:12-13... ONE body, ONE spirit, being JOINED to the Lord! False religious arguments of the mind declare to us that there is NO WAY we can become ONE with Christ, at least not till we die and live in the sweet by and by! I declare to you that that religious stronghold of the mind is

anti(instead-of)Christ and I cast it down now!... I speak a release of the abiding anointing within you to bring the REVELATION of the KNOWLEDGE of the glory of the Lord, His glory rising within YOU as the waters cover the sea!!! I declare to you that you have the MIND of Christ! I speak to the god of this world, the Adam nature that has brought blindness to the mind, and to the 'rulers of darkness', those spiritual entities that obscure the Light of TRUTH, and I command that power be LOOSED off the mind of the reader that Light of the gospel of the GLORY OF CHRIST shine forth for the KNOWLEDGE of the glory of God!

Friends, I happen to believe the prophets Isaiah and Habakkuk as they declare that "...the earth shall be FILLED with the KNOWLEDGE of the GLORY of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea."(Heb.2:14; Is.11:9). As I write these words I am looking at the ocean waves surging in front of me (we are on the Gulf of Mexico right now), and NOTHING can stop the waters from covering the sea! Seas are symbolic of peoples and nations, waters are symbolic of the IMMERSION of baptism (not just physical water baptism); "For as many as were baptized INTO CHRIST - into a spiritual UNION and communion with Christ... have put on, CLOTHED YOURSELVES with CHRIST. There is now NO DISTINCTION... for you are all ONE IN CHRIST."(Gal.3:27-28). Indeed, as individuals in every nation come into the KNOWLEDGE of being IMMERSED in Christ, becoming ONE with and IN CHRIST, this IS the fulfillment of the WATERS covering the SEA... and the earth IS being FILLED with the Glory of the Lord!

I am not looking for God to evacuate His people off the planet and then destroy His creation, rather I am looking as '...nations shall come to YOUR light, and kings to the brightness of YOUR rising... the abundance of the SEA shall be turned to YOU...' (Is.60:3,5). I am looking to a Stone cut out without human hands that grows into a Great Mountain made up of Living Stones that fills the whole earth!(Dan.2:34-35; 1Pet.2:5). I am looking to the ultimate fulfillment of Gen.1:27-28 where we read that "...God created man in His OWN IMAGE, in the image and LIKENESS of God He created him; MALE AND FEMALE he created THEM. And God blessed them and said to them, Be fruitful, multiply, and FILL THE EARTH and SUBDUE IT...".

Let us not allow our minds to be corrupted from the SIMPLICITY or ONENESS with Christ and be as the 'double minded' man we read of in James chapter one. We read of him in verse 8 and also in verse 23-24... he is living with a DUALITY of image. Most interpret these verses of 'hearing and doing' in a context of observing a law; it was never intended that way. The context is receiving the ENGRAFTED WORD, Christ IN US... Him living His Life through us has the power to bring FULL SALVATION to our SOUL (mind, will, emotions), it is NOT hearing a law and obeying it! (Yes, obedience is imperative in the life of the believer, but this is not the context of the verse.) For that ENGRAFTED WORD speaks within us that we are the righteousness of God IN Christ; that IN Christ we are a NEW CREATION with OLD things passed away; that the fullness of the Godhead dwells IN us; that we are seated in heavenly places at the right hand of God IN Christ; that we behold in the mirror the GLORY of the Lord and are transformed into HIS IMAGE. The corrupted mind of the 'double minded' man in his DUALITY hears who the Engrafted Word says he is, yet refuses to believe it and be a DOER. The word for DOER, poites in Greek, is from poieo which means to make or do, abide, agree.

We are to ABIDE IN and AGREE with who the Engrafted Word says we are... THIS is the perfect law of LIBERTY spoken of in the next verses. This word liberty comes from the Greek word eleutheros- meaning unrestrained, as a citizen not a slave, exempt from obligation or liability. A 'double minded' man operates from a position of restraint and obligation; this is the person that RELIGION produces... he is always having to restrain his will and is motivated to do things because he feels obligated to. The one who is living in the SIMPLICITY of ONENESS with Christ has NO will other than the will of God and is motivated by the opportunity to be a vessel through which Christ can manifest Himself. This is the freedom of SIMPLICITY or ONENESS with Christ.

We must 'discern the Body' and understand that the Body (us) cannot operate apart from the Head (Jesus), can have no will other than the Head. This is the DUALITY that the serpent introduced to Eve in the garden and this DUALITY is still the tool of the adversary as many are feeding from the Tree of Knowledge of Good AND Evil.

Let us not allow our MINDS to be corrupted by the DUALITY of the serpent, rather let us embrace the ONENESS with and in CHRIST that Jesus prayed for... let us not preach 'another Jesus'... let us truly BE the manifestation of Christ in the earth!

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