

Containers and Expressers of the Christ Life

Today I would like to talk about a matter which may or may not be clearly or fully understood by many believers; a matter which has an immense impact on **our understanding of what it means to be a Christian – a Christ-person** – and, therefore, on our impact in this world of darkness. We say we want to see our neighbourhood, our region and our nation come to the Lord, and that's good because it's God's will, but for that to happen we have to understand how God ordained for this to occur. We must follow the pattern He set out through His Son.

It is important to understand what was in the Father's mind for mankind before the time of creation. He had a definite plan and purpose for us, and the means by which we are to live and achieve His purpose.

As a part of His plan God sent His Son to earth. He sent Him primarily for two main reasons:

1. To set us back in a right relationship with the Father by redeeming us from sin and by birthing His life in us, and
2. To show us how man with the divine nature was to live and act in accordance with the Father's original plan and purpose.

So let us examine some scriptures and seek clarity on this matter.

Paul in his letter to the Colossians shares his revelation of the mystery which was once hidden but now made manifest. That revelation is given in:

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

This revelation is simply that right from the beginning it was the Father's plan, the hope of glory, that we would be containers of Christ, partakers of the divine nature, living by His life. **His life in us expressed through our uniquely individual personalities.**

Pauls goes on and explains further in his letter to the Galatians:

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."*

Now hang on ... have you ever been confused by the meaning of the "I" or the "me" in this passage? The "I" has been crucified – that means it's dead! Right? But then "I" continues in living existence because Pauls goes on to say, *"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."* So evidently on the one hand "I" is crucified and dead yet on the other hand the "I" or "me" continues in living existence. So what was crucified? In what sense am I a "crucified one", who now lives as a "resurrected me"?

So how can that be, and what is the "I" or the "me" that Pauls speaks of here?

If we carefully read through Paul's letters (and John's gospel) we will find the answer. He constantly declares that our human "I" is nothing but a vessel made to contain; or a branch bearing its vines

fruit; or a servant working only at the beckon of his/her owner; or a wife reproducing by bearing her husband's seed; or a temple indwelt by its god.

My "I" that was crucified with Christ was an "I" that was expressing its owner and operator. As an unbeliever, and like all unbelievers, my "I" had been the expresser of that false "god of this world", the "spirit of error," which, according to Eph 2:2, works in all the children of disobedience.

2 Cor 5:21 ... *"He (the Father) made Him (the Son) who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."*

So when Paul says that "I" am crucified with Christ, he means that my "I" went into death and resurrection with my Intercessor Saviour, who was "made sin" as me and nailed to the cross. In His death "I" am freed forever from the false indweller, the spirit of error; and by Christ's resurrection "I" rise and "I" am now occupied, when I respond in faith, by the Spirit of Truth as fixed, eternal, total Indweller.

We need to understand that my crucified "I" is the very same "I" that now lives. The difference is not and never was in the human "I" container, but wholly in the deity-spirit in possession of my "I." The reason this may be hard to recognise and accept is because of the misunderstanding and false concept of my "I" being independent and self-operating.

Since the fall we have been occupied by and run by the false Satan-deity, who as John states in Rev 12:9, is ... *"the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world."* But when we believe in the finished work of our Saviour we are "born again", the Father's Seed is placed in us and He who is Life is birthed in us, and we move into the reality of now being vessels occupied by our Christ-Indweller. Only by His bodily-death did He cast out forever the false indweller. So it never was a change in our beautiful God-created vessel "I" with its unique personality and great potential, but only an exchange of who is operating our "I." An exchange of the nature of our occupier operator took place. We have never been self-operating.

We consist of spirit, soul and body. When we are "born again" the great exchange takes place in our spirit. Soul and body remain unchanged. Soul (mind, will and emotion) then goes through a renewing process as we set out mind on the Spirit – the Christ indweller. Body will be changed and become brand new and eternal when we physically die and go to be with the Lord (1 Cor 15:50-57).

Where it goes wrong

Where the big misunderstanding occurs is where believers, who know they have come from a sin stained past, get caught in the lie of a seemingly **self-acting self** which says, "Oh I must pray more", "I must try to do more good", "I must try to be more holy", and "I must do this and that to try to be "like Christ". That lie leads them to be "imitators" and not "participators". The plain truth is that the human self was never designed to be self-operating. The human self-relying activity that has taken place actually has been the "spirit of error", with his nature of self-for-self appearing as them. We simply must get away from any notion of being a self-acting self or from any form of self-betterment and embrace self-denial, that Christ alone may be all in all.

