

CHRIST IN YOU

Dwelling in Your Heart

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(This is the third message in a series.)*

Scripture Reading:

Ephesians 3:14-21—For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom every family in the heavens and on earth is named, in order that he may give you according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with power by his Spirit in the inner man; that the Christ may dwell, through faith, in your hearts, being rooted and founded in love, in order that ye may be fully able to apprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height; and to know the love of the Christ which surpasses knowledge; that ye may be filled even to all the fulness of God. But to him that is able to do far exceedingly above all which we ask or think, according to the power which works in us, to him be glory in the assembly in Christ Jesus unto all generations of the age of ages. Amen.

I would like to consider together before the Lord the spiritual mechanism of how Christ in us works. How are we able to apprehend with all the saints the love of God which is beyond description?

How Can Christ Be in You?

I would like to ask a question: How can Christ be in you? When our Lord Jesus was on earth, many

times He tried to tell His disciples that He is in the Father and the Father is in Him. He said, “If you see Me, you see My Father.” The disciples just could not understand. How can one person be in another person? That is impossible. The best you can do is be alongside another person, but you cannot be in that person. It is impossible. So, when our Lord Jesus tried to tell the disciples: “I am in the Father and the Father is in Me,” they just could not understand because, humanly speaking, it is impossible.

Then, in the last discourse of our Lord Jesus with His disciples, during the last Passover feast, He again said to them, “I do not leave you here as orphans. I am coming to you. For a little while the world will not see me, but you will see Me. Because I live, you also shall live. And in that day, you will know that I am in the Father, you are in Me, and I am in you” (John 14:18-20).

The disciples just could not understand. How could the Father be in Jesus? How could Jesus be in the Father? (Remember it is *in*, not *alongside*.) How can it be? But the Lord said, “On that day you will know. Not only I am in the Father, but I am in you, and you are in Me.” The same mystery that He had with the Father of that in-ness would become a reality even to you and to me.

What is “that day”? The Lord said, “I am leaving you, but I am coming. For a little while the world

will not see Me, but you see Me. And in that day. . .” So you see, that day does not refer to what we call the second coming of our Lord Jesus.

Two thousand years ago our Lord Jesus came into this world the first time. The Word became flesh, tabernacled among man, full of grace and truth. That is the first coming. After He died, was buried, and resurrected, He ascended up to heaven, but He promised that one day, He would come again—the second coming of our Lord Jesus. He will come again to receive us to Himself. Every day we are looking forward to that day because that is our blessed hope. No matter how well you live on earth, it does not satisfy you. We are looking forward to seeing Him face to face. We love Him though we do not see Him; but, one day we shall see Him face to face. That is the blessed hope.

In John 14, the Lord said, “I am coming and in that day ye shall know, I am in the Father, you are in Me, I am in you.” Now “that day” does not refer to His second coming which is still in the future. We are still waiting. It may happen today, I do not know, but it has not happened yet at this present time. It is still future to us. But “in that day” refers to the day of His resurrection.

On the day of His resurrection the disciples were in that room. The door was shut and they were afraid. Suddenly the Lord appeared to

them and said, "Peace be with you." He breathed into them and said, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit." That is the day. It is the day when the Lord came to them, breathed into them and said, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit."

In other words, on that day the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ Jesus, the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the triune God, entered into the disciples. When the Lord was on earth, He had a physical body, so He could not be in the disciples. He could only be alongside with the disciples. But after His resurrection, He came to His disciples and He dwelt in them by His Spirit. So, today we say, "Christ in you."

Everyone who believes in the Lord Jesus has Christ in him or in her. How do you know Christ in you? It is by His Spirit, because the Holy Spirit dwells in you. The Holy Spirit dwelling in you means Christ dwells in you. It means God the Father also dwells in you. The Lord said, "We are coming to you." Not only does the Holy Spirit dwell in you, but in the Holy Spirit, the Father and the Son, the triune God, they all dwell within you. So, how does Christ come to be in you? It is by His Spirit.

Where Does Christ Dwell in You?

