The Christ-Life

The Appropriation of the Living Savior

(Selected Scriptures from Colossians)

4/24/2011

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(Jesus <u>RESIDES</u> in the believer's life providing us with Hope, Maturity, and Energy to do His Will)

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Introduction: Colossians 1:18

Christ as "Head" of the church body does that which the head of a physical body does.

The Head controls and directs the impulses and actions of the Body. (the body is submissive to the Head and responsive to the Head).

Without the Head, the body would be dead. Without Christ, there would be no church Body.

No man on earth is the Head of the church. Popery is a great abomination because it robs Christ of Headship. Perhaps the reason the Pope is the head of the RCC is because Jesus isn't! That system is in no way connected to the Head - Christ!

"The beginning" - lit. the beginner; the originator; the premiere initiator. Christ began the Church, He gave it its beginning.

"Firstborn from the dead" - Christ as the head is preeminent over those Christians who will come back alive again from the dead. he has full authority over death and the grave (Rev. 1:18 - "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.")

Paul is not saying that Jesus was the first person to be raised from the dead, for he was not (EX: Lazarus - Jn. 11). But He is the most important of all who have been raised from the dead (Wiersbe, p. 52).

He is also the first One to rise from the dead with a glorified body.

Preeminence = first place

I. The Living Christ <u>INDWELLS</u> You (Col. 1:27-29)
(Jesus <u>RESIDES</u> in the believer's life providing us with Hope, Maturity, and Energy to do His Will)

V. 27
"To whom" - to the saints (v. 26).
"God would" = God desired, wished. It was and is God's will to make known His riches.

What is the "mystery"?
1. The <u>unity</u> (oneness) that <u>believers have with Christ</u> (v. 27b) (cp. Eph. 5:32; cp. Rom. 6:1ff).

2. The <u>unity</u> (oneness) that <u>Jews and Gentiles</u> have in the Body of Christ (via our union to Christ (Eph. 3:1-8).

"Christ in You" –

Yes, the Risen Christ dwells in those who know Him and Savior.

Galatians 2:20
I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but <u>Christ liveth in me</u>: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Col. 1:27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is <u>Christ in you</u>, the hope of glory:

John 14:18-20
I will not leave you comfortless: <u>I will come to you</u>. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and <u>I in you</u>.

"Christ <u>in you</u>" means:
You now share His <u>presence</u> (Mt. 28:20; Heb. 13:5)
You now share His <u>purity</u> (Rom. 6:3-4, 11)
You now share His <u>resurrection</u> (Rom. 6:5; 8:10-11)
You now share His <u>life</u> (Rom. 6:8)
You now share His <u>fellowship</u> (Rev. 3:20)
You now share His <u>inheritance</u> (Rom. 8:17)

A. **Providing <u>Confidence</u>** (v.27b)

God's mystery is:

1. "Rich" -It's something with <u>joys and life</u> that <u>never end</u> (the word "riches" refers to God's <u>plenteous</u> blessings in Christ - cp. Eph. 1:3)

2. "Glorious"-It's something to <u>look forward</u> to in the future. The "glory" refers to our future "hope of glory" (i.e. the Resurrection - I Cor. 15:51ff - "Behold I show you a mystery")

3. For the "Gentiles" - lit. "the nations" - It's something for all nations

4. "Certain"-It's something that God <u>guarantees</u>. "Christ in you, the hope (confidence) of glory"

B. **Providing <u>Maturity</u>** (v.28)

V. 28
"Whom we preach" - the message Paul proclaimed (announced) was singular: "Christ!" (I Cor. 2:2)

"Warning" = "noutheteo" - to put into the mind; to confront one's thinking and to correct one's thoughts.

"Teaching" = indoctrinating

To teach in "all wisdom" is to teach about Christ, because it is in Christ that "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" reside (Col. 2:3).

Paul's <u>purpose</u> (his <u>motive</u>, his <u>goal</u>) = "That we might present (as an offering to God) every man perfect (complete; <u>mature</u>) in Christ"
Paul's whole life and ministry was wrapped up in this goal: <u>mature</u> believers.

