

"ON EAGLES' WINGS MINISTRIES"

*"See how I bare you on eagles' wings and brought you unto myself." Exodus 19: 4.
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"RECOGNIZING our CRUCIFIXION" NOVEMBER 2022.

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: (or instead of 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 for me." Galatians 2:20.

Over the period of a number of years, I became attracted to the scripture featured above. At the beginning, I did not understand the dynamics and intricacies woven into the fabrics of the text. Day after day and each time the passage is read in church services, I lingered in my thoughts of what the realities expressed by Paul really means. Even at a simple glance at the verse, I knew deep down within that the apostle had arrived at a dimension of truth that required for me to linger in my search to acquire that truth, and to make it mine also. Looking at the big picture, we quickly learn that salvation involves "God and us". We are called by our Lord, not merely to be spectators watching how the redemption dialogue is played.

In Paul's statement, he plainly inserted himself in the very act of Christ's crucifixion. He plainly suggests that when Christ died upon the cross, he (Paul) died also. We

could realistically assert that Paul partook in his own redemption. When we acknowledge our part in our redemption, we quickly give honor and glory to God for leaving the door to his glory, to his very throne room, open with an ongoing invitation for “whosoever will, may enter in and go in and out and find pasture. *“I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.”* John 10:9. We do not have to look very far or attend many bible classes to learn that the doctrine of the crucifixion is the bedrock of the Christian Doctrine. Had there not been the crucifixion, there would have been no redemption for fallen man. We are told: *“And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without the shedding of blood is no remission.”* Hebrews 9:22.

The aspect of this study that is so intriguing is the fact that Paul saw himself as being crucified with Christ. He did not feature himself as a mere spectator of what transpired at Calvary. What I love most in this lesson, is Paul’s assertion in his saying: *“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 for me.”* Galatians 2:20. The apostle was so committed to the role Christ played in his salvation, that even the saving grace that was a product of faith, he concluded that it was not his own faith that saved him. Rather, it was the faith of Jesus Christ. It is note worthy that even at this very moment, countless numbers of Christians do not realize that their salvation of which they boast is entirely founded upon the faith of Jesus

Christ. It is his faith that keeps us saved and secure in God's good graces.

Let us note that Paul was not merely playing the word game. He was not presenting a concept that would work well with people in the church who were hungry for something to stir up their thinking. Look at what dimension of conviction the apostle lived and preached to the churches. He literally placed his identity with the cross of Jesus Christ in his pastoral writings to the churches. Listen to his personal declaration concerning the cross of Jesus Christ! *"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world"*. Galatians 6: 14. What argument could one raise to contradict this man's statement of commitment to the cross of Christ? He concluded in simple terms that outside of the cross of Jesus Christ, there was nothing else for him to glory in.

Among the millions upon millions of Christians worldwide, how many do you think have actually reached that place of commitment to the cross of Christ, that they are willing to announce to the world, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." At this particular juncture in the Christian faith, one must have crossed many lines of demarcation. At this plateau of Christian growth, one must have gotten rid of mere forms and vain fashion. Indeed, at this measurement of maturity in the faith, one must be able to bear the marks of Christ, as Paul noted in his letter to the Corinthian

Church. *“From henceforth let no man trouble me: for it bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.” Galatians 6:17.*

In summarizing the concept and the act of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, Paul was made to look at the big picture that up to this day is able to plant new thoughts in our Christian mindset. Think of the enormous task that we would be faced with, if we were required to physically see to it that each person be crucified as Jesus was. What Paul was interested in was how to include each person as a part of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. To avert the problem, Paul came up with a simple solution that still stands predominant in our thinking and teaching. Instead requiring that each and every person follow the act of Christ to be physically crucified we are told in Paul’s grand solution, the following idea: *“For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead. And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.*

The veracity of this concept, Paul concluded: *“Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. (After the flesh) 2nd Corinthians 5:14-16.* Not knowing Jesus Christ after the flesh opens up to us a wide world of spiritual dynamics that the average believer in Christ does not even think about. Think of this for a moment! Sunday after Sunday and on Wednesday night (mid-week bible study) we gather

to teach more about Jesus. But in actuality, we continue to picture in our mind's eye, the man teaching on the side of a mountain, or from a ship, or calling a dead man back to life. I do not think that we ever did learn how to see Jesus beyond the man who walked the shores of Galilee. Have we tried or learned how not to see Jesus no more after the flesh.