The second question is: Where does Christ dwell in you? Or, where does the Holy Spirit dwell in you? In Ezekiel 36 it says, "I will give you a new spirit and I will put my Spirit within you." We know that when we believe in the Lord Jesus, we have a new spirit. Our spirit was dead in sins and transgressions. We were cut off from communication with God, but when we believed in the Lord Jesus, that dead spirit was quickened by the Holy Spirit into life. And not only that, it became a new spirit, because the blood of the Lord Jesus has cleansed our evil conscience with His precious blood.

Not only do we have a new spirit that can communicate with God, but God Himself by His Spirit comes and dwells in our spirit. So in Romans 8 it says, "The Holy Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and we cry out, 'Abba, Father.'"

In Corinthians we are told, "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit." So we know Christ is in us. By His Spirit He is in us. Where in us? In our new spirit.

Let's use the illustration of Noah. The earth was covered with the flood and Noah was in the ark. Then God remembered Noah and used the east wind to blow the water until it gradually subsided. Noah opened the window of the ark and he first released a raven. That raven flew out of the ark and never returned. Then Noah released a dove and the dove came back because it did not have any place to land. A raven can eat a corpse, so it did not come back again, but a dove does not do that, so it returned. There was no place to land until the earth was dried. Then the dove did not come back again.

The Holy Spirit is like a dove. He cannot land and dwell in the old creation, in the dead spirit. He cannot do that. It has to be a new spirit. And when there is a new spirit, then the Holy Spirit as the dove will land and dwell there.

So the Holy Spirit dwells in our spirit. Our spirit is like the holiest of all in the tabernacle where the ark was, where the glory of God dwells. It is in the holiest of all. The Holy Spirit dwells in our spirit, and that means Christ dwells in our spirit.

Why does Christ come and dwell in our spirit? Why is it that the Holy Spirit makes His abode in our new spirit? He is there to live. Christ in you is to live in you. The Holy Spirit in you is to make Christ live in you. And if we follow the Holy Spirit, Christ will be lived out through us.

When you are first saved, in your first love with God, it seems as if you are just walking after the Holy Spirit, and Christ is really living out in your life. But unfortunately, gradually, maybe after a week, or a month, and I think very rarely a year, you begin to discover that even though Christ dwells in your spirit to live, and yet your flesh is still there. And who lives in your flesh? Self. Your self lives in your flesh and he wants to live too. Christ in your spirit wants to live and self in your flesh refuses to give ground for Christ to live. You discover that your spirit is weak, but your flesh is pretty strong. Because of that, Christ is imprisoned in your spirit. Christ is there, but He is imprisoned. He cannot get out because your flesh stands in the way. Your self wants to continue to live as you have lived for so many years before.

You know, when something becomes a habit, it is very difficult to break. Now, I am not driving, and a brother or sister will take me home from the meeting. But when they drive me home, sometimes they pass my home because they are used to driving to their own home. Old habits are very difficult to break. No man can live a Christian life except by Christ living in him. If you try to live a Christian life, you will fail. The more you try to live a Christian life, the more unlike Christ you will be. The only one who can live a Christian life is Christ in you. That is the only way. So even after you have been saved, and Christ dwells in your spirit and He is there to live so that you can live a Christian life, unfortunately, your flesh is so strong because the old habit is hard to break. The flesh struggles against the spirit and the spirit struggles against the flesh. The result is that more often the flesh seems to get his way instead of the spirit getting his way. Isn't that our experience? Our spirit is weak; that is the problem. If our

spirit is strong, then it can overcome all the oppositions of the flesh and Christ can live out in our life. Our spirit needs to be strengthened. And that is the prayer we find Paul praying for the Ephesian believers.

Let's look back again to that prayer because we need that prayer. "In order that He may give you according to the riches of His glory to be strengthened with power by His Spirit in the inner man that the Christ may dwell through faith in your hearts being rooted and founded in love" (Ephesians 3: 16).

Where does Christ dwell in you? In your spirit. But here you find, one day, Christ will dwell in your hearts, rooted and founded in love. These two are very different. Christ dwelling in the spirit, and Christ dwelling in the heart are very, very different. Christ dwelling in your heart is only through your inner man being strengthened by the power of the Holy Spirit. Then Christ will be able to dwell in your heart.

