

“How to” ... Contain, Know and Express Christ

Recap from last time:

We spoke on how we are “Containers for God’s Presence”. Christ in you, the hope of glory. And we discussed the mysterious paradox of Gal 2:20 ... *“I have been crucified with Christ; and 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 the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.”* We have become partakers of the Divine Nature. Old Satan nature out, and new Christ nature in; and that nature is holy and righteous.

And so we came to understand that the ONLY NATURE and ONLY LIFE we have is Christ. 1 Cor 6:17 ... *“the one who joins himself to the Lord is **one spirit**.”*

We also discussed Col 3:11 ... *“Christ is all, and in all.”* He is love, He is Life, He is the way, He is the Truth ... He is ALL. Whatever we need we will find in Him who is our ALL. Eph 1:3 ... *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.”*

Eph 4:10 ... *“He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, so that He might fill all things.”*

Eph 1:22-23 ... *“And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.”*

Christ is all, and in all. In His fullness He is in you and in me! You can’t get anymore, but you can learn to use what you have been given in Christ.

We are containers of Christ and we are His body – our function is to contain Him, to know Him and express Him through our words, attitudes and actions.

He is the Vine and we are the branches – our part is to abide in Him and to bear His fruit.

So that brings us to what we need to discuss today:

“HOW TO” ... Contain, Know and Express Christ:

How do we abide in Christ; put on Christ; and express Him?

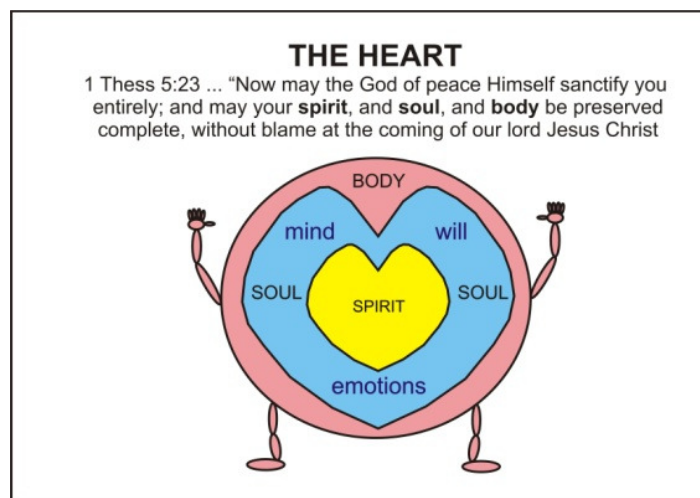
The Heart

First of all we need to be clear on what the scriptures mean by the term “heart.” A series of pictures will help in our explanations and understanding.

We read of terms like divided heart, united heart, pure heart, tranquil heart, joyful heart and so on.

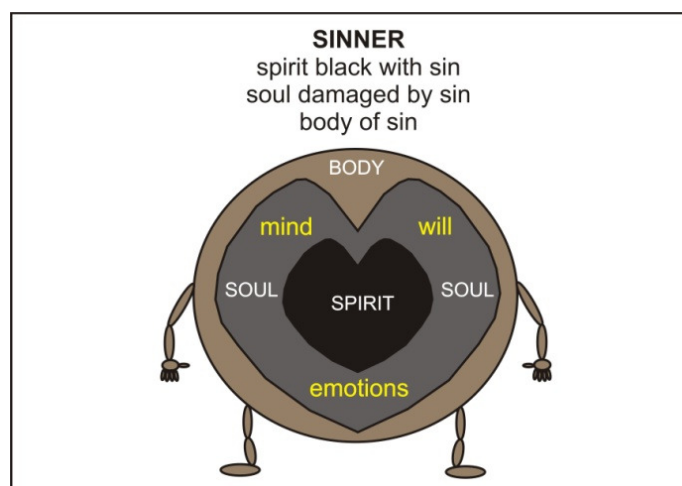
We are tripartite beings; we are made up of spirit, soul and body (1 Thess 5:23). When scripture refers to the “heart” it is speaking of the combination of the spirit and soul part of man. The spirit and soul comprise the “spiritual” part of man which is housed in a “body.” This “spiritual” part is the “heart” of a person. For us to be whole this part must be united, tranquil and joyful and not divided.

