

CHRIST LIVING AS US

Let our hearts “be comforted being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col. 2:2-3). and hidden riches of secret places” Isaiah 45:3



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FULL ASSURANCE OF FAITH



*Let our hearts “be comforted being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the **full assurance** of understanding to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col. 2:2-3).*

CHAPTER I
CHRIST LIVING AS US



“...Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord are changed from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

— II CORINTHIANS 3:18

Does this phrase, “Christ as us” sound like an elite club with a mantra in which we constantly chant “It is Christ, as us”, as some would say? Or, is this simply the Christian’s “obedience of faith” where by we agree with God’s Word and leap into His precious promises and inherit what is rightfully ours as sons of God? Which one is it? Each person has to decide for himself. To the skeptic it seems like arrogant pride for anyone to

proclaim such a rash statement; to the self-righteous, it seems like an excuse to sin flagrantly; but to the weary and desperate ones who have tried with all their hearts yet failed to live the Christian life, it is fresh air. We have finally inhaled the truth that has set us free from the treadmill of living our own lives. "Christ living as us." How can that be?

Christians know the scripture that says, "*To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ **in you** the hope of glory*" but Christ, **as you???** Where is that in the bible? That is a fair question to ask. Therefore, I intend to jump in and answer it.

Let me start by quoting some familiar verses. Before the Apostle Paul was saved he was on the road to Damascus when a blinding light from heaven shone down on him, and threw him off his horse. He heard the voice of Jesus saying to him, "*Saul, Saul why persecute thou **me**?*" Why did Jesus say that Saul was persecuting him? Wasn't He persecuting the church? Yet Jesus identified Himself **as us**, that is, His body. Jesus didn't just say it one time, He was constantly saying it. In Luke 10:16 He said, "*He that hears you hears **me**; and he that despises you despises **me**; and he that despises me despises him that sent **me**;*" He said in Matthew 10:40, "*He that receives you receives **me**, and he that receives me receives him that sent me;*" He also said in

John 13:20, “*He that receives whomsoever I send receives me; and he that receives me receives him that sent me;*”
 And when Jesus prophesied of His coming in glory in Matthew 25:35-40 He said, “*For I was an hungry, and you gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and you took me in: Naked, and you clothed me: I was sick, and you visited me: I was in prison, and you came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungry, and fed [thee]? Or thirsty, and gave [thee] drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took [thee] in? or naked, and clothed [thee]? Or when saw thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as you have done [it] unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done [it] unto ME.*”

Let me reiterate what Jesus is saying:

- Whoever persecutes the brethren, persecutes ME;
- Whoever hears you, hears ME;
- Whoever despises you, despises ME;
- Whoever receives you, receives ME;
- Whoever takes in strangers, takes in ME;
- Whoever feeds you, feeds ME;
- Whoever gives you drink, gives it to ME;
- Whoever clothes you, clothes ME;
- Whoever is sick, nurses ME;

- Whoever visits you in prison, visits ME in prison.

Is it presumptuous thinking, or simple faith that causes us to believe Jesus when He declared such radical identity statements about us, the redeemed? For me, it was simple faith.

How can I not believe it when again and again Jesus identifies Himself **as** me. Some verses that really clinched it for me are in Ephesians chapter 1 verse 20-23, it says “...*He raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places...And has put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body, **the fullness of Him**, that fills all in all.*” Do we really see what this is saying? We, the body, are the fullness of Christ. I knew that He was our fullness, but this is actually saying that we, the body, are His fullness. Wow, that is too big to comprehend. Yet, how can a body not be its head, and how can a head not be its body? This scripture is saying that we, the body **complete Christ!** Stands to reason, a body can't be complete without a head and a head can't be complete without a body. It seems simple when you think of it like that.

Lets think about this for a minute...We had Satan (Eph. 2:1-3) living in us, and he was living his life out

as us in our unsaved days. Of course we were all blinded to it, yet it was the human me who had to repent for my sins. Why did I have to repent for my sins when it was really Satan producing the sins **as** me? It was because I was yielding myself as an instrument of sin while all along it was Satan manifesting his sin nature through me **as** if it were me.