Another Comforter

So far as our experience is concerned, we find that we do have a new spirit, and the Holy Spirit does dwell in our spirit. Who is the Holy Spirit? The Bible says the Holy Spirit is another Comforter. When our Lord Jesus was on earth He was the Comforter of His disciples. A *comforter*, *paraclete*, means "one who is always alongside with you." Or to put it in a fuller way, because the word *paraclete* is very difficult to translate, the old English translated it into Comforter. But the word comfort in old English is very different from our understanding of comfort today. Our understanding of comfort is: When you are a little uncomfortable you cry and your mother or your father will come and embrace you and pat you and comfort you. That is the impression

we get. So our impression of the Holy Spirit as the Comforter is when we are sorry, then He will come and say, "Oh, it's OK, it's OK." That is our understanding of the Comforter. But in the original it is not that sense. When the English Bible was first translated, they used the word comfort and Comforter because in the old English comfort means "strengthen." As it says in Philippians 4: "I can do all things through Him who comforts me." How can you do all things through Him who comforts you? It is through Him who empowers you. So the Comforter actually is better translated as the Strengthener. When our Lord Jesus was on earth, He was their strengthener and the Holy Spirit in you is the Strengthener. He strengthens your inner man by His power because the Holy Spirit is the power of God.

The Holy Spirit within you will teach you in all things. How do we know the will of God? How do we know Christ? It is by the teaching of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit within you will teach you. He will teach you Christ. He will make Christ living and real to you, that you may know Him. We know Christ by the teaching of the Holy Spirit. But He not only teaches, He also strengthens. He not only tells you what the will of God is, He gives you the power to do the will of God. That is what the Holy Spirit within you is doing.

How can our spirit be strengthened? (The Word here uses "the inner man.") The inner man means the man in the spirit. In other words, the inner man is the spirit; our spirit is the inner man. Our soul and body is the outward man.

In II Corinthians 4, Paul mentions that the outward man is decaying day by day, but the inward man is being renewed day by day, stronger and stronger. So the inner man means the spirit, and the man in the spirit is the inner man. That new man needs to be strengthened.

You are not able to strengthen your inner man by yourself. You need the Holy Spirit to strengthen your inner man by His power and according to the riches of the glory of God. In other words, He will strengthen you to such an extent that you will really be glorified, be transformed, conformed to the image of Christ. He will not only teach you what you should be, but He will make you what you ought to be. That is what the Holy Spirit is doing within us. Therefore, without knowing the Holy Spirit there can be no Christian life. Unfortunately, today, people are seeking the power of the Holy Spirit outwardly, instead of knowing the person of the Holy Spirit inwardly. And that is where all the trouble comes. We need to know the Person of the Holy Spirit.

One day, when you know that the Holy Spirit who dwells in you is the divine person, and He is there to teach you, to strengthen you, it will revolutionize your whole Christian life. Many people can testify to that. The Lord does not leave you as orphans, trying to live your Christian life as an orphan. There are too many orphan Christians today. We are trying to be good Christians, but by ourselves, by our own effort. We are orphans, nobody is helping us. The Lord said, "No, I am not leaving you as orphans. I am coming to you. My Spirit in you, He will strengthen you with power so that your spirit will be strong." And when your spirit is strong, it will burst forth and launch out and overcome all the outward opposition and Christ will live out through you. So remember this. We need the Holy Spirit. We need to know Him not only as our teacher, but also as our strengthener. He strengthens our inner man, our spirit.

Our Responsibility

Is there anything that we should do? Is there any responsibility on our part for the Holy Spirit to strengthen us with power? Yes, we need to give the Holy Spirit opportunity, ground for Him to strengthen us. To give Him that ground, that opportunity, first of all we need to have communion with Him. If, with our spirit, we commune with the Spirit of God, with our spirit we commune with Christ, with our spirit we commune with God, the more we commune with Him, the more ground we give Him to strengthen us. The more we live close to Him, the more we draw near to Him, the more we wait upon Him, the more we have fellowship with Him, the more we try to hear Him, the more ground we give Him to strengthen us.