Are you burdened that others <u>grow</u> in Christ? . . . That they become stable, secure, and solid?

C. Providing <u>Power</u> (v.29)
v. 29

"Whereunto" = unto which goal of seeing spiritually mature disciples... "I also labor"

The words "striving" (1:29) and "conflict" (2:1) are athletic terms. They refer tot he strenuous effort put forth by an athlete to win a contest (cp. Wiersbe, p. 68).

"Labor" = to toil to the point of <u>sweating</u>; to the point of <u>exhaustion</u>.

"Striving" = Paul's labor involved "striving" or intense struggling against the host of evil (cp. Eph. 6:12).

We derive our English word "agony" from the Gk. word "agonizomai" translated "striving."

Paul's struggle for the Colossians was no doubt in the matter of <u>prayer.</u>

Prayer is the most intense practice you will ever do.

II. The Living Christ COMPLETES You (Col. 2:6-10)

(Jesus FILLS the believer's life with all that is necessary for successful living)

V. 6

How did the Colossians receive Christ? ANSWER: By faith in Him (v. 5 & 7).

Therefore, how are they to walk in Him? ANSWER: By faith in Him!

"We walk by faith, not by sight"

"The just shall live by faith" (Hab. 2:4; Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:38).

One is not only saved by faith, but he lives the Christian life by faith. From start to finish, our Christian life is a life of faith!

V. 7

"Rooted" - to be deeply rooted in Christ. The idea is that of long roots that have been imbedded and intertwined permanently around Christ never to be removed.

"Rooted" - perfect, passive, participle -

"Perfect tense" = we were rooted in the past (at conversion) and thereby remain firmly settled and stable in the present.

"Passive tense" = it was God who rooted us, not we ourselves. Give Him the glory!

A tree that has been firmly rooted will have three features:

1.Growth - "built up" = it is via our rootedness in Christ that we are continually edified and matured.

2.Stability - "stablished" - it is via our "rootedness" in Christ that we have any true strength at all. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

3.Abundant fruitfulness = "abounding with thanksgiving" = overflowing with praise and thanks to God for all He gave us in Christ.

Psalm 1:3 - "And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

V. 8

"Beware" - be on the look out; keep your spiritual eyes open.

"Spoil you" - to carry off as booty, or as a captive. The word was used in the sense of "to kidnap"; and here is the figure of carrying someone away from the truth into the slavery of error (Reinecker, p. 473).

"Philosophy" - lit. to be fond of man's wisdom (Ex. Acts 17).

Look out for those who will lead you away by using their own ideas as the bait.

"Vain deceit" - empty or hollow trickery. Words without reality; promises without truth; messages without Christ at the core.

"Tradition" - that which is given over from one to another.

"Tradition" is a great danger to true Godliness. it unperceivably becomes a substitute for God's truth. Ex: Jesus' words - Mark 7:1-13 (*v. 7-9); cp. Mt. 15:2-6.

"The rudiments of the world" - the elementary ABC's of the world. The basics to life and success that the world offers.

You are <u>COMPLETE</u> in Him -
Don't <u>FEEL DEFICIENT</u> (v. 9-10)

V. 9

"In Him" - in Christ (v. 8)

"<u>Dwelleth</u>" - to reside; to be at home; all that you need has its home in Christ. He is the place where fullness dwells.

"All the fullness" - Christ is missing <u>nothing</u>. Everything that the Father has, Christ has, because of his oneness with the Father (Jn. 10:30) and his equality to the Father (Phil. 2:6).

"Godhead" = Godness; divine nature or essence.

"Bodily" - Christ, though He became man and even now appears as man in Heaven, houses his <u>complete deity</u> in physical form. While on earth, His body veiled from human view His divine nature, but it was within, though many did not recognize it.

V. 10

"Complete" = lit. <u>filled to completion</u>. Because of our <u>union</u> with Christ (which is Paul's point in the context - cp. 1:27; 2:12=13, etc.), we are lacking nothing in Christ. He is everything we will ever need.

Because Jesus lacks nothing, we lack nothing!

