

Crucified With Christ (Part III)

November 20, 2005

Galatians 2:20 (NKJV)

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Galatians 2:20 (Living)

I have been crucified with Christ: and I myself no longer live, but Christ lives in me. And the real life I now have within this body is a result of my trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

2 Cor. 5:17 (NKJV)

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

2 Cor. 5:17 (Living)

When someone becomes a Christian, he becomes a brand new person inside. He is not the same anymore. A new life has begun!

Romans 6:5 (Living)

For you have become a part of him, and so you died with him, so to speak, when he died; and now you share his new life and shall rise as he did.

For the past several weeks I have been meditating on the words of the Apostle Paul when he said.... “**I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me;**”

Paul tells me that when I received Christ, I became a new person. I was born again. The person I was before I was born again no longer exists. The old me died and was buried with Christ. I am a new creation. The thing that makes me different than I was before is that Christ now lives within me.

Last week I talked about how Christ not only lives within me but He also does His work through me. We understand that we can do nothing of eternal value unless He does it through us.

John 15:5 (NKJV)

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

Moses was a man who knew God. He was called of God. He knew that he was called to deliver Israel. He was educated. He was gifted. But he had a problem. He was trying to do what God called him to do in his own strength and his own ability. And it didn't work.

Moses tried on his own and failed. He ended up in the desert for forty years. Then He suddenly got a revelation that changed his life and ministry. He saw a burning bush that that continued to burn and burn and burn. He knew it was supernatural.

God spoke to him from that bush and told him..... [8] **.... I have come down to deliver them** out of the hand of the Egyptians....

Notice God said, "**I am going to deliver them.** You are going to be the one speaking to Pharaoh but I am going to tell you what to say."

"You can't do it Moses but I can do it through you."

When Moses went back to stand before Pharaoh, He did nothing on his own. Every plan, every action, every word spoken was given to Moses as he waited on God's instructions. God was the director. Moses was simply the vessel God used.

Last week I told you that if we are going to fulfill the plan and purpose that God has for Elim Church, we are going to have to listen for His directions and do things His way.

Christ never told us to build His church. He said....

Matthew 16:18 (NKJV)

And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock **I will build My church,** and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

Christ is the head of the church. We are His body.

Ephes. 5:30 (NKJV)

For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.

1 Cor. 12:18 (NKJV)

But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased.

1 Cor. 12:27 (NKJV)

Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.

After Christ went back to heaven after His resurrection, He came back to the earth through the Holy Spirit to do His work **through** us.

The 14th Chapter of John is a tremendous chapter. Listen carefully to this conversation between Philip and Jesus.

John 14:8-10 (NIV)

Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us."

[9] Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? [10] Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work.

Notice what Jesus said. I believe this will help us understand how Christ does His work through us.

He said, "I am in the Father and the Father is in Me. When you see me you see the Father. The words I say are not my words but it is the Father living in me who is doing His work through Me."

Then He says.....

John 14:12 (NIV)

I tell you the truth, **anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing.** He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.

John 14:16-20 (NIV)

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever-- [17] the Spirit of truth.you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. [18] I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. [19].....Because I live, you also will live. [20] On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.

Wow! That's powerful!

Just as God was in Christ doing His work through Him, Christ is in us, through the Holy Spirit, doing His work through us!

You and I are the body of Christ. He is doing His work through us! He lives within each of us!

Stay with me. I am going somewhere with this.

The work of Christ here on the earth today involves myriads of needs and millions of ministries and is being accomplished through the multiplied millions of Christians who collectively are His body.

Christ is living His life in us and doing His work through us.

Here's the way it works. Christ in me knows what He wants to accomplish through me. He makes me aware of it and He gives me a burning desire to do it.

Twenty three years ago He made me the pastor of this church. He wanted to raise up a great church in this area, and for whatever reason decided to do it through me. For the last twenty three years I have had a passion to see Elim Church become what God wants it to be. My passion is for this Church. My passion is for a great church to be established right here.