Martha reached out to touch the resurrected Christ and was forbidden to do so. Why? Could it be it was because she wanted to hold on to the man she knew so well? Was it because she needed time to get a new look and a new understanding of the man who was now the “glorified Lord”? Back in olden times, when Jesus walked and taught his disciples, he could dwell in no one because the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because Christ himself was not yet glorified. But think on this for a quick moment! Every true believer in Christ believes that he lives within; but there is but one Jesus Christ and yet he lives within the millions of believers individually.

This begs the question” Where is Jesus now, in that we should not know him any longer according to the flesh? Shortly before his death on the cross, Jesus offered his parting words to his disciples, especially regarding the coming of another comforter. Watch every word in this passage carefully as Christ was addressing himself. *“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the*

*Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive because it (the world) seeth him not, neither knoweth him:but ye know him, for he dwelleth **with** you, and shall be **in** you. I will not leave you comfortless: **I will come to you.** John 14:16-18.*

In case you just missed it, here, Jesus is portraying himself as the “Spirit of truth” and at that moment, he said he dwelt **with** the disciples and shall be IN THEM. This happened at Pentecost when Jesus returned as he had promised: but this time he came as the Holy Ghost to indwell all of those who believe him and are obedient to his will. Let us rehearse a few of his personal promises concerning his dwelling in us. Here, Jesus made a promise that he intended to keep—and did keep—and continues to keep. *“If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” John 14:23.*

Paul referred to this truth in another place. *As God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.” 2nd Corinthians 6:16.*

The main thought I want us to bear in mind is the Lord’s promise when he said: *“I will not leave you comfortless—I will come to you.* Well, he did come to them—all one hundred and twenty in the upper room on the day of Pentecost. In a sense, we can call that his second coming because he did come to be with his disciples as he promised. But not only did he come on that day; he

remained with them as he promised to remain with them. After leaving earth Christ sat on the right hand of the Father in heaven, but even then, he continued to keep his promise to be with the disciples. *“And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following.” Mark 16:20.* The Lord kept his promise to those early disciples, and in like manner, he continues to keep his words of promise to us today. Not being the “man Christ Jesus” he now lives in each of us as the Spirit of truth.

Not being “the man Christ Jesus” was not a demotion. Rather, it was a promotion from ministering as a human being with numerous limitations being in human form. As the glorified Lord, Christ is now available to all who call upon him at once with him being Lord of all. One writer puts it this way. *“For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures (the types) of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” Hebrews 7:25;9:24.*

We are given a grand summary of the finished work of Christ that leaves no place for controversy. Again, we read: *“By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering often times the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting*

till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.” Hebrews 10:10-14.

I think that at times we wish we were living in the days when Christ walked the earth, performing miracles and teaching things mankind had never heard before. But as grand and glorious as those days seemed to have been, the limitations that were imposed even against Christ himself, were visible and in some cases were profound. People had to come to Jesus personally to get healed and even the dead had to remain so until Jesus came to minister life and turned back death itself. Today, we are in a time frame that offers answers to prayers almost instantaneously, even considering thousands of miles that separate us across the globe. In spite of these difficult circumstances, we do not hesitate to stand in a church here in the United States and pray for a need some five thousand miles away in London, in the UK. We freely say, and do believe that there is no distance in prayer, for our God fills all in all. He sees the whole world and every human being with just a single glance of his eyes. We are told in scripture: *“The eyes of the Lord are in every place beholding the evil and the good.” Proverbs 15:3.* Be blessed in all things!

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