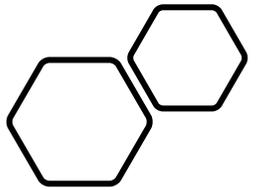


# Pastor's Bible Study II

- Christ Lives *In Me*
- *LWMLC Online Convention, July 8-9 2021*
  
- *Rev. Dr. James Keller*



I feel crummy, Mommy!





Cookie Monster?

Barney?

Theme verse: 20 I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life 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

- Many Christian persons consider Galatians 2:20 the most important verse in the Bible on the subject of *how we are to live the Christian life*.
- The effect of the Law: “If I could just force myself to keep all those rules and commands I learned as a kid, I would be a better person, guaranteed.”
- The Law is like a thermometer: it can tell us we are sick, but it cannot heal us. Even the perfect Law of God cannot enforce good behaviour over self-righteousness.

The trouble is, If the Law has no power to make us better, then why bother with it at all? To be fair, there may be some surface changes in us after the Law is brought to bear. But outward shows of imperfect righteousness have little to do with Christianity.

1) We must crucify the old self utterly and completely, and then

2) God will send His Son to live *within us (in us)* encouraging us to live a really new life now and in God's eternal future. Then and only then are we authorized to say with the Apostle Paul, "*through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life 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

- *What does this mean?* To live requires that someone or something is alive. To be alive as a human person means you are breathing, moving, thinking, experiencing, growing, completing tasks, planning for the future, taking initiative. A dead person has none of these—she has nothing to do or say and doesn't want anything.
- But Christ *lives* in you; He is not dead in you.
- He is not silent or powerless, inactive or ineffective.
- He has tasks to complete *through you*, wise things to say *through you*.
- He has attitudes and qualities of life to declare *through you*. Jesus' life flows through a living vine, bringing branches and fruit—they have life because of His life. And what kind of life is that? Paul paints a portrait of what the Christian life should look like—you know Christ lives in you when His agenda becomes yours:

# #1 *The Relinquished Life*

- [Our theme verse:](#)
- 20I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. 21I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness<sup>c</sup> were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose. Galatians 2:20-21
- ***We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.*** Romans 6:6-7

- When the Christian is given faith that saves in Baptism, God identifies her with Christ now and also in the past.
- Our old self-centred life **was relinquished (“given over” or “given up”)** when we died with Christ
- Therefore, in a real sense the Christian’s life is really the life in Christ.
- Other spiritual comparisons for “Christ lives in me...”
  - 1. Adam and all of posterity (Rom 5:12-19)
  - 2. Union between husband and wife (Eph 5:22-33)
  - 3. Union between the head and the other members of the body (Eph 4:15-16)
  - 4. Relationship of the vine to the branches (John 15).

# Jesus is “The Seen and Unseen God”

- “No one has seen God...” 1 John 4:12
- Christians make the invisible God known, by reflecting the love of Christ into creation.
- We are being transformed into the same image of one degree of glory or another.
- WDTM? It means we begin to “have the mind of Christ—we say what Christ says, and we do what Christ does.”

# Knowing the Unknown God

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**12No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us. 1 John 4:12**

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**18And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord,<sup>e</sup> are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another.<sup>f</sup> For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. 2 Corinthians 3:18**

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**26I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.” John 17:26**

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**3His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, 4by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. 2 Peter 1:3-4**

# “Rest in Him...”

- What reasons do we have to “rest in Him?” Are any of them any good?
- Yes, because our faith is in the Son of God, who “loved me and gave Himself up for me.” Galatians 1:4
- The Gk verb for “gave” means to “hand over”, or “deliver over”, so
- 1. Jesus gave Himself over as a **voluntary** sacrifice for our sins
- 2. His death was a **penal** sacrifice—He delivered Himself over to the cross
- 3. His death was **substitutionary**—it was “for us (me) and for our (my) salvation”
- First person ordinarily indicates a deep personal feeling on the part of the speaker.

## #2 *The Exchanged Life*

- ***We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.*** Romans 6:4
- ***For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.*** 1 Corinthians 15:22

Blood donation is not like the Christian faith. The blood we receive from a donor is a gift, but it does not transform us. **Only our union with Christ has transformative action.**

***There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do.*** Romans 8:1-2

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## The Christian life is an *exchanged life*.