Even as a Christian, Paul says in Romans 7:17 that when he sins, it is not him doing the sinning, but sin/Satan dwelling in his bodily members. So, it is Satan in our unsaved days living **as** us, and now in our saved days it is Christ living **as** us,¹ but we have never been a just me living as me.

How can we believe that Christ lives as us, when we see things that don't look like Christ as us? Focusing on our behavior makes us crazy and certainly leads us away from believing what Christ says about us. Heb. 12:2 says "*Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.*" Looking "unto" means to look away from something. "*Looking unto*" must mean to keep our inner eye on Christ and not on the circumstances, the appearances or on our behavior. Then, you might ask, doesn't that justify our bad behavior? No, earnest Christian wants to justify his bad behavior. We just want to be changed into the image of Christ and not do the bad behavior. The

way not to sin is certainly not by trying hard not to sin, that doesn't ever work. Then how can it be? Romans 8:29 says that "*we are predestined to be conformed into the image of His Son*". How?? It is simply by beholding your reflection in a mirror, although, it has to be the right image in the mirror.

NOTES:

- i. The exception to, Christ living daily "as us", is when we occasionally slip into sin. Sin is an expression of Satan and not Christ. As we confess it, the blood quickly cleanses us from sin and we continue on the road of faith believing that Christ lives as us.

CHAPTER 2
THE MIRRORING PROCESS



This painting by Caravaggio called "Narcissus" was painted in 1599. It depicts "narcissism" which is derived from a Greek myth. Narcissus was a handsome Greek youth who rejected the desperate advances of a nymph. As

punishment, he was doomed to gaze at himself in a pool of water, and eventually he fell in love with his own reflection. Today's psychologists have used his name to coin the term, "Narcissistic personality disorder."

However this infatuation with one's-self is termed, it is basically an extreme form of being self-absorbed. The Greek lad was so enamored with his own reflection that he, as the story goes, was turned into a flower, which today bears his name. This myth, like most, is pretty wearied, yet ironically the bible says that either Spirit transformation or discouragement and defeat depends entirely on how we image ourselves in a mirror.

Let us see what the Apostle James and the Apostle Paul both say about looking into the mirror. *"If any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass; For he beholds himself, and goes his way, and straightway forgets what manner of man he was. But whoso looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the word, this man shall be blessed in his deed"* (James 1:23-25). And also here is what Paul says in II Corinthians 3:18, *"We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."*

Both James and Paul say that if we look into our own personal identity mirror and see just ourselves, like Narcissus, we will either have false hope in ourselves, or be discouraged and walk away because we have forgotten who we really are. But if we look into our own personal identity mirror and see Christ, who is the perfect principal of liberation, or behold, as Paul says, the glory of the Lord, then we will be transformed from glory to glory.

James says that if we want to be doers of the word we have to simply **“look”** into a mirror and see Christ as our perfect liberation and remain therein. While Paul says if we want to be transformed into the image of Christ, we have to be a **“beholder”** of the Lord’s glory in the looking glass. “Looking” and “beholding” is simple faith. However, regrettably most stumble over the simplicity of it all.

I am reminded of how God dealt with the complaining children of Israel in Numbers 21:5-9. He sent fiery serpents among the people and many died. They cried out for help from Moses. Moses went to God for a solution. The Lord said to Moses, *“Make you a fiery (brazen) serpent, and set it upon a pole; and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looks upon it, shall **live**.”* Of course the serpent represented Satan who was judged on the Cross (John 3:14; John 12:31). So, all the Israelites had to do was

look and live, but some rebelliously would not look and died needlessly.

So it seems to me what these two Apostles are saying is that you have to behold Christ “*face to face*” in the mirror. Although, if you instead see just your own face, you will walk away defeated and unprofitable. But if you look into your mirror and not see yourself as just flesh, but instead by faith see Christ as you then you will see Christ “*face to face*.”

Paul also said in I Corinthians 13, the love chapter, that when spiritual adulthood comes we will see Christ “*face to face*.” Until then we will see in part and know in part, but when we see Christ “*face to face*” we will know even as we are known. The Lord already knows who we really are, but it is never good enough for God to know it, and we not know it (I Cor. 13:11-12). And we won’t know it until we see Christ in our mirror “*face to face*.” It is by a declaration of faith that we are transformed. Christ reveals Himself as the “*inner man*” who presses His glorious face out through our outer face of clay thereby actually living day by day, as us.