That is why prayer is so important. Prayer is not just a form; prayer is a life. We need to pray because in prayer, our spirit is in communion with God the Spirit. Prayer is not just some words. Prayer is out of our spirit. Praying in the spirit, out of our spirit, deep down in our spirit, we draw near to God, the Spirit. There we pour forth to Him, commune with Him and there we listen to Him. If we have a prayer life, then our spirit, our inner man is automatically strengthened. The reason why your spirit is so weak is because you are not in communion with Him. If you live your whole day without drawing near to Him, without lifting up your heart to Him, of course the world will occupy you and your spirit will be weak. But if you maintain a continuous fellowship with Him, your spirit is strengthened. That is what you find in that book by Brother Lawrence, *The Practice of the Presence of God*. Brother Lawrence was a cook in a monastery. He was very busy cooking with all the pans and doing all those things necessary for cooking in a monastery. And yet, at

the same time, deep within his heart, he was communing with God.

We can practice the presence of God. During the day, when you are working, maybe in the midst of what you do, just lift up your heart and say a word to the Lord: "Lord, I thank You. I am with You. You are with me." If we maintain a constant communion with the Lord, then our spirit is strengthened.

Not only that, the Holy Spirit can strengthen your spirit by teaching you in all things—big things and small things. We often think: "If I have a very big thing to be settled, a crisis, then I need the Holy Spirit to teach me how to face this crisis, how to solve this problem. The small things, I can do myself. I do not need Him to tell me what to do." But the Holy Spirit will teach us in all things; and whatever He teaches is true and is not false. And if we obey the teaching of the Holy Spirit, we abide in Christ. So, every time you hear the voice of the Holy Spirit and you obey, your inner man is strengthened a little bit.

You know, the reason you find your spirit so weak is because first, you do not have the habit of listening to the Holy Spirit; and second, even if He tells you, you disobey Him. You still want to go your own way, so your spirit remains weak and your flesh gets stronger and stronger. It is the Holy Spirit that strengthens our inner man. And by the strengthening of the inner man, Christ as it were, comes out of the spirit into the heart and dwells there.

What is the Heart?

Physically speaking, the heart, our cardiac organ, is the center of our physical being. Spiritually speaking, our spiritual heart is the center of our spiritual being. Proverbs 4:23 says, "Keep thy heart more than anything that is guarded; for out of it are the issues of life."

How does life come into us? It is through the heart.

You remember the parable of the sower? Our Lord Jesus was sowing His word and it fell upon the ground and this ground represents the heart. So, when the word of God comes, it comes into you through the heart, and if you believe with your heart and confess with your mouth, then you are saved. That is how life comes into you. And it is also through the heart that life issues out. In order for Christ to live out of you, He has to dwell in your heart.

Who lives in your heart today? It is your self. That is why what issues forth is your self. The heart in the Scripture is a composite of one part of the spirit and all the three parts of the soul. If you search the Scripture, you will find the heart is the passageway between the soul and the spirit because it is composed of part of the spirit and all the parts of the soul.

Our spirit has three functions or faculties: communion, intuition, and conscience. Conscience is in the spirit, but it is also part of our heart because in Hebrews you find that our evil conscience of the heart is being cleansed by the blood of our Lord Jesus. So, you find that conscience is part of the heart. In the Old Testament there is no word *conscience*; the word is *heart*. David's heart smote him when he cut Saul's skirt. What it means is that his conscience bothered him. But in the New Testament, we find the word *conscience*. And the conscience is in the heart because our evil conscience of the heart is purified by the blood of our Lord Jesus.

Then of course, the heart composes all the parts of our soul. I think it is evident that our soul has emotion. If you are angry, if you are happy, that comes from your heart. "My heart rejoices." And the thoughts, the will, purpose, is in the heart, in the soul. For instance,

Hebrews 4:12 says the word of God is sharper than any two-edged sword. It will penetrate, cut asunder, dividing the soul and the spirit and expose the intents and the thoughts of the heart. Intent is will; thought is mind. So you find that the heart includes conscience of the spirit and the will, the mind, and the emotion of the soul. That is the heart.