The spirit is the deepest most hidden part of the heart (1 Pet 3:4). The soul is the mind, will and emotions part of the heart – I call that the 'control centre' – where choices and decisions are made.



Process of Salvation

Secondly, with that understanding of what the "heart" is let's now look at the **process of salvation**:



We were all born with a sinful Satan nature.

Rom 5:18 ... *"through one transgression (Adam's transgression) there resulted condemnation to all men."*

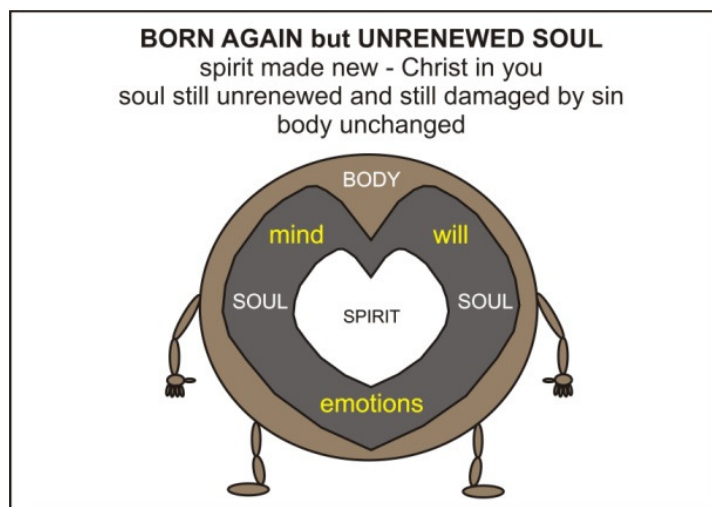
Rom 3:23 ... *"all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."*

But thank God Christ came to redeem us from sin and give us a new nature.

For Romans 5:18 does not stop with man lost in sin, it goes on to say:

... *So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness (Christ's death on the cross for us) there resulted justification of life to all men."*

John 3:16 ... *"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."*



When we were "born again" the old sinful Satan nature was taken out and the new holy and righteous nature of Christ placed in us. In terms of Gal 2:20 this is the "I" that was crucified with Christ (old nature out), and the life which "I" now live is Christ (new nature in).

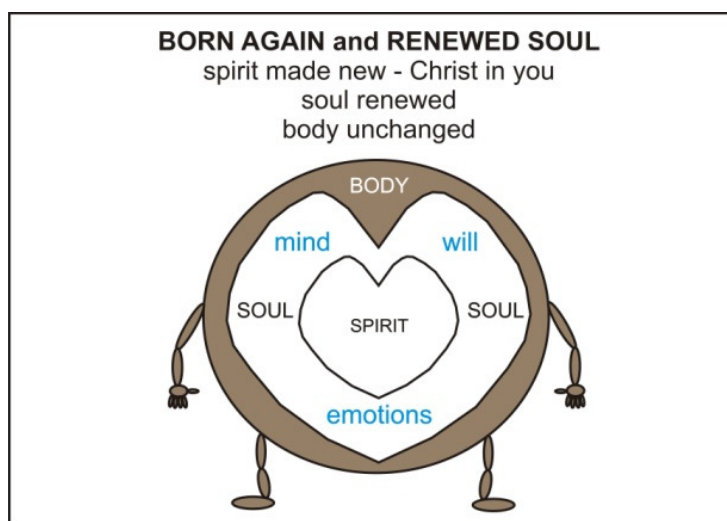
1 Pet 1:23 ... *"for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God."*

This "birthing" takes place in the spirit when the Holy Spirit places the "seed" of the Father – Christ – in us.

Col 1:27 ... *"Christ in you the hope of glory."*

1 Cor 6:17 ... *"But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit."*

At the time of our rebirth there is little or no change yet to the soul or body, they are still sin damaged and need renewal. But the process of renewing of the soul begins here.



Rom 12:1-2 ... *“Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”*

How does that happen? And remember Paul's struggle in Romans 7 – this is a battle for the mind.