It is then that we walk as He walks, talks as He talks, live as He lives. I John 2: 6 says, “*He that says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk, even as He walked.*” And I John 4:17 says, “*Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment;*

*because **AS** He is, so **ARE** we in this world.*” The only way to be as Him in this world is for Christ, to manifest Himself as us.

There it is, we were an instrument of sin as Satan manifested his sins through us as if it were us, and now through the Cross we are joined to Christ and He is manifesting His righteous nature through us, as if it were us, when all along it is really He the Head as us, the body. Where else is Christ going to manifest Himself, if He lives in us? I can only be **as me and you!** The scripture in Eph. 5:30 reveals a great mystery: “*We are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.*” Sounds like “**as us**” to me!

CHAPTER 3
WHAT ABOUT ALL MY DOUBTS?



You might ask yourself, if I can't believe these biblical evidences then what is the alternative? Isn't it, Christ **and** a separate performing me? If that is true, then wouldn't we be slipping back to works again? It is either He as me, or a performing me as me.

I believe that we need a "**re-defined I**," that is, Christ/**I (the real I is Christ expressing Himself as the human me)**. If we think that we are "JUST US," then we are still under the delusion of an Independent-Self; and where there is an independent-self there is self effort; and where there is self-effort there is law; and where there is law there is sin, for "*the strength of sin is the law*" (I Cor. 15:56b).

If we still believe the lie of an “independent-self” the outer law will shout at us, and if we respond to the shouts of the law, we are acting as if we have a life of our own with the human power to fulfill it. Functioning from the lie of independent-self is the root of all sin which gives Satan power over you¹. Why would we respond to the outer law when we know that we have Christ (who fulfills the law perfectly in us)? Faith is simply recognizing that fact. This activates the Holy Spirit’s power in us.

My good friend, Sharon Roy, commented saying that she couldn’t take a leap of faith and say that it was Christ living as her, because she didn’t yet know that she was “*dead*”. She was still identifying herself as an independent self instead of seeing herself as a unified dependent-self. She falsely thought that she was her temptations, fears, and insecurities. She didn’t know that it was Satan manifesting fear in her bodily members. Once she discovered that it was Satan and not her, then she could take a leap of faith and proclaim that Christ lives **as** Sharon, and stand on it when she was tempted otherwise. Sharon knows Christ as us today, and counsels and teaches it to others. God has to make us pretty helpless before we can know that we are “*dead*” and Christ is our life (Col. 3:3-4).

So which will it be? “Christ as you,” or “you as you”? I’m glad you chose “Christ as you,”² because it is impossible for you to be “you as you.” There never has been an independent self in the whole universe except God Himself, that is. All created forms are dependent beings, depending on the One who is all powerful, all knowing, and all sufficient. You know that the human you isn’t God, so doesn’t it stand to reason for you to be a surrendered dependent-self joined to Christ who lives His life as you?

You have never been a **“YOU AS YOU”**! Even the Apostle Paul and Bob Dylan, the singer/song writer, are singing the same song. Bob sings, “Gotta Serve Somebody,” and Paul writes, “You were **slaves** to sin,” and now “you are **slaves** to righteousness” (Romans 6:17-18). You have always been a slave to somebody, and never been free to be “just you.”

Why would we want the defeat of a powerless sinful false self when we can have the power and the wisdom of the resurrected Christ being our life? Could it be that we don’t want to lose ourselves, that is, **THE ONLY SELF WE HAVE EVER KNOWN**? Yet didn’t Jesus say that unless you lose yourself, you can’t find your life (Matt. 16:25)? Is it fear? Does it take you out of your comfort zone? Do you wonder what will keep you from being your own

New Age guru? The New Age teaches that we can trust ourselves...Christ is not telling you to have confidence in yourself (II Cor. 3:8). He is bidding you to trust Him as you. Maybe you think that since you are “just you” then you can keep yourself? Don’t you know that left to yourselves we will commit any sin.³

But, we are not left to ourselves, are we? We are left to the mighty keeping power of “*Christ who is our life*” (Col. 3:4). Isn’t He big enough?