Because self dwells in the heart, therefore what is expressed is your self. But one day, when Christ dwells in your heart, then what is expressed through your conscience, through your mind, through your will, through your emotion, will be Christ. In other words, you have the mind of Christ. You express the love of Christ. Not my will but Your will be done. And you have a clear conscience before God as you live before God and man. It is very important, extremely important, I would say that it is the secret to Christian life, that Christ not only lives in your spirit, He has to come forth and dwell in your heart. And when He dwells in your heart, then you are rooted and founded in love.

The Tabernacle

The tabernacle is another illustration. The tabernacle was divided into three parts: there was the outer court which represents our body, the holy place which represents our soul, and the holiest of all which represents our spirit. The ark, the glory of God, was in the holiest of all. It was not in the holy place; it was not in the outer court. In the outer court, there was no covering, so it is lighted by sunlight. In the holy place, it was covered, so it was lighted by the light from the golden lampstand. But in the holiest of all, there was no lampstand. It was pitch dark so far as sunlight or manufactured light was concerned. But it was full

of light because the glory of God filled the holiest of all. And yet the glory of God was restricted in the holiest of all because it was not only covered above and on all three sides, but in between the holiest of all and the holy place, there was a heavy veil. The glory of God could not diffuse, could not penetrate that veil into the holy place. It was restricted there. But when our Lord was crucified on the cross, the veil was rent from top to bottom. Now if the glory of God dwells in the holiest of all, when that veil is rent, then what happens? That glory will spread into the holy place. Of course, historically speaking, in the second temple that the remnant built and King Herod enlarged, the holiest of all was empty. There was no ark there. It was completely empty. There was no glory there. But spiritually speaking, that is what will happen.

How can Christ, who dwells in our spirit, come and dwell in our heart? First, we already mentioned the positive side: our spirit must be strengthened by the power of the Holy Spirit. And when it is strengthened, then it will thrust out and fill our hearts. That is the positive side. But there is also the negative side and these two have to work together. The negative side is that the veil has to be rent.

Rending the Veil

What does the veil represent? Hebrews 10 says that today we can approach the throne of grace, we can enter into the holiest of all with boldness because of the blood of our Lord Jesus and because of the rent veil, which is His flesh. He dedicated a new and living way for us to get into the holiest of all. The veil signifies the flesh of our Lord Jesus.

When our Lord Jesus came to become flesh, the word became flesh, He had a body, and this flesh

was the veil. On one side that veil was facing the holiest of all; on the other side it was facing the holy place. It separated the holiest of all from the holy place. Our Lord Jesus was towards God and there was communion; there was oneness. When He was in the flesh, He was the only one who could commune with God. The Father was in Him and He was in the Father, and in a sense, He became that separation because He is perfect. He could communicate with God, see God, but because He was perfect, it showed that we are imperfect. Therefore, we cannot see God, so it separates us from God. But when our Lord Jesus' flesh was broken on the cross, then a new and living way was opened for us, dedicated for us. In other words, we all have to walk in that way. What is that way? It is the way of the cross. Our Lord Jesus opened that way. His flesh was broken, representing us, and the old man was crucified with Him. It was rent so that the glory of God may come forth into our heart. But remember, it is a way dedicated to us. That is to say, He has opened the way, now walk ye in it. We have to walk the way of the cross. We have to have our flesh broken, our outward man broken. Christ dwells in our inward man and self dwells in our outward man. The breaking of the outward man allows Christ to come and dwell in our heart.

Treasure in Earthen Vessels

In II Corinthians 4 it says we have this treasure in earthen vessels. The earthen vessel represents the outward man. It is opaque. It is cheap. It is common. But we have a treasure in the earthen vessel. The treasure is Christ—full of radiancy. But because we are an earthen vessel and the treasure is in the earthen vessel, so the power, the surpassing

greatness of the radiancy of the power of the treasure is imprisoned in this earthen vessel. You cannot see the light. He is the diamond, but the diamond is in the earthen vessel, so you cannot see the light of the diamond. But when that earthen vessel is cracked, is broken, then you find the radiancy of the treasure comes forth. It is not of man, but of God. That is why the Holy Spirit within not only strengthens our inner man, but the Holy Spirit without arranges our daily circumstances. He arranges our daily life—whom you will meet, what will happen to you.