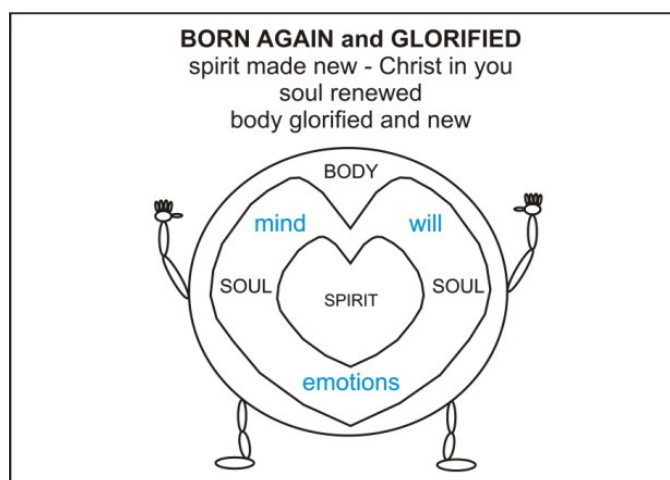
Rom 8:6 ... *“For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace.”*

This renewal is an ONGOING PROCESS in which the Holy Spirit helps us “put on Christ” in our soul area. This is the putting on of the mind of Christ.

We will come back to this a little later when we talk about the “how to” put on and express Christ.

So we have been “born again” and have received a new Christ nature. That is an instant and complete action that takes place when you receive Christ. There's nothing more to be added. You are complete in Christ. Then from that time on until you go to be with the Lord there is the PROCESS of the renewing of the soul; the conforming of your mind, will and emotion area to the Christ who is in you.

Then, finally, the last step in our salvation, one day we will go to be with the Lord, we will be glorified, when He will give us a new body. Then the process of salvation will be complete.



1 Cor 15:51-53 ... *“Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.”*

How to let Christ be seen in and through you:

Now understanding what the **heart** is and the basics of the **process of salvation** we can now go on to examine some scriptures which will help us with not only the “how to” contain Christ, but also “how to” know and give expression of Him in our everyday lives.

The Agent for this Change is The Helper – The Holy Spirit

It is important to understand how the Holy Spirit helps effect the change, the renewal process, in us, and our part in this matter.

Jesus promised us that not only would He come and take up residence in us but that He would also send the Holy Spirit to be our Helper – to help us learn Christ:

John 14:16-20 ... *"I will ask the Father, and He will give you another **Helper**, that He may be with you **forever**; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides **with** you and will be **in** you. I will not leave you as orphans; **I will come to you**. After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you will see Me; because I live, you will live also. **In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.**"*

John 16:13-14 ... *"But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. **He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you.**"*

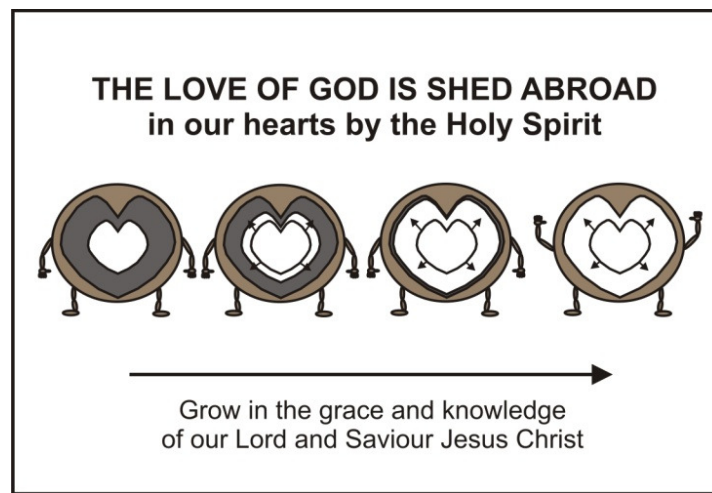
It is interesting to note that the word "**Helper**" (some Bibles use "Comforter"), referring to the Holy Spirit, comes from the Greek word Parakletos. This word is made up from two root words – *para* which means alongside (parallel to) and *kaleo* which means to call for, or to invite to come.