Maybe you are thinking that this “Christ as you” revelation violates who God is to you. Maybe you think...“I have a personal relationship with the Lord and I can’t give that up...” Or, maybe this kind of, “Christ as me” thinking, makes me think that there is no transcendent Lord to pray to. These honest apprehensions are pretty common when we don’t yet understand our union with Christ.

Let us take our answers from our Lord who was the only union man who qualifies as our true prototype. Think about this—Jesus knew His union with His Father and He didn’t give up knowing that His Father was transcendent; or did He give up his prayer life (see John 17); nor did He give up His personal relationship with His Father. So, we don’t give up our relationship with Christ, how absurd, although, we do give up the childish idea that we are

His servants when as mature sons, He calls us His friends (John 15:15). Therefore what we do gain is a greater, fuller, grander, yet mature relationship with Him. Who wouldn't want that?

Knowing that Christ is joined to you, forming the new you, is the basis of the gospel (Gal. 2:20; Rom. 6:4-11; II Cor. 5:21). Jesus came to die as you, so that you can be joined to Him and He might live His life by you, through you, and as you.

Maybe you think it sounds like the New Age error that says "the human is God". The Pharisee's thought that Jesus was saying that too (John 10:33). Jesus never said that He, the Son, was the Father. However He did proclaim that "*the Father and I are one*" (John 10:19), and "*if you have seen me, you have seen the Father*" (John 14:9). He functioned by faith the very same way that we function. Jesus proclaimed that, "*Of my human self I can do nothing*" (John 5:19 & 30), and so do we because we know that it is really Christ living in us, and as us. Christ is the power, **He is** the peace, **He is** the wisdom, **He is** the life, He is the courage, He is the patience, **He is** even our very faith (Gal. 5:22; Gal. 2:20b).

1. Read my booklet "There is No Such Thing as an Independent-self". This booklet will further explain this liberating key.

2. Unfortunately, if you chose “you as you,” you chose Satan as you.
3. “The Keepers Creed” “I will commit any sin left to myself, but I am not left to myself, by faith, Christ **is** keeping me (Brian Coatney and Jude 24).

CHAPTER 4
RESPONDING FAITH



How does that work? We put our faith in Him and He comes back and does the faith-ing through us. You might say to yourself, “*I believe, but help thou my unbelief.*” Then, I recommend that you tell the Lord, I can’t be willing, but “I am willing to be made willing.”⁵ The Lord will take you up on that.

Why can’t we agree with Him and identify ourselves **as forms of Him?** Do you think that the bible is saying that you become Christ? No, it is not saying that. The body can’t say that it becomes the head and neither does the head become the body; however the head can say that it expresses itself as the body, and the body can respond by faith and agree.

Is it unbelief that keeps us Christians from identifying ourselves as a form of Christ? I hope not, because it was unbelief that stopped the Israelites from entering into the promise land, and it could be the same deadly unbelief that causes us not to inherit the precious promises given freely to us by our Lord.

This life is meant to be easy. Like my good friend Brian Coatney says, “it is excruciating at times, but it is easy to walk in the Spirit.” But you might think, “I am full of doubts.” ...Good...faith is built on doubt. Plenty of good doubt and wavering apprehensions are usually the prelude to responding faith.

Think about it, believing the gospel in the first place was a leap of faith. I bet you wondered how you could live up to being a good Christian when you first heard the gospel? And maybe people mocked you saying that you were now “Holier than Thou.” I’m sure all these misconceptions crossed their and your mind. Yet your spirit cried out to God and He met you. You had to leave all the wonderings and reasoning behind and simply believed God. By faith you took Christ, and He took you and saved you.

Knowing Christ as you is another huge leap of faith. You can’t prove it, you can’t reason it all out, and you can’t fully understand how it could be. Yet deep cries out to deep and faith calls you into the unknown. You don’t live any longer; it is Christ living

as you! “I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, **yet not I, but Christ** lives in me and the life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loves me and gave Himself for me” (Galatians 2:20).

Behold Him in your mirror, say it, drink it, and eat Him who is the Truth, and this “*Pearl of Great Price*,” will set you free.

It is Christ as you, or Christ living as if it were you, if that makes you more comfortable!

1. From “Rees Howells Intercessor”, by Norman Grubb

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