By being united to Christ (via the Holy Spirit's baptism - I Cor. 12:13; Rom. 6:1ff; Col. 2:12-13), we share His way, His truth, His life.

Principality - rulership; Christ is at the <u>top</u> of everything!

Power - authority; Christ is <u>over</u> everything.

III. The Living Christ MOTIVATES You (Col. 3:1-4)
(Jesus REDIRECTS the believer's life so that we live with Eternity's Values)

"If ye then be risen with Christ" -

Paul, writing to Christians at Colosse, speaks of them as being already resurrected with Christ.

"Risen with Christ" = co-raised; jointly resurrected.

How is it possible that believers are already risen?

Answer: Our future resurrection is so guaranteed; so sure to happen, that God speaks of it in the past tense.

How is the believer's resurrection so certain?

Answer: Because of our oneness with Jesus Christ. Because of our union with Him.

Christ and the believer have been married (Rom. 7:1ff) or merged.

ILLUS: Marriage united a man and woman together in such a way that what one has now belongs to the other.

Her bills are my bills; my checkbook is her checkbook (and vice-versa). The same is true for the house, car, food, property, talents, etc. We wear the same last name, share the same burdens, joys, and victories, etc.

**So it is with Christ and His bride. This mysterious union described in Ephesians 5:30-32 reveals the incomprehensible truth that the believer and Christ hold all things common.

God views Christ and the believer as being together; one; "joint heirs" (Rom. 8:16-17).

This union is called a mystery (Eph. 5:32) that is spiritual
(I Cor. 12:13), and living (John 15:4).

Note the emphasis on oneness with Christ in verses 1-4 -

"Risen with Christ" (v. 1)

"Dead (with Christ)" (v. 3; 2:20)
"Hid with Christ" (v. 3)
"Appear with Him" (v. 4)

We benefit in Christ's death and resurrection.

SEE previous context:

--Col. 2:6 (we received Him by faith, so we are to walk daily with Him by faith)

--Col. 2:9 - Christ lacks nothing (all power and blessing are His)

--Col. 2:10 - Therefore, those who belong to Christ lack nothing

We are complete in Him because of our union with Him (v. 12) (SEE: Ephes. 2:4-7)

2:12 - "Co-burial" (baptism = Spirit baptism [Rom. 6:4-5; I Cor. 12:13])

2:12 - "Co-resurrection"

2:13 - "Co-quickened"

A. Remembering Your Oneness With Christ Will Change Your: PRIORITIES IN THE PRESENT (v. 1-3a)

V. 1

Your oneness with the risen Christ is the greatest incentive to live a different lifestyle (cp. Rom. 7:6; I Cor. 15:45; II Cor. 3:6).

"Seek" - to live zealously for something. (present tense - to keep seeking, every day).

"Above" = the Heavenly, the spiritual, the eternal

"To seek those things which are above" means to center your life on your ascended (Eph. 4:10), glorified (Jn. 17:5; Phil. 2:9) Christ! (SEE: Walvoord, Bible Knowledge Commentary, Vol. II, p. 680)

"Things above" - our # 1 priority affection is to be toward God! (SEE: mark 12:29-30)

"Where Christ sitteth" - the fact that Christ is sitting (at the right hand of the Father) proves two things:

1)He is alive
2)His work is complete (cp. Heb. 1:3, 10:10-12)
The "right hand" is a position of power and authority (what the Father does, He does by the power of His "right hand" - Ex. 15:6, 23; Ps. 89:13, 118:16; Is. 48:13); and this is where Jesus is seated (Ps. 110:1; Mk. 16:19; Lk. 22:69; Acts 7:55; Rom. 8:34; Eph. 1:20; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3, 8:1, 10:12, 12:2; I Pet. 3:22).

The point is: If you are one with Jesus and if you share His life (v. 4), then you should live for Him and seek to please Him.

We need to look at our values in light of our oneness with Christ.

What is important to us and what should be important are not always the same.

"We seek those things which are above when in heart and spirit we are truly sojourners in this world and are not bound to it" (Calvin, cited by Vaughan, p. 90).