So the paraklete, the Holy Spirit, is the One who draws along side of you and invites you to come to Him so that He can reveal Christ in you to you. As Jesus put it, *"He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you."*

1 Cor 2:9-16 ... *"Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him. For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so **the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God**, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words. But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no one. For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he will instruct Him? But **we have the mind of Christ.**"*

So with that understanding let's return to the process of "putting on Christ."

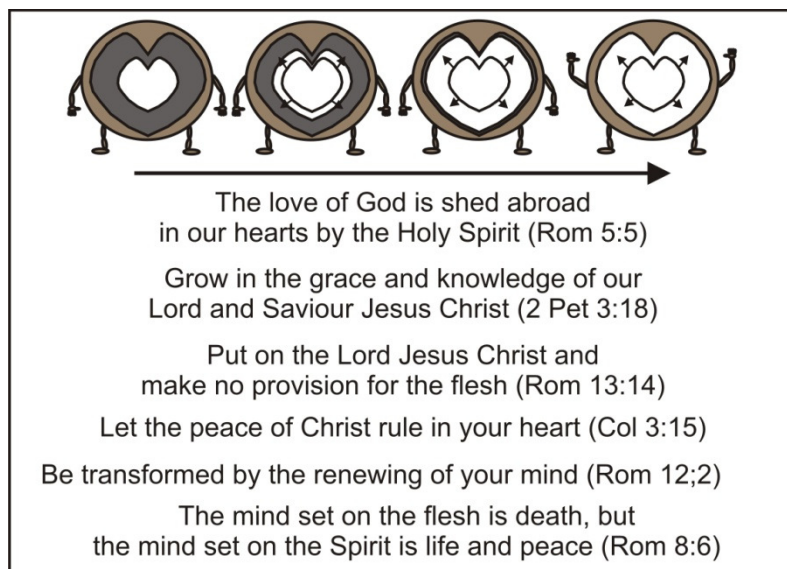
Rom 5:5 KJV ... *"the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost who is given unto us."*



As we respond to His call and cooperate with the Holy Spirit He helps us in the renewal of our souls. He takes that which is in Christ, with whom we are one in our spirit, and reveals it and spreads it to our soul (mind, will and emotion part).

This is a **PROCESS** that takes place moment by moment, day by day **as we choose to submit** to the guiding and teaching of the Holy Spirit. The more constant and continual this submission and obedience to the Holy Spirit the more rapidly our soul renewal takes place, and the more Christ will be seen in you by others.

Christ is all, and in all (Col 3:11). The **ALL** means **ALL!** – it includes Love, Joy, Peace , Patience , Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-control. Christ wants all of His nature, character and attributes to be shed abroad in your soul and seen through your attitudes, thoughts, words and actions.



Now let's look at some more scriptures relating to the operation of the Holy Spirit.

2 Cor 1:21-22 ... "Now He who establishes us (confirms or secures us) with you **in Christ** and anointed us is God, who also sealed us (marks us as His own possession) and gave us **the Spirit** in our **hearts** as a pledge."

Eph 6:17 ... *“And take ... the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*

Heb 4:12 ... *“For the word of God (the sword of the Spirit) is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the **division of soul and spirit**, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the **heart**.”*

The Holy Spirit operates in the “heart” – within the spirit and soul.

2 Cor 5:4-5 ... *“For indeed while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened, because **we do not want to be unclothed but to be clothed**, so that what is mortal will be swallowed up by life. Now He who prepared us **for this very purpose** is God, who **gave to us the Spirit as a pledge**.”*

Pledge or Guarantee – What does this mean; the Spirit in our Hearts as a pledge? (A guarantee).

By giving us the Holy Spirit the Father has given us the “Guarantee” that the work He has begun He will complete until the day of Christ Jesus (Phil 1:6). He has given us the Holy Spirit to help us “*work out* (out-work) *your salvation with fear and trembling*” (Phil 2:12).

In the old Testament times, in all the dispensations prior to the current dispensation of grace, the Holy Spirit was only given to a few chosen people (Judges, Kings, Prophets etc) to empower or enable them to do what God has called them to do on His behalf. The Holy Spirit was “upon” or “with” these people and only for a defined length of time. He was never “in” them and His presence was not permanent. The only way they could do what God had called them to do was by the power or enabling of the Holy Spirit. As long as they obeyed the leading of the Holy Spirit all was well and they were successful. But when they chose to disobey, it was all over.