Steve Riggle has a passion to build Grace Community Church. Jabo Green has a passion to build Life Tabernacle. Joel Osteen has a passion to build Lakewood Church, etc.

I don't have a passion to build Life Tabernacle or Lakewood or some other church. And they don't have a passion to build Elim Church. I wish them

well and they wish me well but I don't send offerings to them and they don't send offerings to me.

God saw a need to establish a home for prostitutes in Merrida. He decided to do it through Sherrill Muckelroy. He led her down there. She saw the need. He filled her with a burning desire to meet that need.

I was in downtown Houston the other night and I saw horses pulling carriages. The horses had blinkers on so they were not able to see all the people and traffic around them. God puts blinkers on us so that we can only see what He chooses to look at through our eyes.

I see one problem, and you see another one. The fact that we see the problem and have a passion to do something about it is proof that Christ is in us reaching out to meet that need through us. We are Jesus to that need.

The same is true of all the ministries of the church. There are those who see the need and have a passion to minister to the youth. And others who see the need and have a passion to minister to children. There are those who see the need and have a desire to sing in the choir and play in the orchestra.

There are those who see the need and have a desire to visit the sick and others who see the need and have a desire to do all the other dozens of things that must be done. God has set each one of us in the church and given each of us a different passion for each ministry that must be done.

Don't get frustrated when others do not have the same passion for a particular ministry that you do. They are not supposed to.

God will give you the people you need to accomplish His purpose. If it requires a team of people, He will cause others to join with you to get the job done. He will give them the passion to do what ever needs to be done to fulfill His plan.

So relax! Stop trying so hard to recruit everybody to help you with you vision. Everybody is not going to help you any more than you are going to help everybody else. Don't get discouraged or offended. If God wants the job to be done He will give you the help you need.

Pray about it! The same Christ who lives in you and who gave you the passion for the work lives in others and will give them the passion to help you!

Matthew 9:36-38 (NKJV) says.....

But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. [37] Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. [38] Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."

You may ask, "If God wants His work to be done, why doesn't He just do it? Why does He have to do it through you and me?"

It all goes back to the creation of man. God created man and may man the master of this planet.

Genesis 1:26 (NKJV)

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

When man fell it didn't change the degree that God had made. All that happened on earth would still have to be done through man. Therefore in order to save man, God had to become a man and die for us.

When He saves us, He comes to live within us. We then become His body here on the earth and He works through us to accomplish His work.

Think of how you get things done. You will a certain thing to be done and then you accomplish it through a physical member of your body. If you will to write a letter, you get a piece of paper and a pen and your hand becomes an extension of your mind to write the words down on the paper. Your hand becomes one with your mind to get the job done.

As members of the body of Christ, we have the mind of Christ. When we have a passion to do a certain work, it is not because we want to do something for Jesus. It's because Jesus wants to do something through us. It is Jesus doing His work through us!

That doesn't mean that there won't be opposition or hardships. It doesn't even mean that there will be immediate success.

Jim Elliot and his fellow missionaries went to do the work of Christ in Ecuador among the Auca Indians. They ended up with spears in their backs. But over their dead bodies a church has been established among those people.

Stephen was doing the work of Christ in Jerusalem and was stoned to death. But even as he was being stoned he prayed "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."

Was God's work accomplished? Well, the man who was his chief persecutor, was converted and became the man through whom God reached out to the Gentiles. His name was Saul of Tarsus. He became the great Apostle Paul.

Success is not measured by numbers of converts we may have or the size of the church we may pastor. Success is measured by our faithfulness to do the job Christ has commissioned us to do.

To the world Christ appeared to be a total failure. He was crucified on a cross between two thieves. But He was not a failure. He accomplished the work He came to do. Through His death Satan was defeated and the church was established. He now lives in over two billion men and women through whom He is accomplishing His purpose on the earth.

Give invitation!