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Living Life in Christ

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Living Life in Christ

Day 35

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)

This Scripture sums up how Paul lives life. But what does it mean? What is Paul actually saying?

He begins, “*I have been crucified with Christ.*” Paul knows it has already been done; when Jesus was crucified, he was crucified with Him. When Christ died, Paul’s old/Adam nature died too.

Paul knows the old Paul is dead. He says, “It is no longer I who live.” Although Paul would still have been tempted to think, feel and act like he used to, he is aware that he is dead to the old way of living. No longer is he being led by his independent soul—his mind, will, and emotions separated from God. No longer is he held captive to his old way of thinking based on the Old Covenant law.

Paul says, “But Christ lives in me.” He has come into agreement with Someone greater than himself. Now Paul is being led by the Spirit.

Rehabilitating the old nature was not an option for Paul; neither is it an option for us. Religion is forever telling us that we can and should be rehabilitated. It seeks to provide ways that the “good” self might help fix up or control the “evil” self. But that is not God’s way. The freeing truth is to know that when Christ died, we died too.

In Adam, all sinned and fell into the old nature born of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil with the soul in charge. But when Jesus died on the cross, He took our old nature with Him to the grave. And when He rose, we rose with Him in His new nature of life being led by the Spirit. Romans 6:5 says, “For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection.”

Paul encourages, “*Put off* the old man with his deeds, and *put on* the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him” (Colossians 3:9-10). He encourages, “Be renewed in the Spirit of your mind, and ... *put on* the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness” (Ephesians 4:23-24).

We believe what God says about our union with Christ in His death and resurrection. We give ourselves to God in faith and let Him lead us in the transforming work He wants to do in and through us. We “put off” and “put on” by welcoming truth and letting God’s thoughts and feelings renew our souls. We “work out [our] salvation” (Philippians 2:12) by letting the life of Christ in us work its way out for the world to see in our God-given humanity.

But we can’t trust someone unless we know they love us. We can live by faith only when we are confident of God’s love for us. Paul says, “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.”

“*Who loved me,*” that is the key. Paul knew Jesus’ love deeply and personally.

Life in our new nature hinges on knowing God’s love for us. You can’t live by faith—you can’t give yourself totally to Him for His transforming work—unless you know that He loves you —*you personally*. Love isn’t love until it is given away and Jesus gave Himself totally, unreservedly for you. The Son of God died for you to give *you* His full, abundant life.

Ponder for a Moment

What does it mean to you that you have been “crucified with Christ”?

What does it mean to you that your life is now defined by Christ’s life in you?