Right from day one, in the beginning, God has chosen to give us a free will – the **freedom to choose**. He never wanted us to be puppets. He wants sons and daughters who will freely submit to His ways and thereby enjoy His empowerment – to live as we were created to be – containers of His life and to express that life.

God has given us the very life of His Son to live by, He has given us the Holy Spirit to reveal Christ in us to us so we can live by and express His life with the guarantee He will never be taken away from us – but he has also given us a free will to choose.

So the big question is: Will I, will you, choose to submit to the leading and guiding and teaching of the Holy Spirit? Or will we quench Him?

Will I, will you, love the Lord your God with all your heart?

Wholeness is the outcome of holiness being shed abroad in our hearts. Christ in you is holy and by submitting to the Holy Spirit to teach you Christ and allow the holiness of Christ to touch every aspect of your life, will guarantee you come to wholeness. As Eph 4:13 puts it, “until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.”

Final Challenge:

Phone call. When your mother phones and speaks to you, you immediately know it is her because you recognise her voice. If a stranger calls and says, “Hi this is your mother speaking” you’ll immediately know this is a stranger and not your mother, Why? Because you know your mother’s voice, and this is not it.

How do you know your mother’s voice? Because you’ve spent **hours and hours in her presence**, and spoken and listened to her. You have a **close relationship** and you just **know** her!

Do you know the voice of your Lord? If you want to grow in the grace and knowledge of your Lord and Saviour you can only do this if you know Him – know His voice. There is no way around this but to spend time with Him. Hang out with Him. Listen to Him. Let him reveal Himself to you. Obey Him.

Let the Holy Spirit take the sword of the Spirit, the Word and penetrate between soul and spirit and bring you revelation of Christ who is The Word.

The focus is Christ and getting to **know Him**. It’s not about you focusing on you and your needs. He is ALL, and out of His ALL your needs will get met. Out of His holiness your wholeness will come. The focus is not on those around you who have hurt you and the injustice of their offences. The focus is on Christ. When you get a revelation of Jesus Christ, who is the only life you have, you’ll get a revelation of who you are and when He is formed in you (in your mind, will and emotion area) you’ll be pouring out mercy and grace on your offenders and not seeking revenge or their punishment or demise. You’ll find out that love does not take into account a wrong suffered, and you won’t be focusing on you and you’ll be focusing on their needs.

An important part, a vital part, of the transformation, the renewal, of your soul is the shifting from self as your point of reference to Christ as your point of reference.

As the old song stated, “Turn your eyes upon Jesus and look full in His wonderful face, and the things of the earth will grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace.”

So finally, the questions we must answer:

- How well do you **know** Him
- Do you **know** His voice? All the tones – happy, sad, stern, praising, soft and so on.
- Is **time** with Him in the Word and prayer a **priority** for you?
- Can He be **seen in you** – in your attitudes, words and actions?

The **provision** and power is His, the **choice** is yours – will you take **possession** and be transformed?

There are no shortcuts. Be constantly attuned to the Holy Spirit and let Him reveal Christ in you to you.

John 17:3 ... “*This is eternal Life, that they may **know** Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou has sent*”

Prayer:

Eph 3:14-21 ... *"For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen."*

You may like to go on and read the following scriptures in the light of what we have discussed in this lesson:

Eph 3:12-17 ... *"So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, **put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts,** to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness **in your hearts** to God. Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father."*

1 Tim 1:5 ... *"But the goal of our instruction is love from a **pure heart** and a good conscience and a sincere faith."*

2 Tim 2:22 ... *"Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a **pure heart.**"*

Heb 3:10-12 ... *"Therefore I was angry with this generation, and said, 'They always **go astray in their heart,** and they **did not know My ways**'; As I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest.' Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, **unbelieving heart** that falls away from the living God."*

Heb 4:11-13 ... *"Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through following the same example of disobedience. For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the **division of soul and spirit,** of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the **heart.** And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do."*

Eph 4:30 ... *"Do not grieve the Holy Spirit by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."*