Praise God, as Paul saw and stated in Romans 7, when I am at last exhausted enough by the failure of my self-effort I am ready and conditioned to recognize with great relief and daring faith that I

have “died” to this long accepted false concept of being self-operating. By faith I see that my false owner and Satan-Sin-operator, with his nature of self-for-self, has been replaced forever by my True Owner, Christ, with His nature of self-for-others.

Rom 8:1-2 ... *“Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ² For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.”*

I can now accept myself with all my human faculties, my individual personality, as permanently operated by, expressing and manifesting my Christ-Indweller in His self-for-others nature. I’m set free. I willingly submit as slave-servant to Him who gets busy giving me my intercessory life’s opportunities of being Himself-for-others through or me.

Oh that we will break forever away from the deluding lie of being a self-operating I – “I” and understand and know we are Christ – “I” in place of Satan – “I”. As Christ – “I” we are occupied and operated by Him, free to express and manifest His self-for-others nature. Christ in you as you.

There is only One

There is no such thing as independent self in the universe. There is only One: God has stated, *“I am the Lord; and there is none else”* (Isa. 45:18). All creation is derivative, operating by God’s creative life in some basic form in it. We humans have our unique beings as selves “in Him”. As Paul states:

Acts 17:28 ... *“for in Him we live and move and exist, ... for we also are His children”.*

The nature that is being expressed is His, not ours, as Peter (2 Pet 1:4) declares that we are ... *“partakers of the divine nature.”*

It was Lucifer that brought in this deception of being self-independent, self-operating expressing his self-for-self nature. Note all the “I will” statements in the following passage:

Isa 14:12-15 ... *“How you have fallen from heaven, o star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, you who have weakened the nations! ¹³ “But you said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north. ¹⁴ ‘I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’ ¹⁵ “Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol, to the recesses of the pit.”*

Note the similarity here between the statement, “I will make myself **like the Most High**”, and the statements and actions of many believers who through ignorance are attempting to be “**like Christ**”. We were never called to be “like Christ”, but rather to simply be containers of Him giving Him expression in our thoughts, words and actions. There’s a huge difference between these. We are called to be participators and not imitators.

You can teach a parrot to talk and it can speak clearly, but at the end of the day it’s a parrot not a human. You can dress it up and teach a circus chimpanzee to look and act like a human and put on a great show, but at the end of the day it’s a chimp and not a human. Nowhere and at no time was or is it the Father’s will or desire that we try to be “like Christ”. You can teach almost anybody to do almost anything and after a while he will even begin to look and act like a Christian. But he is not a

Christian by what he does outwardly. He's not a Christian because there is not the inward factor, the life and righteousness of Christ impelling him to righteousness and true holiness. We are not called to be "like Christ" but to simply be containers of Him allowing Him to have expression through us, through our words and actions. There's a huge difference between trying to be "like Christ", and to giving outward expression of Him who is within. We're to be participators, not imitators.

We must also get away from the delusion that we are self-operating and "helped" by the Holy Spirit, as if He is along side of us at our beck and call to carry out the things we want to do (even if these are good things). The Holy Spirit is given to us to teach us Christ; to reveal Christ in you to you.

The Man Jesus Christ

Now with this understanding of the truth that as the "born again" we are containers of Christ and expressers of His nature, I would like to go back to the 2 points about why the Son of God came to earth and look at some relevant scriptures.

1. Firstly, he came to put to death the sin nature and to be the "dying seed" which would spring up and provide us with the opportunity to be partakers of the divine nature.

John 12:24-26 ... *"Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal. If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honour him."*

The One Seed became multiplied so that His seed could be birthed in each and every one of us.

John 1:1-4 ... *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men."*

John 1:12-13 ... *"But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God."*

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."*

John 1:14, 16 ... *"And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth ... ¹⁶For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace."*

Eph 1:3-4 ... *"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,⁴ just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him."*

John 14:18-19 ... *"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."*

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

2. Secondly, Jesus came to earth to show us how man with the divine nature was to live and act in accordance with the Father's original plan and purpose. He contained and expressed the Father.

Heb 1:3 ... *"He (the Son) is the radiance of His (the Father) glory and the exact representation of His nature."*

John 5:19 ... *"Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner.'"*

John 5:30 ... *"I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me."*

John 12:49-50 ... *"For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak. I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me."*

John 14:6 ... *"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.'"*

John 14:9 ... *"Jesus said to him, 'Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"*

John 14:10-11 ... *"Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me."*

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

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."*

1 John 2:27 ... *"As for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him."*

John 17:6-26 ... ⁶ “I have manifested Your name to the men whom You gave Me out of the world; they were Yours and You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. ⁷ Now they have come to know that everything You have given Me is from You; ⁸ for the words which You gave Me I have given to them; and they received them and truly understood that I came forth from You, and they believed that You sent Me ...