You see, with Christians there is no such thing as “an accident,” no such thing as “by chance.” The Holy Spirit arranges our life and, by the discipline of the Holy Spirit, He is breaking our outward man. So II Corinthians 4 says, “We are surrounded.” Often we find ourselves being surrounded, but even though we are surrounded, there is still an opening—up. “We are at our wits’ end” (*Phillips Translation*), but that is not life’s end because our end is His beginning. We are persecuted, but not abandoned. We are knocked down, but not knocked out.

In boxing you may be knocked down, but you are not knocked out; you stand up again. And that is our Christian experience. The Spirit of God arranges our circumstances to break our self down, to break our outward man down. And the breaking of the outward man allows Christ to come and dwell in our heart.

For instance, we are naturally envious when we see some brothers and sisters prosper and we suffer. We envy them. Even in Psalm 73, that man saw the worldly people prosper and godly people suffer, and he could not understand it. He was envious. He was not happy about it, until he entered into the sanctuary and then the Lord opened his eyes. That is natural. But the

Holy Spirit arranges the circumstances. He may let your neighbor prosper and you suffer, and when your envy comes, the Holy Spirit says, “Well, that is the flesh. Let it be delivered to the cross to death.” And if you obey the Holy Spirit and deliver it to death, strangely speaking, when you see your neighbor prosper, you will rejoice with him. Now, that is the breaking down of the outward man and Christ living out.

We have an English proverb: to err is human; to forgive is divine. To forgive is divine. You cannot forgive. If somebody treats you badly, of course, revenge is the natural reaction. And you try to hold back and not take revenge, but even if you do not take revenge, you cannot forget it. But thank God, the Holy Spirit deals with you, and you not only forgive, but you completely forget. That is the life of Christ. When we come to the Lord, He forgives and He forgets. If you fall in sin and you confess, He forgives you; but even though He forgives and forgets, often you cannot forget. So maybe after five minutes, you come to the Lord and say, “Lord, I am sorry for that. Please forgive me.” And the Lord says, “What are you talking about?” He has already forgotten. That is divine. Then Christ lives out through you.

So, that is the spiritual mechanism. How does Christ live out His life in you? He will live out through your conscience, He will live out through your will, He will live out through your mind, He will live out through your emotion. When people meet you, they do not see you, they see Christ. Paul said, “I am crucified with Christ. No longer live I. It is Christ who lives in me. And I live by faith, the faith of the Son of God who has loved me and given Himself for me.”

When Christ dwells in your heart, when Christ sits on the throne of your heart, that is the same thing

as it says in Ephesians, “Be filled with the Holy Spirit.” Be constantly ruled by the Holy Spirit. And if this happens, you will be rooted and founded in love. Rooted is like a tree. You will root. Founded is like a building anchored on the rock.

When you really touch God, and really experience Him, what do you experience? You experience love, because God is love. Then you begin to be able to apprehend, you begin to understand, you begin to appropriate. Spiritual reality does not come by our intellect. It comes through our heart. It is love that enables us to know God; it is not your intellect that enables you to know God. When love fills your heart, then you not only love God, but you love all the saints. You will apprehend the love of God with all the saints, and you will find that it is beyond understanding. That is the time that we will be filled with the fulness of God.

When do you know that you are filled with the fulness of God? It is not when your mind is full of theology; it is when your heart is filled with love. That is when you are filled with the fulness of God. And thank God, in Paul’s prayer, he says, “To Him that is able to do far exceedingly above all that we can think or ask.” He is able to do that. It is so good—almost unbelievable. But He is able to do far exceedingly above all that which we ask or think according to the power which works in us. That power is tremendous. The power of the Holy Spirit is tremendous. Nuclear power cannot be compared with it. The power of the Holy Spirit is the greatest power in the world because it can fill us with the fulness of God.

“To Him be the glory in the church, in Christ Jesus, unto all generations of the age of ages. Amen.” This is the gospel. May the Lord open our eyes and by His Spirit enable us to apprehend. Because God is love, He wants us

to possess His love.