V. 2

The first word ("seek") suggested striving; the second word ("set affections") suggests concentrating (Walvoord, p. 680).

"Set your affection" - lit. Focus your thoughts; put your mind.

What you spend your time thinking about reveals where your priorities are.

"The sure safeguard against seeking things below, is not to set the mind upon them" (Eadie, Colossians, p. 91).

To set our thoughts on things above does not mean that we are to withdraw ourselves from all of the activities of this world and do nothing but contemplate eternity and heaven . . . But as Barclay explains, "There will be this difference-- from now on the Christian will see everything in the light and against the background of eternity. He will no longer live as if this world was all that mattered; he will see this world against the background of the larger world of eternity" (Vaughan, citing Barclay, p. 91).

--What people talk about reveals what they think about (where their affection is).

--Where people go reveals what they think about.

--What people do reveals what they think about.

What are some things that are upon the earth? (SEE: v. 5)

We are so united to Christ, that where we go, He goes; what we do, we in a spiritual sense bring Christ into the practice (I Cor. 6:15-17); when it is a sinful practice, we grieve the Spirit of God (Eph. 4:30).

"Not on things on the earth" -

SEE: Matthew 6:19-21, 33

Our # 1 goal in life is to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and the temporal necessities will be added to us (Mt. 6:33).

SEE: I Tim. 6:6-12, 17-18.

Eternal vs. Temporal -

II Cor. 4:18 - "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

When we keep in mind our oneness with Christ, we will have this attitude: "What is important to Jesus is important to me. What is on His heart is on mine. Where His focus is, there do I want mine to be."

When your affection is on things above, you will have time for God.

You will have time to read His Word; you will have time to do His work; You will have time to seek His face in prayer; you will have time to assemble with His people, etc.

(The reason why "Easter" is the only time many go to church is because during the other 51 Sundays of the year - they are busy seeking the things that are on the earth.")

V. 3

"For ye are dead" - cp. 2:20 - "dead with Christ."

How is the believer "dead"?

He is dead to that which Christ is dead to. He is dead in relationship to the O.T. Law, dead in relationship to sin; dead in relationship to the world system (2:20).

The believer has already died and been raised to live a new life

II Cor. 5:14 - "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead."

Gal. 2:20 - "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I , but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me."

Cp. Rom. 6:3-11.

A story is told about two sisters who enjoyed attending dances and wild parties. Then they were converted and found new life in Christ. They received an invitation to a party and sent their RSVP in these words: "We regret that we cannot attending because we recently died." (Wiersbe, p. 133)

B. Remembering Your Oneness With Christ Will Change Your: <u>OUTLOOK</u> FOR THE FUTURE (v. 3b-4)

V. 3

"Hidden" implies both concealment and safety, both invisibility and security.

The believer is not yet visibly glorified, but he is secure and safe in Christ" (Walvoord, p. 680).

V. 4

The word "hid" (v. 3) is used in contrast to the word "appear" (v. 4).

Our profound oneness with Christ is hidden from our eyes; but one day this reality will be clearly revealed, openly displayed (manifested - Greek phaneroo).

In the mean time, we must accept this reality by faith!

"According to the Apostle Paul, we have <u>already</u> been glorified! (Rom. 8:30). This glory simply has not yet been <u>revealed</u>." (Wiersbe, p. 134).

"Christ . . . is our life" -

Our Savior does not merely give us life, He is our life. He is our eternal life. To have Him is to have life (I Jn. 5:12). To be united with Him is to be fused to the source and essence to life. He is "the life" (Jn. 14:6).

It is said of Jesus: "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men" (Jn. 1:4); Jesus Himself said, "I am the resurrection and the life . . ." (Jn. 11:25). "I am the way , the truth, and the life." (Jn. 14:6)

I Jn. 5:20 - "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

This appearance is describing the Rapture (at which time the resurrection of God's saints also occurs - I Cor. 15:51-54; I Thes. 4:16-18, Rev. 20:4-6.

What is our outlook?

Via our union with Christ, we look forward to a certain Resurrection. Cp. Job's testimony (Job 14:14-15; 19:23-27; (cp. Jn. 5:25).