²⁰ “... I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; ²¹ that they may all be **one**; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me. ²² The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be **one**, just as We are one; ²³ I in them and You in Me, that they may be **perfected in unity**, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me.

²⁵ “O righteous Father, although the world has not known You, yet I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me; ²⁶ and I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.”

When the believer is **one with Christ in him/her**, totally reconciled, dead to his/her own self-independence and **married to the Christ within**, then in that unity he/she will present only Christ to the world around him/her. This is the “unity” Christ speaks of in this prayer.

Christ’s prayer was for us to come to the revelation of our oneness in Christ – the only life we have is Christ – Just as the only life that was in Jesus was the Father. One vine stock/root with many branches forming the one productive vine.

2 Cor 4:6-11 ... “For God, who said, “Light shall shine out of darkness,” is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ (personal presence of Christ within us). ⁷ But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; ⁸ we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; ⁹ persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; ¹⁰ always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. ¹¹ For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus’ sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.”

2 Cor 4:10 ... “always carrying about in the body **the dying of Jesus**, so that **the life of Jesus** also may be **manifested in our body**.”

Let Christ be seen

Paul states it in Phil 2:12 ... “work out your salvation with fear and trembling.” Or in other words, let that which is within, the new Christ nature and operator, be worked outwardly. Outwardly express Him who is within. Salvation cannot be taught. Salvation is a Person, and that Person is Christ. If you are born again then He lives within you and He is the only life you have. Manifest His name!

And you can only do that by spending time with Him, as Paul puts it, ... “Learning Christ”, getting to know Him.

The purpose of our salvation, our living by the life of Christ, is that we may enjoy the manifest, conscious presence of God as well as He enjoys our presence. The purpose of our salvation, our being born again and living by the life and faith of Christ, is so that we may be brought into a right relationship with Father God in order that He may bring us into a conscious relationship with Him; and through that we may express Him to the world around us so they may know He lives and loves them.

The words “Presence” and “Face” as translated in the Bible are the same word. In Psalm 16:11 David says, *“In Thy presence is fullness of joy”*. In Psalm 27:8 he says, *“When You said, “Seek My face,” my heart said to You, “Your face, O Lord, I shall seek.”* But there is a difference between presence and manifest presence. You can be in the same room as a person, in their presence, but only when you are face to face in conversation with them are you in their manifest presence.

The lukewarm or ineffective Christian is one who doesn’t know his/her Lord because they don’t personally experience His manifest presence. They spend very little or no “face to face” time with Him. This stands in contrast to the one who knows the meaning of “waiting on the Lord” and knows the Lord and enjoys much of His manifest presence; who joyfully proclaims, *“for to me to live is Christ”*.

Phil 3:10-12 ... *“that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;¹¹ in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. ¹²Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.”*

God tore the veil from top to bottom so that we could enter and dwell in His manifest presence. But we have a veil which stops us from entering and enjoying His manifest presence which we need to tear down and discard for once and for all ... the veil of the flesh. It is a veil of self-love, self-pity, self-trust, self-admiration, self-content, all driven by the lie of our being independent selves, self-operating selves; a lie which we learned from the evil self-for-self nature that was formerly ours when, as Paul states in Ephesians 2:1-2, ... *“And you were dead in your trespasses and sins,² in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.”*

So it’s time to turn our back on this erroneous belief, turn our back on self. Tear, cut, rend, burn and destroy until nothing is spared of the flesh, of the old veil. You and I must take it down and enter His manifest presence and be who He ultimately planned for us to be. Vessels containing, knowing and expressing Him. Living by His life, expressing His life.

If you break through the “self-veil” you will discover a waiting presence that will grace and bless you and transform you, and walking in His strength you’ll enter a new and high level of praise and a radiance that will infect others and cause them to see Jesus. His glory presence will splash all over you and radiate out from you; and then the awakening will occur. Folks will fall face down and begin

to repent and turn to God like never we have seen before. These are the “greater works” Jesus spoke of.

This is the plan and pattern The Father had for us and for mankind provided through His Son. He is our salvation, and as we draw near and know Him and express Him who is our life, then the world will know and see Him and be drawn to Him.

So my encouragement to you is to go, meditate on these things and allow Christ in you to be seen through you. Listen, yield, obey and you’ll be amazed at what He achieves through you – Christ in you as you making a huge difference in your home, office and neighbourhood.