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When we are weak, Christ further demonstrates His strength:

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***9***But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. ***10***For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong. 2 Cor 12:9-10

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When we face situations beyond our comprehension, God's wisdom is always available to us:

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***5***If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. ***6***But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. James 1:5

When we are faced with impossible situation, God does the impossible:

- **26Those who heard it said, “Then who can be saved?” 27But he said, “What is impossible with man is possible with God.” Luke 18:27**

When we meet people who are difficult to love, God displays His unconditional love through us:

- **7Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. 8Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. 1 John 4:7-8**

When we don't know who or what to pray for, the Holy Spirit guides us:

- **16The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. Romans 8:16-17**

Christ  
lives...in me.  
WDTM?

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When Christ abides in us He brings all the fullness of God with Him:

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***17so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Ephesians 3:17-19***

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Our assignment is simple: be faithful to our calling as Christians

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***4Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. 5I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. John 15:4-5***

## #3 The Trusting Life

- ***Since then you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.*** Colossians 3:1
- ***The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.*** John 17:23
- My faith in Christ points to the reality that Jesus was delivered up for me *personally*.
- Our confidence is not in our personal piety or righteousness. It's in a faith that is continually focused upon the sacrificial, atoning, propitiatory death of Jesus Christ by which he was justified.
- Paul knew that his ability to live in Christ came through faith in His atoning, saving work on the cross. He did not chase after the newest experience or angle on the Christian life; we should return to the cross. Christ's all-sufficient love is always there. It's simple.
- ***"Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it."*** ([Mark 10:15](#)).
- Believe like children
- Have faith like children

# ...if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly.

- **Faith** means reliance or dependence and so we now live by continual dependence on Christ, yielding to Him, allowing Him to live His life in and through us. Christ is now our life. It is no longer a matter of us keeping the Law or a set of rules. Our new life is not lived by **striving**, but by **trusting** and obeying, not out of fear but out of love and a desire to be pleasing to Him.
- ***I do not nullify (declare invalid, treat as meaningless, set aside) the grace of God (by wanting to retain the Law and striving to keep it); for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly.*** ([Galatians 2:21](#))
- The new life in Christ is lived on the principle of faith in Christ rather than on trust in the Law or a set of rules or guidelines.
- Faith connects you so intimately with Christ, that He and you become as if it were one person. As such you may boldly say, 'I am now one with Christ. Therefore Christ's righteousness, victory, and life are mine.' (Luther.)
- "Did the Law ever love me? Did the Law ever sacrifice itself for me? Did the Law ever die for me? On the contrary, it accuses me, it frightens me, it drives me crazy. Someone else *saved me from the Law, from sin and death unto eternal life*. The Somebody is the Son of God, to whom be praised and glory forever. Amen." (Luther, a paraphrase)

# From Luther's Commentary on Galatians:

- To be faithless is to be lifeless, without union with Him who has life and imparts it. Faith rests on His ability and will as a divine Redeemer—“the Son of God” feels its warrant and welcome—“He loved me;” and revels in the adapted and numerous blessings provided—“He gave Himself for me.” These blessings are all summed up in “life,” as awaking it, fostering it, and crowning it, so that its receptive faculties are developed, and it pulsates healthfully and freshly in sympathetic unison with its blessed Source. Faith brings the soul into close and tender union with Him “who is our life,” keeps it in this fellowship, and creates within it a growing likeness to Him in the hope that it shall be with Him forever. Faith gives Him a continuous influence over the conscience, writes His law on “the fleshly tables of the heart,” and enables the believer to realize His presence as his joy and power. In short, the new existence which springs from co-crucifixion with Christ, “lives, and moves, and has its being” in this faith of the Son of God. (Commentary on Galatians)



# Question: Is Jesus your Co-Pilot?

- From a certain POV, yes.
- But there is a insurmountable problem with that verbage:
- It's simply NOT TRUE, and no amount of pious talk or fawning submission to Christ will make it so.

# Is Christ really our Co-Pilot?

- ***"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me."*** Galatians 2:20
- "Jesus is my Co-Pilot" is found on bumper stickers and T-shirts everywhere, well-intentioned, but wrong.
- When I'm in the driver's seat, rarely do good things happen—Jesus is meant to be there.
- If you have died and Christ lives in you, then **He's not your co-pilot! He died so that He alone could define us. He alone *is the pilot.***
- Your joy is to let Him drive and define our life. There will no doubt be bumps in the road, but you can count on it:
- **He will take you somewhere good, exactly where you should be, guaranteed!**